
Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Quality Handbook
Session 2023/24

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INTRODUCTION

The UWS Quality Handbook contains information about the range of processes that UWS uses to protect the student experience and to ensure that provision is designed, developed, approved and monitored to meet the expectations of the University and our external stakeholders such as the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and the Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) that we work with.

The handbook is prepared and updated by the Quality Enhancement and Standards Team (QuEST) on an annual basis; we have collated all relevant information into a single resource that we hope will be of value in providing guidance on all aspects related to the management of quality at UWS. The UWS approach to quality is informed by both the UK Quality Code and the Quality Enhancement Framework, which is distinctive to Scotland.

QuEST aims to work in partnership with Schools, Programme Leaders, the Students' Union and Professional Services to enhance the student experience through planned and deliberate steps in line with the University's strategic approach to quality.

Through engagement with colleagues, QuEST will:

- be solution focussed, creative and demonstrate a clear commitment to enhancing the student experience;
- be professional and responsive in all written and verbal communication;
- be friendly and approachable and aim to deal with initial enquiries as soon as possible or direct to an appropriate person;
- promote an ethos of partnership working with Schools, programme teams and Professional Services;
- seek to streamline processes and minimise bureaucracy.

Through engagement with external partners, QuEST will:

- enhance the reputation of the University;
- represent and promote the University at external events;
- keep up-to-date with external developments and expectations and sector-wide best practice;
- review and evaluate quality processes and procedures for effectiveness;
- actively engage in sector-wide discussions on changes to quality requirements.

Please contact us if you have a query about any aspect of the work that we do; we are always pleased to engage at an early stage in the development of proposals to provide specialist knowledge and to discuss any issues you may have. This is an exciting time for UWS, as we continue to implement the Curriculum Framework and QuEST is here to work with Schools and programme teams, providing support and guidance where needed. We look forward to working in partnership with staff across the University in session 2023/24.

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Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 1
Strategic Approach to
Quality at UWS
Session 2023/24

CHAPTER 1 STRATEGIC APPROACH TO QUALITY AT UWS

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CHAPTER 1 STRATEGIC APPROACH TO QUALITY AT UWS

1 STRATEGIC APPROACH

The strategic approach to quality takes note of the various internal and external influences, policies and procedures. This Handbook sets the strategic direction, with the overarching premise that a 'planned and deliberate steps' approach is taken. Major influencing factors are the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and the [Quality Enhancement Framework \(QEF\)](#).

At UWS we believe that **all** staff have responsibility for the maintenance of academic standards - both academic staff who develop, deliver and assess modules and programmes, and staff from across the Professional Services and within Schools who support the delivery of the student experience.

2 ACADEMIC STANDARDS

UWS is committed to the maintenance of appropriate academic standards for all its programmes in line with those of other UK Universities.

The responsibility is discharged through:

- The **University Senate**, which has responsibility for all matters relating to academic standards;
- The **Education Advisory Committee (EAC)**, reporting to Senate, whose responsibility is to be proactive in the strategic development and enhancement of learning and teaching, and to disseminate good practice across all Schools;
- The **Academic Quality Committee (AQC)**, is a sub-committee of EAC, which advises and makes recommendations on the operation and development of the University's quality assurance and enhancement approach.
- The **approval** of all programmes and modules of study involving external peers; this includes management of the strategic development of the portfolio by the University Leadership Team in collaboration with Schools, and a rigorous approval process designed to meet the Expectations, Core and Common Practices of the Quality Code;
- Student engagement and partnership working through a well-established system of **student representation & feedback** mechanisms;
- **Enhancement & Annual Monitoring (EAM)**, which includes scrutiny of External Examiners' reports, module review and programme monitoring reports, evaluation of student feedback, including NSS data, and review of progression and degree award statistics;
- **Institution-Led Review (ILR)**, using both internal and external reviewers;
- Appointment of **External Examiners** on all academic award bearing programmes with explicit responsibilities for ensuring that the University of the West of Scotland's academic standards are consistent with those in other UK universities;
- The submission, where appropriate, of programmes of study for accreditation by external **Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)**.

Formal Reporting

In formal governance terms, the responsibility for quality assurance rests with Schools, who report annually to Senate on the quality & standards of awards. The University is also required to provide an annual report to the Scottish Funding Council on the management of quality assurance & enhancement, including a statement of assurance endorsed by the University Court.

At UWS, we consider the views of our students to be key to the quality enhancement process, and we aim to ensure student input is sought and acted upon at all levels. Chapter 3 of this handbook outlines the various ways that students can become involved in improving our systems and processes to provide a better experience for all.

3 EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON THE UWS APPROACH TO QUALITY

3.1 Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

The QAA is the independent body entrusted with monitoring and advising on standards and quality in UK higher education and is dedicated to checking that the three million students working towards a UK qualification get the higher education experiences they are entitled to expect. QAA ensures that students are involved with all aspects of their work. QAA work across all four nations of the UK and also build international partnerships to enhance and promote the reputation of UK higher education worldwide. A full range of information, reports and guidance is available from the Agency's website www.qaa.ac.uk.

QAA Scotland has devolved responsibility for the work of QAA in Scotland.

The work of QAA Scotland is enhancement-led, in line with the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/quality-enhancement-framework>.

3.2 The Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF)

The QEF is the enhancement-led approach to quality in Scotland. Collaboration and partnership are at the heart of this innovative method.

The QEF supports higher education institutions in managing the quality of the student learning experience. It also provides public confidence in academic standards and the quality of the student experience.

There are five integrated elements in this approach:

1 Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)

The QAA website states that 'the approach to undertaking external institutional quality review in Scotland is built on the principle of being enhancement-led and is a peer review process.' Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) was the QAA Scotland's method of review used between 2003-2022. A new review method is currently under development within the context of the [Scottish Funding Council's Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability and the development of a Tertiary Quality Framework](#), which is proposed for implementation from 2024-25. The new method is being delivered across 2 phases:

- **Phase 1** comprising Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) and Institutional Liaison Meetings (ILM) will take place in 2022-23 and 2023-24.
- **Phase 2** is being developed during 2022-23 in consultation with the sector. This cyclical review phase will commence in 2024-25, coinciding with the anticipated implementation of the SFC's tertiary quality arrangements.

UWS was reviewed via the QESR process in March 2023, which concluded that the University 'is making effective progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision to enable effective arrangements to be in place for managing academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience.' The full report,

which includes identified good practice and recommended areas for action, can be viewed here <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/University-of-the-West-of-Scotland>. The University can continue to use the QAA Quality Mark.



2 Institution-Led Review

QAA confirms that institutions in Scotland are responsible for reviewing their own academic subjects and professional services. This is known as institution-led review (ILR). Institutions have flexibility to design and manage ILR but they do need to meet the Expectations, Core and Common Practices of the Quality Code and the guidance published by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on quality for higher education institutions.

This guidance identifies requirements for ILR including:

- reviewing all subject provision in a maximum of a six-year cycle;
- using trained reviewers;
- involving students at various stages of the process including as full members of review panels;
- involving at least one reviewer from outside the institution;
- making use of external reference points when evaluating and reporting on subject provision.

During **Enhancement-led Institutional Review processes, such as QESR**, QAA Scotland will examine how effective an institution's ILR processes are. They will also discuss the outcomes of ILRs during the annual Institutional Liaison Meetings .

In addition to current ILR practice, UWS is also developing a separate process for the review of professional services, which will implement a 6-year review cycle.

3 Student Engagement

The QAA Scotland highlights the importance of encouraging students to take an active role in shaping the quality of their education. There are many ways to encourage effective engagement from students, including:

- a student member on every Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) team. This supports the review process and provides an emphasis on the student perspective;
- student representation at every level of the institution;
- students taking part in Institutional-led Reviews;
- effective support for student representation through appropriate training, usually provided by the institution. Sector agencies like **sparqs (student partnership in quality Scotland)** also provide support and development for institutions and students <https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/>;
- information on the student experience through national, institutional and longitudinal student experience surveys.

4 Enhancement Themes

The national programme of Enhancement Themes is led by the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) and managed by QAA Scotland. This programme aims to enhance the learning experience of students studying within the Scottish higher

education sector. This is achieved by the sector identifying and agreeing to work on specific areas (known as Themes). Within each Theme, institutions, academic staff, support staff and students are encouraged to work together to generate ideas and find innovative ways to enhance the learning experience of students. Each Theme allows the sector to share and learn from current and innovative national and international practice. More information can be found on the QAA Scotland website <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/en/quality-enhancement-framework/enhancement-themes>.

5 Public information provided by institutions

The QAA Scotland website states that public information relates to the details that institutions publish about the quality of their teaching and learning. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requires all institutions to make this information available. It must be clear, accurate and accessible to the public. QAA Scotland will consider the accuracy of this information as part of the Enhancement-led Institutional Review process.

SFC asks institutions to follow the established guiding principles for public information, which are to provide:

- assurances about the quality and standards of provision;
- information to inform student choice, and to assist employers and other stakeholders to clearly understand the nature of the Scottish university sector;
- information which helps current students to understand, engage with and make best use of institutional systems for quality improvement;
- information about the institution's educational processes which stimulates reflection on academic practice and the sharing of good practice within the institution and more widely.

The SFC has issued guidelines to help institutions put in place this part of the quality enhancement strategy.

3.3 The UK Quality Code

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is used to assure the standards and quality of UK higher education. It is used by UK higher education providers to ensure they are achieving the outcomes expected of them. It presents a series of reference points to help providers offer their students a high-quality experience. Further information on the Quality Code can be found here, <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code>.

During 2022-23, the QAA and UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment have been conducting a detailed set of conversations with the sector to inform the future development of the Quality Code.

3.4 The Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

This is one of the national qualifications frameworks in the UK. It promotes a clear understanding of the achievements and attributes represented by the main qualification titles in Scotland. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework has 12 levels. The different levels indicate the level of difficulty of a particular qualification. The Level Descriptors outline the general outcomes of learning at particular SCQF levels. For more information see <https://scqf.org.uk/>.

3.5 Subject Benchmark Statements

QAA Scotland confirms that Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas. They show what graduates might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their studies.

Subject Benchmark Statements are written by subject specialists. They are used as reference points in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes. They provide general guidance but are not intended to represent a national curriculum or to prescribe set approaches. Instead, they allow for flexibility and innovation. More information can be found on the QAA website <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

3.6 Advance HE

The new agency has been created following the merger of the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE). Advance HE's mission is to champion the continuous enhancement of teaching and learning, equality and diversity, and leadership and governance in higher education, both within the UK and globally.

Advance HE is 'of and for the sector', with a board that is representative of the broad cross section of organisations engaged with Advance HE, including representatives from UUK and GuildHE, who originally formed the respective organisations, and have supported the merger from the outset. More information can be found on the Advance HE website <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/>

3.7 Universities Scotland

Universities Scotland (US) is a membership organisation working for the Principals and Directors of Scotland's 19 higher education institutions. US develop higher education policy and campaign on issues where our members have a shared interest. For more information see <https://www.universities-scotland.ac.uk/>.

4 SCHEDULED REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANAGING QUALITY

To support the activity undertaken as part of Enhancement and Annual Monitoring and Institution-Led Review, the various systems and processes that contribute to the UWS framework for managing quality assurance and enhancement are reviewed periodically. The stimulus for reviewing particular areas can come from a range of sources:

- Scheduled review and refresh of policies and procedures (on a rolling basis);
- Issues arising from other activities – ILR, EAM, Programme Approval *etc.*;
- Thematic Reviews;
- Areas noted for development through internal audit;
- Holistic review of arrangements (on a 5-year cycle between ELIRs);
- Outcomes of ELIR that highlight areas for development.

Examples of review activity undertaken include:

Session 2020/21

Curriculum Review

Review of remit and membership of the Student Experience Committee

Review of Annual Monitoring processes, including the Programme Monitoring Report

Honours classification review

Session 2021/22

Postgraduate Portfolio Review

Review of Plagiarism Procedure and academic integrity practices

Review of Academic Engagement Procedure
Development of Digital Capture Guidance
Ongoing review of a variety of policies and procedures through the Student Experience Project

Session 2022/23

Development of an Academic Integrity Procedure and Academic Integrity Guidance taking account of advances in artificial intelligence
Development of professional services review process
Review of Committee structures and remits
Review of student retention, including a review of the Regulatory Framework

By undertaking review of areas noted above, the intended outcome of improvement and development of policy and procedure can be achieved, in terms of both planned and deliberate steps and also with the flexibility to review areas in response to emerging issues or changed priorities.

Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 2
Institution-Led Review
Session 2023/24

CHAPTER 2 INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW

The templates referred to in this chapter are available here:

<https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared Documents/CHAPTER 2 INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW?csf=1&web=1&e=SGmHSi>

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ANY QUERIES CONCERNING THIS BOOKLET SHOULD BE RAISED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WITH QUEST. THIS BOOKLET CAN BE PROVIDED IN OTHER FORMATS ON REQUEST.

THE PROCEDURES DESCRIBED WITHIN THIS BOOKLET HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR EQUALITY IMPACT AND CONFIRMED AS BEING AT LOW RISK OF HAVING ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

CHAPTER 2 INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW

1 INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW CONTEXT

All University credit bearing provision will be subject to periodic internal review in line with Scottish Funding Council (SFC) guidance and within a cycle of not more than 6 years.

Institution-Led Review (ILR) – formerly referred to at UWS as ‘Subject Health Review’ - is defined as the internal and external peer review of the academic health of the total taught and research provision in a subject delivered by the University. The review forms an integral element of the University’s quality assurance system and is intended to provide an opportunity to focus on and to review quality enhancement, learning and teaching, the wider research and scholarship in the subject area and the interactions and interrelations between subjects together with their future development. The student experience is at the heart of ILR.

ILR is located within an enhancement-led approach to quality. The process is intended to be robust and holistic but one that is useful to the subject team and the School in providing a periodic juncture for reflection, evaluation and focus on future plans and opportunities. The Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) is committed to ensuring that the process is supportive and developmental in nature. The Academic Quality Committee (AQC) shall assist LTC in taking forward ILR. LTC shall continue to take an institutional overview of the outcomes of ILR.

ILR provides an opportunity for good practice to be validated by peers and more widely disseminated. The panel will seek to evaluate how the subject and programme team plans for enhancement and takes deliberate steps to bring this about.

All areas of the University’s credit-bearing provision will undergo ILR on a cycle not exceeding six years (APPENDIX 1). Schools have flexibility to aggregate programmes and subjects in ways which provide coherence and fit the organisational structure, mode of delivery and enhancement-led approach, as long as all modules and programmes are covered within the six year cycle.

Programme review is an important and integral part of ILR. As part of the ongoing focus of ILR, Schools are responsible for ensuring programme structures/documentation are reviewed regularly, normally in the year preceding ILR. ILR will confirm the ongoing re-approval of programmes.

A **two-phase approach** is adopted at UWS; this requires genuine engagement by panel members during Phase 1 (written input) as well as active participation/attendance during Phase 2 (face to face component/main event). It also brings additional responsibility to the role of the Chair.

Details of Phase 1 and Phase 2 are provided in section 11.1.

The **Scottish Funding Council (SFC)** publishes guidance on the nature and scope of institution-led internal review within its guidance to HEIs on quality (*SFC Guidance to Colleges and Universities on Quality AY 2022-23 and AY 2023-24: Refresh – August 2023*)¹. These guidelines state that institution-led quality reviews should include the following characteristics:

¹[SFC Guidance on Quality 2022-23 and 2023-24: Refresh](#)

²<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/monitoring-and-evaluation>

- ILR should consider the effectiveness of annual monitoring arrangements and the effectiveness of the follow-up actions arising from annual monitoring. Reporting at programme or subject level should identify actions to address any issues and activity to promote areas of strength for consideration at institutional level. The ILR method should be designed to allow constructive reflection on the effectiveness of the annual monitoring and reporting procedures.
- All aspects of provision are expected to be reviewed systematically and rigorously on a cycle of not more than six years to demonstrate that institutions meet the expectations for standards set out in the UK Quality Code²(revised Nov 2018), and the standards set out in the European Standards and Guidelines (part 1, 2015).
- ILRs must continue to produce robust, comprehensive and credible evidence that the academic standards of awards are secure and that provision is of high quality and being enhanced. ILR should be designed to promote and support critical reflection on policy and practice. The method used should ensure that any shortcomings are addressed and it should give a central role to quality enhancement by promoting dialogue on areas in which quality could be improved and identifying good practice for dissemination within the institution and beyond.
- All credit bearing provision should be reviewed, including undergraduate and taught postgraduate awards, supervision of research students, provision delivered in collaboration with others, transnational education, work-based provision and placements, online and distance learning, and provision which provides only small volumes of credit.
- The unit of review should have sufficient granularity to allow adequate scrutiny of programmes and disciplines including ensuring there is adequate external scrutiny at the discipline level by the external panel member(s). Excessive aggregation should be avoided if it means the process cannot examine the ‘fine structure’ of provision and doesn’t facilitate the identification of specific issues affecting particular programmes.
- Reviews should provide an objective review of provision based on an understanding of national and international good practice. Each review team should include a student and at least one member external to the institution with a relevant background.
- Institutions are expected to continue extending student engagement and participation in quality in line with the [Student Engagement Framework for Scotland](#). Students should be engaged at all stages of the ILR process including the development of the self-evaluation, as full members of ILR teams, and in follow-up activity. This is emphasised further in the QAA Quality Code guidance.
- Additional specific information should be gathered from students as part of the evidence base for reviews. The ILR should include student views of provision and learning experience, differentiate between views from different categories of students, identify distinctive characteristics of provision, and take account of graduates’ views on the relevance of provision for employability.
- Reviews should take full account of subject benchmarks and establish that programme design and learning outcomes are consistent with relevant benchmarks;
- Reviews should take account of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education², in particular the ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Chapter’ within the revised 2018 edition –

“Monitoring and evaluation of higher education is an essential process within providers, forming a fundamental part of the academic cycle”.

- Reviews should take full account of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Quality Code core practices state: *“The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications framework”.*
- Both annual monitoring and ILR are likely to consider: themes arising from and responses to external examiner reports; internal and external student survey data; performance data on recruitment, progression and achievement; and data trends. Data is likely to be benchmarked against other areas of the institution's activities as well as equivalent provision in other institutions.
- All services contributing to the student experience should be reviewed as part of an institution's approach. The role of support services is of crucial importance in determining the overall quality of the student learning experience and can impact significantly on student achievement and wellbeing. Reviews should enable the University to be satisfied about the contribution made by support services to the 'quality culture' of the University and the ways in which services engage with students to monitor and improve the quality of services and the ways in which the services promote high quality learning and continuous quality enhancement.
- Whilst variations in approach involving support services will exist, SFC expects that institutions' approaches to the review of professional support services should be systematic, planned and timely, covering all non-academic services or departments that contribute to the overall student learning experience and considering their effectiveness and interactions with Schools. For 2023-24, UWS will continue to embed the impact of support services within ILRs. Supplementary to ILRs for taught provision, in line with an ELIR 19 recommendation and in response to revised SFC guidance, a separate Professional Services Review shall take place in 2023-24 using newly proposed methodology, with the first involving a pilot ILR of the Student Success Team.
- ILR should reflect on the outcomes of relevant PSRB accreditations. Institutions are encouraged to engage with PSRBs to explore appropriate ways of aligning PSRB activity with ILR.

The operation, outcomes and impact of internal ILR is one of the key elements on which the 'confidence' judgement in external review rests. QAA meets annually with senior officers in the University to discuss engagement with the enhancement-led approach to quality. Furthermore, institutions are also required to provide an annual statement of assurance to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to complement the annual report which the governing body endorses. (*SFC Guidance Refresh – August 2023, para 101*)

Every four to five years an external review takes place involving scrutiny of supporting evidence by an external panel who also meet with staff and students. The former Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) methodology has shifted to an intermediate Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) and Institution Liaison Meeting (ILM) approach; with a newly anticipated Tertiary Quality Framework currently under development which will inform changes to external review; details not yet available. UWS underwent QESR in session 2022/23. UWS received a positive judgement, noting “the review team is **confident** that UWS is making **effective** progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision to enable effective arrangements to be in place for managing academic standards and the quality

of the student learning experience”. An analysis of the outcomes from ILRs forms part of the University’s submission for QESR.

A particular focus of the annual discussions and QESR is the approach to internal review (ILR) and **what the University is learning from the outcomes of each review**. To inform this discussion and as evidence of the effectiveness and robustness of the internal review arrangements, the University will forward the report of each ILR to QAA. A summary of the key actions/issues is also submitted annually to Senate, Court and SFC.

During [QESR](#), the University was praised for its quality assurance and enhancement procedures ([QAA QESR report – UWS March 2023](#)). The report stated that “the team demonstrated robust processes that are implemented diligently, with a particular focus on enhancing the student experience”. In particular, the two-phase institution-led review process enables the review visit to be tailored to the subject area being reviewed, addressing the most pertinent topics. The University seeks to demonstrate the articulation between ILR and the annual monitoring process by using similar themes in both processes.

At UWS, the Quality Enhancement and Standards Team (QuEST), co-ordinates both internal review/ILR and institutional reviews centrally.

2 UWS STRATEGY 2025, UWS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK AND LEARNING & TEACHING THEMATIC PLAN

The institutional ILR process provides an opportunity for subject teams to reflect on progress towards the ambitious targets of the UWS Strategy 2025 by taking cognisance of agreed learning and teaching principles and ambitions for hybrid delivery:

- UWS Curriculum Framework 2022
- Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan 2021

Some key principle statements within Strategy 2025 correlate to the different elements and the core purpose of our Institution-Led Review (ILR) including:

- The notion of “*We are here for our students*” permeates throughout the strategy.
- “*Passionate about Education – Students are at the heart of what we do. We will be creative and challenging in our pedagogy and instil a sense of curiosity in our students.*”
- “*Through inspired teaching, we will improve the lives of those who study at UWS, and enable them to improve the lives of others.*”
- “*UWS works in partnership with its students to deliver world-ready graduates who will design, shape and build a new future. We are pioneers in developing effective interactions with global business, industry and the public and voluntary sectors.*”
- “*Innovative – UWS creates new knowledge, Innovation, enterprise and knowledge exchange are central to our academic portfolio.*”
- “*Our staff are our most valuable resource and we will invest in them through a new programme of continuing professional development.*”
- “*Our flexible programmes of study, with all having digital hybrid delivery options, will allow students to engage in learning around the world.*”

The Self Evaluation Document will be expected to outline how the subject and programme teams are addressing the approaches to curriculum design and teaching delivery, driven by the UWS Curriculum Framework, hybrid delivery ambitions and the Learning & Teaching Thematic Plan.

The [UWS Curriculum Framework](#) (revised 2022) states:

- “Our portfolio of programmes is contemporary, relevant, sustainable and allows students to thrive in the rapidly-changing 21st century workplace.”
- “*Students are at the heart of what we do. The UWS student journey is personal, seamless, and supported by outstanding Personal, Professional and Academic staff and functional, student-centred and user-friendly systems and processes.*”
- “Our online and physical learning environments are dynamic, technology-rich and support world-class pedagogy.”
- “Our graduates are leaders, with world-ready, interdisciplinary meta-skills and flexible, global perspectives.”

The **UWS Curriculum Framework 2022** is a key component of the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan and the Student Experience Programme through which the plan will be implemented. It is intended that all provision will be aligned to the CF by end of 2023/24 (with phased implementation); with teams using varying methodology to align to the CF, some of which will use the ILR process.

Supporting guidance in terms of addressing elements of the CF exists in the form of a **CF Alignment Document** and teams are strongly encouraged to refer to this guidance whilst reflecting on their practice and drafting the SED; this document reinforces the 6 principals and the 11 associated commitments and related routes of inquiry.

The following six curriculum design principles feature within -:

- Flexible and hybrid
- Simple and coherent
- Student-centred
- Authentic
- Inclusive
- Sustainable

3 AREAS TO BE ADDRESSED BY INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW AND IN THE SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENT (SED)

The University’s EAC has confirmed that the following areas should be addressed by ILR and in the Self-Evaluation Document (SED) prepared by the ILR team.

<p>SED HEADINGS -:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provision▪ Learning, Teaching and Enhancement▪ Research and Knowledge Exchange▪ Student Assessment and Feedback▪ Progression and Achievement▪ Student Support and Guidance for Learning▪ Quality Enhancement and Assurance▪ Strategic Development/Five Year Vision

3.1 Provision

The ILR provides an unparalleled forum for review of curriculum in discussion with subject experts. It will consider the academic development of the subject with regard to the effectiveness and currency of design, content and organisation of provision with reference to the outcomes of provision and the development of knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, subject specific skills, employability skills and Personal

Development Planning (PDP) in the context of national and international developments. The impact of placement experience and work-based and related learning on the student experience will also be considered.

The review will explore how the subject team has embedded employability skills across their programmes. The review will explore how graduate attributes, “I am UWS”, including those relating to employability are effectively incorporated into the programmes and promoted to students.

The review will explore ethical matters with respect to the provision, in terms of visibility within the programme design, and opportunities for reflection on ethical issues. Learning and teaching strategies should be compliant with equal opportunities policies and promote a critical understanding of discrimination, diversity, ethics and other related concepts in the context of education and society.

Reviews should take full account of subject benchmarks, Professional, Statutory, & Regulatory Body (PSRB) reports, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The module descriptors and programme specifications will be considered against these frameworks and benchmarks with the expectation they will be re-approved through the ILR process. The panel will wish to understand how the subject/programme team uses external reference points in developing its provision.

The SED should articulate how the provision is kept up to date with the leading academic developments in the subject both nationally and internationally, taking into account Strategy 2025, the **Curriculum Framework and the Learning & Teaching Thematic Plan**. It should present an objective review of the provision based on an understanding of national and international good practice and employer expectations. The SED should include a reflective statement on how provision compares with practice in other countries.

ILR will consider the strategy and approach for recognition of prior learning and any articulation arrangements with colleges.

Collaborative Provision

Quality Code states: “*Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them*”.

Collaborative provision in the subject area will be considered in terms of the approach taken to managing the student learning experience on collaborative programmes. This relates predominantly to franchise collaborative provision where a UWS award is offered at a delivery location out with a UWS campus so it is important the student experience at these locations is captured during the ILR. The University has a separate process for collaborative review, though, for franchise, this focuses more on institutional arrangements to manage the collaborative partnership and the student experience rather than the module/programme content.

For validated collaborative provision, whilst these should be referenced within the SED in the context of the strategic direction of the subject, the ILR will not scrutinise these awards; collaborative review will be the main forum for periodic monitoring of quality and standards for validated awards and for the re-approval of the modules/programmes.

The panel will engage with the subject/programme teams on the distinctiveness of the University provision in the area under review.

Equality & Diversity

In line with Strategy 2025, “*We remain committed to widening access, equality, diversity and inclusion.*” As a public authority the University has a general responsibility not to discriminate in employment or in providing goods, services and facilities to students. There are specific duties to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations with people who have characteristics protected under legislation.

These protected characteristics are:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Age▪ Disability▪ Gender reassignment▪ Marriage and civil partnership▪ Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Race▪ Religion and belief▪ Sex▪ Sexual orientation

In addition, the ILR should explore how students from widening participation backgrounds (20% lowest in SIMD - Scottish Index Multiple Deprivation; those articulating from FE and returners to HE) have been recruited, supported and how they are progressing.

The ILR will explore and report on the inclusiveness of the curriculum and approaches to learning, teaching and assessment with specific regard to how these address issues of diversity. UWS is committed to achieving equality of access to higher education at all levels and recognises that discrimination of any kind has a detrimental effect on learners, their relationship with University staff, their learning activities and their achievement. Staff should be aware of and make use of the available resources, which provide advice and guidance on developing inclusive learning, teaching and assessment.

ILR will explore how staff in the subject area are engaging with inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practices within the curriculum and also in its handbooks and other communications with students.

3.2 Learning, Teaching and Enhancement

The review will consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of the learning and teaching approaches within the subject area and how these foster independent learning and critical thinking. The panel will wish to understand how the University’s Curriculum Framework and Learning & Teaching Thematic Plans are impacting on this subject area.

The quality of the learning environment, its equivalence across all campuses and sites of delivery and how effective learning is supported across all campuses will be of interest to the panel.

The panel will seek clarity on the strategy for the current and planned future use of the University’s VLE and extended e-Learning environment and how this is underpinned by staff development. The use of the Aula VLE will be of interest, as will the reflection on team’s experiences as a result of the pandemic which have shaped our thinking about flexible, technology-enabled, blended delivery and indeed accelerated our experience and understanding of hybrid education / flexible learning as we move forward. From 2023/24, a **set of learning principles** have been introduced which seeks to move “beyond hybrid” and back to a model of learning and teaching that recognises we are an on-campus University, returning to the rigour to our pre-pandemic processes for module delivery.

The panel will also review research informed teaching in the subject area and how research mindedness is engendered in students.

The SED should articulate how scholarly research and professional activities underpin teaching particularly at honours and masters level. Pedagogic staff development will also be discussed. The panel will explore engagement of staff with the wider national and international frameworks for pedagogy and quality enhancement. This may include involvement with the Scottish national enhancement themes, the [AdvanceHE](#), external examiners, QAA etc. How such external activity enhances the delivery of the subject will be considered together with planned staff development and the partnership between the subject/programme team(s) and the University's Directorate for Learning Transformation and Enhancement (LTE) team. The staff Performance & Development Review (PDR) process, "My Contribution", will be discussed and its relationship with strategic planning in the School.

The review will consider the opportunities for and response to student feedback at all campuses, and sites of delivery, as well as all modes of delivery. The role of the Student/Staff Liaison Group (SSLG) and how this group assists in considering the effectiveness of processes for annual monitoring arrangements, maintaining standards and enhancing quality will be explored by the review panel. **ILR is required to consider and report to SFC on the effectiveness of annual monitoring and enhancement arrangements and follow up actions.** The panel will explore how the team uses student statistics in the annual and ongoing monitoring processes and what comparisons are made with similar statistics within and out with the University.

The staff development activities and aspirations to support staff in taking forward programme development and enhancement of the student experience should be discussed in the SED.

The SED should evaluate the effectiveness of the subject/programme team's/School's implementation of strategies for promoting quality enhancement and for identifying, disseminating and implementing good practice.

In the context of a large multi-campus University, the panel will wish to explore communication strategies for module and programme management across all sites of delivery. The SED should make this clear.

3.3 Research and Knowledge Exchange

The panel will consider opportunities for research student development, staff development and networking internally and externally on research issues in the subject area under review. The School plans for research and the relationship between this and the subject under review will be scrutinised, these will also be considered in line with the aspirations of the University. Support mechanisms for staff to undertake research and subject consultancy activity and research-led teaching will be explored. The quality of the research students' experience including supervision, support and appropriate student feedback are reviewed under this heading. The panel should have the opportunity to meet research students where there are such students in the subject area.

3.4 Student Assessment and Feedback

The SED should illustrate staff awareness of the University's [Assessment Handbook for Staff: Effective Practice in Assessment](#) and provide assurances that cognisance is being taken with respect to the principles outlined within this strategy.

Reviews will consider the effectiveness of assessment strategies and the variety and appropriateness of assessment methods and whether the intended learning outcomes

set for programmes are valid and are being achieved. The balance between formative and summative assessment will be explored. Quality and timeliness of feedback to students on assessment and student understanding of how learning outcomes are achieved will also be considered and discussed with students.

How the subject/programme team makes use of the reports from external examiners will be considered and the School's response to these will be key evidence for the review.

3.5 Progression and Achievement

The panel will also consider progression and achievement, and will review actions taken as a result of ongoing analysis of programme success rates, including strategies for retention and progression, module success rates, honours classifications, destination statistics and graduate employment. Strategic Planning will provide a range of relevant data will be made available to the ILR team and the panel.

As part of the annual monitoring processes at UWS, Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs) are prepared to enable teams to reflect on their practice. The PMR will be data-led and this will be submitted as part of the evidence for ILR.

3.6 Student Support and Guidance for Learning

ILR considers the effectiveness of strategies for admission and subject specific induction arrangements (including arrangements for direct entrants/Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). There should be evidence of how high quality support and guidance for all modes and locations of study in relation to module/title choices is applied consistently across the subject area. Support arrangements for students on placement/Work Based Learning (WBL) will be considered.

The panel will explore the implementation of Personal Development Planning (PDP) and the impact this has on the diverse range of students, including those with protected characteristics and those with additional learning support needs. Support for international students may be a specific issue to consider. The University's [Student Experience Policy Statement](#) will be discussed with the subject team. This statement applies to all students and to professional and academic staff who provide advice and support to students, and sets out the approach to how the staff and students of the University will work in partnership to build an excellent student experience and enhance opportunities for students to achieve success. The University's [Student Partnership Agreement \(SPA\)](#) shall be considered in tandem with the Student Success Policy Statement.

ILR will explore the contribution made by professional support services to promote high quality learning and support.

3.7 Quality Enhancement and Assurance

The panel will be interested in exploring the mechanisms in place for quality enhancement and assurance. This will include understanding institutional quality processes including how annual monitoring, collaboration and student engagement systems operate and inform improvements.

3.8 Strategic Development/Five Year Vision

The panel will want to have a clear understanding of the School's vision for the strategic development of the programme, leading to the development of a five-year vision in the context of external evolution of the subject, professional bodies/industry and the University's Strategy 2025. The panel will interrogate the relationship between the SED and School Plans. The planned development of the portfolio of programmes, interschool activity, postgraduate and collaborative/new market developments will be discussed.

There will be detailed consideration of student data from the dashboard; this will feature as a key part of the ILR considerations and evidence base.

4 ONGOING PROGRAMME APPROVAL

For the majority of University programmes the review of their continuing academic health and re-approval is confirmed via the ILR process rather than in separate re-approval events.

The panel will be asked to confirm that the programme specifications and module descriptors for the ILR are current, up-to-date, accurate, relevant and complete (see section 8). ILR confirms the re-approval of provision until the next ILR (or re-approval), making conditions and recommendations where necessary.

If there are serious issues specific to the re-approval of individual programmes, the panel may set conditions for ongoing approval or recommend in its report to EAC that a formal review of the programme(s) takes place.

5 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN ILR

5.1 *Scottish Funding Council Guidelines*

The SFC guidance on the engagement and involvement of students in quality states an expectation that student engagement and participation in quality shall continue to be extended in line with the [Student Engagement Framework for Scotland](#). It is expected that students will be engaged at all stages of the ILR process including the development of the SED, as full members of ILR teams and in follow-up activity. Continual [representation](#) from students is desirable. (*SFC Guidance Refresh – August 2023, para 80-81*)

Furthermore, the Quality Code states that: “*The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience*”.

An FAQs and Top Tips ILR Newsletter is available on request.

5.2 *Informing and Involving Students*

At the start of the session in which the ILR is to take place, the subject/programme team(s) should advise all students of the ILR process. This is facilitated by an ‘*Informing and Involving Students*’ leaflet available from QuEST. **The ILR should be on the agenda of SSLGs to ensure students are aware of the process, how to engage with it and the importance of their involvement.** The SSLG also provides a forum for student input to the SED. Responsibility for involving students in the ILR process lies with the subject/programme team.

As defined within the UK Quality Code, students should be engaged in curriculum design, development and review processes. Students are encouraged to engage with ILR on several levels:

- Each ILR has a student representative in full membership of the panel. Normally, but not exclusively, this will be a sabbatical officer of the Students’ Association. The student representative will not be/have been a student from the subject area under review. (training is provided for all student panel members);
- The panel will have the opportunity to meet a spectrum of students/graduates (taught and research) from the subject area from all programmes under review. The students invited to these discussions will, as far as possible, reflect the broad diversity of the student cohort;

- Graduates should also be included in the meetings with students. (School should arrange for 10-20 such students/graduates to be available. Academic staff can seek necessary advice and guidance from QuEST regarding student population);
- ILR teams are strongly advised to brief the students who are going to meet the ILR panel on what to expect when meeting the panel. Refer to the QuEST, 'Informing and Involving Students' leaflet. Ideally, this should prepare students for the likely questions they will be asked, but not to script the students. Academic staff are known to the students and are best placed to brief their students on the process and encourage participation;
- SFC guidance also states that the ILR team should gather additional specific evidence from students in the subject area under review for the ILR panel. **Students should be given the opportunity to influence the content of the SED**, particularly in contributing to the evaluation of learning, teaching and enhancement and student support and guidance. This may include all or some of the following:
 - The report of a special meeting or minutes of specific discussions at an SSLG of the provision under review and the draft SED;
 - The report or written commentary of one or more focus groups convened to discuss the provision under review and/or the draft SED (ILR teams should coordinate, but QuEST/Learning Transformation/The Union can help contribute at the focus group itself);
 - Specifically devised 'ILR' questionnaires.

It is recommended that student views are sought, where possible, in a controlled environment.

Whatever methods are employed, the process of collecting the additional student feedback should:

- Generate holistic evidence about student views of provision and of their learning experience;
- Differentiate between the views of different categories of students where these are likely to be significant (for example part-time and full-time, students from different levels of programme, entrants from school and entrants from further education etc.);
- Allow identification of distinctive characteristics of provision; and
- Take account of the view of graduates on the relevance of provision for their careers.

6 SUPPORT SERVICE ENGAGEMENT IN ILR

There is increasing recognition of the important role of professional support services in determining the overall quality of the student learning experience. For instance, students interact with guidance services, learning resources, ITDS, the library, recruitment, student finance etc. and together these services have an impact on the overall student experience. Refer to the QuEST, '*Involvement of Professional Support Services in ILR*' leaflet.

All services contributing to the student experience should be reviewed as part of an institution's approach. Support services are of crucial importance in determining the overall quality of the student learning experience and can impact significantly on student achievement and well-being. It is a matter for each institution to determine how this should be done. For 2023-24, UWS will continue to embed the impact of support services within ILRs. Supplementary to ILRs for taught provision, a separate Professional Services Review shall take place in 2023-24 using newly proposed

methodology, with the first involving a pilot ILR of the Student Success Team. Whatever the approach taken, the evidence should allow the institution to reflect on the contribution of support services to the 'quality culture' within the institution, the ways in which the services engage with students to monitor and improve the quality of services, and the ways in which the services promote high quality learning and continuous quality enhancement. (SFC Guidance Refresh – August 2023)

Professional Support Services should engage with ILR on several levels:

- ILR teams should develop evidence that can be made available to ILR panels on how Professional Support Services contribute to the quality culture. **This should include how Subject/Programme teams and Support Services interact to engage with students to monitor and improve the quality of services** and the ways in which the services promote high quality learning and continuous quality enhancement. Over time this will draw on a range of input such as review by the University of Support Areas, the output from and the use made of questionnaires and other student feedback, external reports on specialist areas etc. Dedicated reviews involving student facing professional services shall commence in session 2023-24;
- Reviews should take account of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Student Engagement \(November 2018\)](#);
- The Subject area under review should engage with professional support services to jointly evaluate the impact of service department support to that subject's students, the equivalence of support across campuses and the meeting of the particular needs of the students in that subject area;
- Professional support services may be asked by the subject/programme team to comment on the SED and/or to identify how their unit supports improvement in the student experience at UWS. Input into the SED may be via an SED Engagement Workshop where support units may engage with the subject team to evaluate the impact of support services on that subject's students, and identify any required input into the SED. Any outcomes arising from this workshop should be incorporated into the SED;
- Meetings with Support Service representatives will be built into the Phase 2 ILR event providing an opportunity to describe the interface between the Subject/Programme team and the Professional Support Service, and the support arrangements in place for the students of the subject area and how they work together to meet the needs of students. The panel can divide if need be, to enable a range of members to meet appropriate specialists from support areas to explore the particular themes they are pursuing from their engagement with the SED.

7 SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENT (SED)

7.1 ILR Lead/Team Approach

A Self Evaluation Document (SED) is prepared by the subject/programme team, based on the key areas to be addressed (outlined in section 3), and taking cognisance of the guidance in APPENDIX 2.

The Deputy Dean/ Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) will identify the ILR lead/author of the SED; however sole responsibility does not lie with this one individual and a team approach must be taken. In order to get the best outcomes from ILR to support subject development, it is recommended that ILR teams are established. The

ILR team should have clear performance objectives in relation to the ILR, including clear roles for specific individuals.

Recommended ILR Teams should include:

- ILR Lead/author of SED;
- Deputy Dean;
- Programme Leaders (for all programmes under review);
- Other key academic staff involved in the delivery of the subject area under review;
- School/Student Enhancement Developer(s) (where applicable);
- School Administrative Support;
- Centre for Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments (where appropriate)

The SED should be explicit about the ILR team's view of the strengths of the subject as well as areas for improvement by placing emphasis on evidence-based reflection. It should be **reflective and self-critical, evaluative rather than descriptive** and should demonstrate that discussion and analysis is ongoing within the subject/programme team and pose suggested ways forward in reaction to current and anticipated challenges. The SED should also outline what the team/subject area particularly wishes to achieve from the ILR. Furthermore, students should be given the opportunity to contribute to the SED (see section 5).

On embarking in the drafting the SED, some starter questions are appended in **APPENDIX 3** to assist the ILR team in reflecting and preparing for ILR.

The Directorate of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) has particular skills to assist ILR teams in undertaking this activity and they should liaise closely in this regard. Learning Transformation is available to provide support, guidance and development opportunities to teams undertaking their reflective activity, planning enhancements and programmatic design. The team should be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity to discuss the specific needs and interests of ILR teams and most useful approaches to support.

7.2 General

The University follows a six-year cycle of reviews; hence each subject area will be reviewed at least once every six years. Although the review should reflect on key developments over the period since the last review, a reasonable length of time for the scope of the review would encompass the previous three sessions (i.e. the panel could request to review a sample of student work for the previous three-year period).

However, the focus on the ILR is about enhancement and future developments and how the subject/programme team learns from the past to inform the future and takes deliberate steps to bring about enhancement.

The team should bear in mind that the SED will be considered by externals and colleagues from outwith the subject area and should be clearly written, making explicit the range of provision and the strategies for taking it forward and therefore a limited amount of descriptive content is necessary in the SED to provide context for reviewers. However, the brief description should be followed by evaluative and reflective comment under each heading.

Members may request samples of student work for review so it is recommended that Schools retain samples of student work (as described in procedures for the Retention of Assessed Work (**APPENDIX 4**)) to prepare for any requests which may arise).

7.3 SED Workshops/Discussion Forum

ILR teams are encouraged to hold SED Workshops/or an alternative discussion forum to promote self-reflection and inform preparation of the SED, ensuring all relevant colleagues are given opportunities to participate or input. This should involve all ILR team members and relevant Support Services. Advice on suggested formats for such events can be obtained from the Centre for Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments in terms of the best approach to maximise effectiveness of such workshops and stimulate reflection.

7.4 Guidance on Format of the SED

As intimated in section 7.1, SED guidance (APPENDIX 2) is available for use. The SED should include the following sections:

- Introduction and context – a short statement on the range and history of provision, distinctiveness and how the subject contributes to the University’s strategic aim of excellence in the student experience, and what the team hopes to achieve from the ILR;
- List of programmes/titles included in the review – including student numbers at each level of each programme title, full-time/part-time/online learner/other status, (where possible including gender breakdown) and at which campus/collaborative partner sites these are delivered. The panel will be interested in the cohort analysis used by the subject/programme team to understand the student profile and retention and progression. **Where individual modules [University credit-bearing] in the subject are offered out with a programmatic structure these should also be listed as should modules which contribute to programmes out with the subject area under review;**
- Critical evaluation of the effectiveness of the areas to be addressed as detailed in section 3 above, and taking the Curriculum Framework, Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan, and the new Learning and Teaching principles into account;
- The SED provides an opportunity for the ILR team to provide its perspective in terms of the current arrangements in place for the quality enhancement and assurance of standards; particularly in terms of external examiner reports/responses, effectiveness of annual monitoring, Divisional Programme Boards, Student/Staff Liaison Groups, level of student input, MEQs, student surveys etc.;
- The SED concludes with a summary of strengths and an action plan, identifying areas for further development based on the ILR team’s evidence-based reflection. Teams are at liberty to shift format ordering and layout, provided the key areas are included.

7.5 Footnotes

The document should be fully footnoted and annotated, citing references and document sources to which the evaluation refers. It is important to ensure that the sources referred to (footnote) are available and brought together as the SED is being written (lodged on the ILR-specific drive – see section 7.7). This provides essential reference material to the panel in supporting the claims made by the subject/programme team.

7.6 *Approximate Length*

The SED should be as concise as is reasonable to cover the required detail and typically should range between **8,000 – 16,000 words** plus appendices.

7.7 *School Approval of SED & Associated Evidence Base*

The SED should be scrutinised and endorsed by the School, prior to being submitted to QuEST. The final SED, along with the current programme specifications (see section 8 below) should be signed off on behalf of the School by the Dean as conforming to the University's expectations for submissions.

In development of the SED, the School must confirm the following:

- **Appropriate student engagement into SED** (to include evidence as appendix to SED to support student input – eg. commentary as an appendix/or a footnote);
- **Appropriate Professional Support Service engagement into SED** (confirmation will be sought that Support Services have had the opportunity to input to the SED. This may be via an SED Workshop/Discussion Forum or by other activities);
- **Programme specifications and module descriptors** are current, up-to-date, accurate, relevant and complete.

Other documentation and evidence to support the review shall be lodged on a **ILR-specific drive (z:drive)** populated by the ILR team and QuEST. Details of the required documentation can be found in APPENDIX 5.

Prior to the review, in addition to the SED, the panel will also receive a briefing pack together with access to a **Microsoft OneDrive** account containing module descriptors, student handbooks, student progression data and all other documented evidence to support the review. In relation to this, the School must also confirm:

- Specific material lodged on z:drive for the ILR is current, up-to-date, accurate, relevant and complete. This material will be transferred to the Microsoft OneDrive for Panel to view.

MATERIAL DISTRIBUTED TO PANEL -:

QuEST shall distribute the following e-materials to panel members:

- **Self-Evaluation Document** (Final School approved version with School Confirmation Form attached) [e-copy, but hard copy can be requested];
- **Programme Specifications** for all programmes under review (presented in an appropriate order to align with SED and with supporting contents page);
- **Module Descriptors – This will include core modules (and any proposed new modules)** contributing to programmes under review (presented in appropriate order). Optional modules will be accessible to the panel via the OneDrive. (Note: the versions required for approval should be those **proposed for delivery in the NEXT AY following the ILR**)

The School will forward the above to QuEST approximately **ten weeks** in advance of the Phase 2 main event, together with a completed and signed School Confirmation Form (APPENDIX 6) stating that the School is satisfied that the expectations of ILR have been met. Furthermore, the supporting documentation (on z:drive) should be ready to be transferred onto the Microsoft OneDrive for issuing to panel members.

Both SED and password details to the OneDrive will also be forwarded to the ILR panel via QuEST prior to the Phase 1 (i.e. 10 weeks in advance of main event), together with a note of guidance from the panel Chair asking for feedback and proposed lines of enquiry. Feedback questions will be provided.

8 MODULE DESCRIPTORS AND PROGRAMME SPECIFICATIONS

Module descriptors and programme specifications are key documents for ILR; these must be current, up-to-date, accurate, relevant and complete. The cycle for ILR indicates that there is a process of reflection and review within the School and subject area when modules and programme structures will be updated in preparation for the review. The panel will be interested in the rationale and process by which changes were made/are proposed and how students have been consulted.

Where amendments are proposed for the next cohort, the ILR panel should receive the proposed modules and programme structures but also a summary of the key changes/existing structure so the panel can understand the changes and enter into dialogue with staff and students about this. A useful way to present this is by means of **programme structure tables** showing current and proposed versions which can be readily compared (QuEST can provide exemplars).

The Panel should receive the programme and module materials for approval for delivery next academic session (ie. Not the current versions).

9 PLANNING AND PREPARATION

9.1 General Overview

ILR is an ongoing period of review rather than a 'big-bang' event. Careful planning of the process by the School working together with QuEST is therefore required. The Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), assisted by the Academic Quality Committee (AQC) will monitor these arrangements. The Student Experience Committee (SEC), new for 2023-24, shall seek to encourage appropriate student representation.

A brief pattern of activity for ILR is as follows:

- An **initial kick-off** meeting will normally be held 4 – 6 months before the ILR to assist ILR teams to prepare for their forthcoming review;
- A proposed schedule containing an **indicative timeline/schedule** shall be made available by QuEST to assist ILR teams in meeting key milestones; also acting as a prompt for events and deadlines, and helping to ensure a full understanding of the ILR process (APPENIX 7). The Dean of School is responsible for ensuring this timeline is adhered to and deadlines met;
- Regular meetings can be facilitated by QuEST if required to assist ILR teams. Colleagues from Learning Transformation are also available to offer specific academic-related support;
- The ILR team should forward potential **external panel nominees** to QuEST for consideration and approval;

- QuEST will invite and determine internal panel members (including student panel members);
- The ILR team should identify staff and students/graduates who will meet with the panel (either physically or remotely) and confirm names to QuEST at least one week before the Phase 2 Event.
- The responsibility for involving students in the ILR process lies with the ILR team. Academic staff are known to the students and are best placed to brief their students on the process and encourage participation. ILR teams therefore hold responsibility for briefing those students/graduates due to meet the ILR panel on what to expect (highlighting likely questions but not scripting the students). Academic staff can however seek necessary advice and guidance from QuEST to carry out these tasks. Refer to the QuEST, '*Students Matter – Informing and Involving Students*' leaflet.
- Furthermore, the School is responsible for circulating the SED and copies of the panel membership/programme to the internal subject/programme team and students/graduates as well as any other stakeholders (clinical managers, service users, practice mentors, Industrial Advisory Board members etc) who may be attending.
- Any requests from the panel for further documentation must be made via QuEST.

9.2 Internal Communication

The ILR should be an inclusive and developmental process involving all staff, relevant support services, as well as students in the subject area. The School will determine the attendance of staff to each relevant meeting of the review (predominantly during Phase 2) but it is expected that all staff should be available (given the ongoing pandemic, reviews may be facilitated remotely if a physical event on campus cannot take place). Given that advance notice is given for the ILR dates, it should be possible to schedule other priorities to maximise staff attendance. The Dean of School, Deputy Dean and relevant Divisional Programme Board Chairs are invited to appropriate meetings for Phase 1 and 2.

QuEST staff are available to the School at all times in the preparation phase to clarify issues/expectations and can brief groups of staff and students as requested by the School.

QuEST will provide the ILR lead contact with the panel membership for the ILR, they should ensure these are forwarded to members of staff attending the event. The School will confirm the agreed programmes under review.

9.3 Staff Profiles

The School under review will be required to provide a full list of teaching and research staff involved with the provision. This can be done via CVs and/or use of PURE Research Profiles. See APPENDIX 10 for details.

10 THE REVIEW PANEL

10.1 Role of the ILR Chair

The Chair of the ILR will act on behalf of the University, representing LTC by undertaking an institution-led review of a subject's quality assurance and enhancement arrangements.

The role of the Chair is pivotal as a co-ordinating and directing influence on the process. Chairs are nominated by senior colleagues within the Vice Chancellor's Executive (VCE), normally the Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) Learning Teaching and Student Success. The Chair of ILR will be a senior member of staff from out with the subject under review and all will be required to undergo specific ILR Chair training.

The Chair of the ILR has the authority to air serious concerns about the quality of an SED and/or the associated evidence base, or engagement with the process in advance of the event. In cases where the Chair raises significant concerns, the decision to proceed or not would be taken following discussion between the Chair, an appropriate PVC and the Head of QuEST.

Furthermore, following an ILR event, should any concerns regarding quality, standards or engagement with the ILR be identified, the Chair of the ILR along with the panel may agree to hold a follow-up event one year later.

Adoption of the Phase 1 and 2 approach will bring additional responsibility to the role of the Chair, in terms of co-ordinating the revised approach.

10.2 Selection of External Participants

The selection of external panel members will be discussed at a preliminary meeting between the Deputy Dean, Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching), the relevant Head of Division, the ILR Lead and QuEST; and thereafter verified by the ILR team. Nominations for external panel members should be submitted to QuEST at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that availability of first choice externals is maximised. The School Board should scrutinise the nominations proposed by the ILR team and approve these before they are provided to QuEST.

All nomination forms (APPENDIX 8) must be completed in full and signed off by the School Board before being passed to QuEST. QuEST will need this information to confirm the balance, expertise and experience of the panel before recommending approval of the panel. The Head of QuEST will authorise invitations to be issued on behalf of LTC.

There should normally be a minimum of two academics and one professional/industrialist. The School may request additional panel members to cover the specialisms under review.

ILR teams should follow specific criteria outlined in APPENDIX 9. This guidance should assist in identifying potential external candidates for individual reviews. External panel members will need to provide evidence to confirm their eligibility to work in the UK; this is a requirement for honorarium payment.

10.3 Selection of Internal Panel Members

The selection of internal panel members will usually be from the following:

- Chair of the ILR: A senior member of staff (from out with the subject under review). All Chairs must undergo ILR Chair training;

- A minimum of two members of academic staff from out with the subject under review. These should normally comprise of either:
 - A senior member of academic staff from a subject area recently Institution Led Reviewed; OR
 - One or more members of LTC from a School not connected with the review; OR
 - One or more members of staff from an area to undergo an ILR in the next year (if more appropriate, those with forthcoming ILRs may prefer to act as an observer);
- The Student Union's Sabbatical Officer or nominee (not from the subject area under review). School Officers may be nominated;
- Observers (as required).

The Panel and Chair will normally be supported by two members of QuEST; this will normally include the Head of QuEST/or one senior member.

11 THE EVENTS: PHASE 1 AND 2 (ON-CAMPUS OR ONLINE/REMOTE)

All ILRs will comprise a Phase 1 and Phase 2 Event.

Over the last few sessions, ILRs have been conducted either physically on-campus, via remote/online platform or by a combination of both taking a hybrid approach. Where a hybrid approach is agreed, this shall normally comprise one full day on campus, and one full day online but NOT a mixture of both taking place on the same day. Decisions surrounding whether an event shall be held on-campus or via remote means shall be determined on an individual basis in line with the School's wishes, and may depend on several factors – this may simply be dependent on the availability and willingness of external Panel members to participate. It may be noted that, having reflected on the effectiveness of the remote ILRs conducted since online ILRs commenced, QuEST has identified positive aspects to holding these reviews via an online platform (in particular for the student session), and it is intended to explore further opportunities to maximise efficiencies of both remote and on-campus physical events.

Phase 1 will involve written input from all panel members followed by an interim half-day event involving the Chair of ILR, QuEST, Deputy Dean, Associate Dean (L&T), Head of Division and the ILR Lead only. Phase 1 events are normally conducted remotely.

Phase 2 will form the main face-to-face event requiring attendance (either physically on campus or remotely) by all panel members. If no physical on-campus event possible, this will be conducted remotely. Where a hybrid approach is agreed, this shall normally comprise one full day on campus, and one full day online but NOT a mixture of both on the same day. Reviews will normally comprise a single 2-day event but for smaller reviews, it may only be necessary to hold an event over a shorter time period, QuEST will make decisions on a case by case basis. QuEST will discuss with the Chair of the ILR and the School the planned location of the ILR depending on the campuses involved in delivery/or whether the ILR should be conducted remotely. The length of the programme will also be dictated by the number of programmes within the review and the need to ensure the panel can review these in appropriate detail.

No rigid event programme exists. It is intended that the event programmes to be more flexibly arranged depending on the panel's focus.

In summary -:

- **Phase 1** will consider the programmes under review, mainly for assurances surrounding quality management arrangements and re-approval purposes. An interim report will be produced by QuEST to inform Phase 2. (This approach is mirrored regardless of physical/online event).
- **For Remote/Online ILRs** – where required, QuEST will co-ordinate targeted questions (informed by Phase 1) to relevant staff/students/individuals to create a supplementary Master Dialogue (where required) which will enable frontloading of information and a supporting evidence base. This approach allows the online Phase 2 event to concentrate predominantly on those areas of exploration which still remain outstanding/and are fundamental in nature.
- **Phase 2** will steer the review towards an enhancement-led approach and explore the benefits of having dedicated time with external experts devoted to subject development discussions. If online – the approach will be conducted slightly differently with the frontloading of information in advance of Phase 2 and more targeted questioning during the event. Either way, it is intended that programme teams will be able to tailor Phase 2 more specifically to their subject area, instilling more engagement, and providing opportunities to showcase good practice, to identify case studies where there be challenges that the ILR panel could engage with, to enable incorporation of accreditation elements, among other considerations. The design of the Phase 2 programme will be informed by Phase 1 and whether the review will be conducted physically on campus or online.

The nature of ILR is not adversarial. The panel will seek an open and constructive exchange with the ILR team who are encouraged to adopt the same approach, to engage fully with the process and not to feel defensive. To support this stance, a transparent agenda will be maintained through the process with advance comments from the panel shared with the subject/programme team.

The SED and the meetings with staff should demonstrate that a process of honest self-evaluation is embedded in the ILR team's approach to improving the student experience.

The panel may request VLE access to enable members to review live modules and other student facing material.

11.1 Phase 1 (Written input)

- (i) The SED and supporting programme/module material to be circulated to panel approximately **two/three months prior** to the final event.
- (ii) All panel members are **required to** provide advance written comments (using an online survey template provided by QuEST). Genuine engagement will be essential and receipt of written feedback will be crucial to fulfil the role as panel member. Written feedback received from panel will be reviewed by the Chair and QuEST, to inform the agenda for the Phase 1 interim event.
- (iii) **Phase 1 Interim event** (held approximately **1 month prior** to final event): This will involve Chair of ILR, QuEST, Deputy Dean, Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching), Head of Division and ILR Lead only (either on-campus or conducted remotely). This meeting will involve general discussion of issues arising from the Phase 1 review, consider resolution of some issues, and seek confirmation of quality management arrangements. There will also be agreement of the provisional programme for the Phase 2 event.

- (iv) Production of written report arising from Phase 1 by QuEST – this summary report will highlight good practice and areas for further exploration. Where Phase 2 is being undertaken remotely, the interim Phase 1 report will inform the nature of targeted questions (for use by QuEST) to be provided to relevant individuals prior to Phase 2; this will enable frontloading of some information and enable Phase 2 (where conducted remotely) to concentrate on significant matters still outstanding.
- (v) Phase 1 summary report – this will be circulated to all panel members prior to Phase 2. It is intended that, successful completion of Phase 1 should:
 - Resolve any queries surrounding routine practice which would no longer require consideration at the final event, thus freeing up time during Phase 2 event to focus on subject-specific areas.
 - Identify specific areas for consideration during Phase 2 event.
 - Identify specific colleagues who should meet with the panel during Phase 2 (e.g. Professional support staff/technical staff).
 - Identify any additional information required from the School.
 - (If online ILR) Identify targeted areas for advance questioning to relevant staff/students/individuals in advance of Phase 2 (to form the Master Dialogue).

11.2 Phase 2 (Face-to-Face Final Event)

For session 2023/24, there will be flexibility as to whether the Phase 2 event will be conducted on-campus or remotely, or as a hybrid of both (1 day online/1 day on campus). At present, it is desirable to use one sole approach as a combination of both on-campus and online participation on the same day (as a Panel member) is not deemed as the most effective approach. The programme for Phase 2 event will not follow a standard format; however students and School/subject staff will always be expected to participate (either on-campus or remotely) in their specific ILRs. Even if event taking place on-campus, participation at the sessions during Phase 2 may still be facilitated remotely should this be the best approach to ensure reach to these participants. The panel will meet with students at the start of the event.

The duration of this event is normally 2 days, but will be determined locally, dependent on the size and nature of the review.

For **Remote/Online ILRs** – Where required, QuEST will co-ordinate targeted questions (informed by Phase 1) prior to Phase 2 to relevant staff/students/individuals to create a supplementary Master Dialogue which will enable frontloading of information and a supporting evidence base.

All panel members are **required to** attend the Phase 2 event on campus/or remotely.

The ILR programme for the Final Phase 2 event will:

- Be informed by the Phase 1 summary report and any further feedback received by the panel. It will be clear from completion of Phase 1 what the issues requiring further exploration are. Supplementary information may be available when pre-Phase 2 surveys are conducted (normally if online).
- Provide flexibility to enable the programme team to tailor Phase 2 more specifically to their subject area, hopefully instilling more involvement and engagement from subject teams (e.g. providing opportunities to showcase good practice, to identify case studies where there may be challenges that the ILR panel could engage with, to enable incorporation of accreditation elements, among others).

- Continue to involve students and School/subject staff input (as appropriate) in terms of participation in specific ILRs.

11.3 **Exceptional – Phase 3/Additional Event**

If required, there will be an opportunity for a Phase 3 or additional event at the request of the Chair (any exceptions will be agreed by LTC). This may be due to the number of programmes or complexity of the review. If required, a further meeting will take place 4 – 6 weeks after the initial meeting. It may take place at a different campus/or remotely. At this meeting there is further exploration of the issues identified at the earlier meetings and additional documentation received. Usually, there are meetings with Senior School staff and with teaching staff.

Where the panel has significant issues for the subject/programme team to address, it may exceptionally seek to reconvene in a one-year follow-up.

12 **REPORTING AND FOLLOW-UP ACTION**

The final report will be written by QuEST, usually within 6-8 weeks after the Phase 2 event and circulated to the panel for confirmation following approval by the Chair of the ILR. The ILR team will be given the opportunity to comment on the factual accuracy of the draft final report and provide any outstanding data. Where an online/remote ILR has been conducted the supplementary Master Dialogue will normally feature as an appendix to the final report to provide a detailed evidence base providing assurances that areas were covered during earlier scrutiny, even if they were not explored in detail during Phase 2.

The final report should be discussed in detail by relevant Divisional Programme Board(s) and the School Board. The final report will be scrutinised by AQC (normally within 6 months of finalisation of the report) on behalf of LTC and will report on key themes and monitor follow-up action. Where necessary, an institutional action plan will be developed and any wider University issues will be summarised for the attention of the VCEG. EAC will be responsible for sharing and disseminating good practice arising from ILR.

The School/ILR team/Divisional Programme Board(s) will engage with the recommendations of the report and provide a Follow-up Action Plan within 6 months of receipt of the full report. A pre-populated ILR Follow-up Action Plan template will be provided for use by programme teams (APPENDIX 11). LTC shall continue to take an institutional overview of the outcomes of ILR whilst remitting the action plan to AQC to monitor one year follow up.

Committee Reporting of ILR Outcomes			
	AQC	LTC	Senate
Summary Outcomes	Report submitted to first available meeting of AQC	Assurance through AQC reporting	Assurance through LTC reporting
Conditions met	Confirmation that any conditions have been met, and all programme material updated accordingly. Requires approval by Chair.		
Full Report and ILR Team Action Plan	Action Plan (with link to the full report) submitted to AQC within 6 months of the finalisation of the report.		
One Year Follow-up	Report with updated ILR Team Action plan submitted to next available meeting of AQC.		
Annual ILR Thematic reporting	Approval sought from AQC for submission to LTC and Senate.	Annual ILR Thematic reporting	Annual ILR Thematic reporting

Schools should recognise the importance of ensuring open and transparent communication of internal review outcomes and action plans across the School; this applies to both staff and students. The outcomes should be highlighted at relevant **Student-Staff Liaison Group (SSLG)** meetings with a view to monitoring and review involving student input. SSLGs should receive outcomes as well as the One-Year Follow-up Action Plan and details of progress.

An overview of ILR themes will be made available to Senate annually.

The ILR report will:

- Confirm the **approval or re-approval** of provision until the next ILR (or revalidation), making conditions and recommendations where necessary;
- Highlight strengths of provision and areas of positive practice for dissemination within the University;
- Include brief commentary in relation to SFC expectations and outcomes with regard to:
 - Confirming satisfactory engagement of students;
 - Confirming satisfactory engagement with Professional Support services;
 - Commenting on engagement of subject staff in the ILR;
 - Commenting on the quality of reflection and evaluation;
 - Commenting on the accuracy, currency and relevance of the documentation and evidence to support the SED;
- Provide conclusions of the health of each of the areas addressed, making recommendations where necessary.

12.1 One Year Follow-Up Event

Each ILR will be subject to a follow-up event the following session (normally within 12-15 months of the review). A small AQC-led panel will meet with the Programme Leader(s) and selected staff to discuss the outcomes arising from implementation of the action plan; this may be facilitated on-campus or remotely. The panel will consist of:

- The Chair appointed from the membership of AQC by the Chair of Learning and Teaching Committee
- One standing members of AQC from a non-contributing School
- One academic with experience of ILR events from a non-contributing School

The School shall update the action plan prior to the follow-up event to outline progress against each condition and area for development.

In summary, ILR Follow-up activity should consist of the following:

Note: EAC remits scrutiny and ongoing monitoring to AQC. AQC provides assurances to EAC.		
Task	School/Other	EAC/AQC/ QuEST/Other
ILR Summary Report (produced by QuEST)	Comment on factual accuracy; Report discussed at Divisional Programme Board(s)	ILR Programme Teams - for consideration. LTC – Assurance through AQC reporting
Conditions met (where applicable)	Team ensures conditions are met and all programme material is updated accordingly.	Confirmation that any conditions have been met - requires approval by Chair.
Full ILR Report (produced by QuEST)	Comment on factual accuracy; Report discussed at Divisional Programme Board(s). Action plan should be developed by team and submitted to AQC within 6 months of finalisation of the report.	Team Action Plans considered by AQC (with link to Full Report) to identify themes and University wide actions (wider issues maybe referred to VCEG). This scrutiny of Action Plans/Reports will inform the annual letter to SFC.
ILR Team Action Plan (produced by School on pre-populated template)	Divisional Programme Board(s) prepare one action plan in response to the report. Divisional Programme Board(s) and School approval of action plan by AQC/LTC. Desirable for outcomes to be linked to School Plans / LTC. <i>(date for completion of actions is normally within 12 month window – any exceptions should be clearly flagged and justified)</i>	Institutional Themes/Action plan prepared by QuEST/AQC for endorsement by LTC (& then Senate). Programme Board(s) engages with Team Actions. School monitors progress.
ILR Outcomes & Action Plan	Outcomes & Team Action Plan should be highlighted at relevant SSLG meetings with a view to monitoring and review involving student input.	SSLG meetings
ILR Themes	Themes made available for information.	Senate; Institutional EAM Event
One year follow up <i>(should comprise evidence of impact rather than simply a narrative of change)</i>	Will normally take place within a year of the ILR Phase 2 Event. Divisional Programme Board(s) provides update on how actions have been addressed one year later. School confirms that follow up has been addressed. SSLG comments on updated action plan.	AQC convenes formal follow up meeting with Deputy Dean, Associate Dean (L&T), ILR Lead and key members of the relevant Subject/Programme Team to seek assurance that actions have been addressed.
	Divisional Programme Board(s) address any outstanding items prior to reporting to LTC.	Follow-up report provided to next available meeting of AQC and assurances thereafter reported to LTC.
General Milestones		
Annual Institutional Overview	Discussion and approval of SFC Institutional letter and agreement of institutional wide actions. SEPTEMBER ANNUALLY	QuEST Endorsed by: Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Student Success)
Annual confirmation to COURT/SFC	Annual statement of assurance to Funding Council from governing body (Court)* NOVEMBER ANNUALLY	QuEST Return of annual report to SFC on ILR Endorsed by: Chair of Court
Dissemination of ILR Reports /Findings	The following to receive ILR Summary Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student's Union • Student body (via relevant SSLGs) • Schools • Learning Transformation and Enhancement (LTE) 	QuEST Full reports will be lodged on UWS internet.
Sharing of Good Practice	Centre for Learning Transformation and Enhancement to identify good practice and disseminate across the University. Good Practice Staff Seminars anticipated.	Directorate for Learning Transformation and Enhancement (LTE) / QuEST
Full ILR Reports	Provided annually to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) SEPTEMBER ANNUALLY	QuEST Discussed at annual meeting with QAA.

INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW (ILR) - SCHEDULE 2023/24 – 2028/29 (6 year schedule)

Proposed Schedule (and date of Last Review)
2023/24 (6 Reviews) (Plus QESR Institutional Liaison Meeting ILM) Business Postgraduate (Scottish) Business & Management (2017/18) Business (London Provision) Social Work (2018/19) (SSSC attending) (5-Year cycle required for accreditation body)
2024/25 (3 Reviews) Computing (2018/19) Engineering and Quality/Project Management (2018/19) Psychology (2018/19) (BPS NOT attending) (5-Year cycle normally required for accreditation body/at Schools request. But as BPS have a covid backlog, they have requested a delay; so 2024/25 takes us to a normal 6-year cycle as a one-off) Business – MBA & MBA Pathways (2017/18) (12-month extension approved by SFC) Business – DBA (2017/18) (12-month extension approved by SFC) Biological Sciences & Health (2018/19) (former title Life & Environment) (includes Paramedic Science)
CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK MUST BY ALIGNED BY END OF AY 2024/25
2025/26 (5 Reviews) Contemporary Drug & Alcohol Studies (CDAS) (2019/20) *UG Social Sciences, PG Social Sciences and Criminal Justice (2019/20) Career Guidance & Development (2019/20) Career Long Professional Education (2019/20) Community Provision - HLS (2019/20)
2026/27 (7 Reviews) Law and Legal Studies (2020/21) Accounting and Finance (2020/21) Creative Technologies (2020/21) (i) Education Community Provision (2020/21 – formerly Education IPP) (5-Year cycle required for accreditation body - CLDSC attend ILRs and use as re-accreditation event) (ii) Early Years (2020/21 – formerly Education IPP) (5-Year cycle required for accreditation body – SSSC attend ILRs and use as re-accreditation event) Adult Nursing & Healthcare (ANHC) (Adult Health (2020/21)) (will comprise revised NMC standards) Midwifery (2020/21) (previously Maternal, Child & Family Health)
2027/28 (7 Reviews) Arts & Media Postgraduate (2021/22) Arts & Media Undergraduate (2021/22) Business Undergraduate (2021/22) (iii) Education: Initial Teacher Education (ITE) (2021/22) (GTCS 6-Year cycle & GTCS hold separate re-accreditation events separate from ILR) Sport & Exercise (2021/22) Mental Health Nursing & Integrated Practice (MHN & IP) (Mental Health (2021/22)) Divinity (Scottish Baptist College) (2021/22) (Joint ILR/CR)
2028/29 (3 Reviews) Languages (2022/23) Joint ILR – Physical Sciences & Concurrent Education Provision (2022/23) Physical Sciences (2016/17 & 2017/18) (comprising Chemistry, Forensic Science, Mathematics (2016/17) and Physics (2017/18)) Concurrent Education Provision (with Chemistry/Physics/Mathematics) (2022/23) (Lead will be CEPS, with ESS involvement as appropriate)

INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW - SED GUIDANCE

The Self Evaluation Document (SED) is the key document for the ILR. This guidance is designed to assist the authors whilst drafting their SEDs.

1. INTRODUCTION

- Add context and core information about the programmes within the subject in the School (2 or 3 paragraphs)
- Year and timing of review, i.e. Session 2021/22, January/February.
- Who has prepared document? Details of how it has been endorsed by staff and students, including statement on how the expectation to gather additional specific information from students as part of the evidence base for the review has been addressed.

1.1 Range of provision

(List all programmes under review – undergraduate, postgraduate, collaborative etc)

1.2 Staff profile

Brief narrative regarding staffing including academic staff, recognised teachers, admin support, clinical, placement and external facing activities.

1.3 Current student profile² - below

1.4 Enrolment Data – provide evaluation of the student data on enrolment since last re-approval.

Undergraduate

Current students	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9	Level 10
No. FTE/headcount				
Programme 1				
Programme 2				
Programme 3				
Programme 4				
Programme 5				

Postgraduate

Students	PgC	PgD	MSc
Programme 1			
Programme 2			

PhD students		

² More detailed information in supporting documentation.

Staff student ratio		

Campus Location & Number of Students		

Brief narrative on student profile including analysis over time.

1.5 Aims of provision in relation to UWS Strategy 2025

- What is main aim of provision – internationalisation, access, distinctiveness, niche provision?
- Describe the subject’s contribution to excellence in the student experience.
- Outline what the subject team hopes to achieve from the ILR at this time in the subject’s development?

NB Point 1:
For all sections, the SED should highlight good practice or innovation.

NB Point 2:
Whilst completing the SED, ILR teams should endeavour to illustrate how their School/Subject group are taking cognisance of the following:

- **UWS Strategy 2025**
- **UWS Curriculum Framework 2022**
- **Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan 2020-2025**
- **Research, Business Innovation & Advancement Thematic Plan 2020-2025**
- **Student Experience Policy Statement**
- **[New Learning & Teaching Principles 2023](#)**

2. REFLECTION ON – UWS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK (CF)

The **UWS Curriculum Framework 2022** is a key component of the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan and the Student Experience Programme through which the plan will be implemented. It is intended that all provision will be aligned to the CF by end of 2023/24 and, during its implementation the SED should include a dedicated section on how the area under review has taken steps to assure alignment with the CF (noting that cross referencing may be evident within as appropriate)

Supporting guidance in terms of addressing elements of the CF exists in the form of a **CF Alignment Document** and teams are strongly encouraged to refer to this guidance whilst reflecting on their practice and drafting the SED; this document reinforces the 6 principals and the 11 associated commitments and related routes of inquiry.

Six Core CF Design Principles:

- (i) **Flexible and Hybrid** – Using best-in-class technologies and pedagogies, meeting the learning needs of students in contemporary Scotland. (3 core commitments)
- (ii) **Simple and Coherent** – Providing carefully-designed linear pathways for students whether part-time or full-time; on-campus or online, starting in first year or joining at any time in their degree pathway. (1 core commitment)
- (iii) **Student-Centred** – Meeting the diverse needs of the distinctive UWS student cohorts, using a flexible and agile approach to curriculum that responds better to the needs of each student and considers and seeks to impact positively on the wellbeing of all students. (3 core commitments)
- (iv) **Authentic** – Using real-world learning activities and assessments to best prepare students for the complex and ever-changing professional world and society in which they live and work. (2 core commitments)
- (v) **Inclusive** – Recognising the diversity of the student body, and the need to be accessible to all. (1 core commitment)
- (vi) **Sustainable** – With efficient structures, pathways and number of modules. (1 core commitment)

How has the School/Subject area addressed alignment to the Curriculum Framework? Please provide narrative with respect to each of the 6 core principles, providing examples where possible.

To minimise duplication, teams may prefer to comment (where appropriate) within the specific sections within the SED, signposting which of the six core curriculum framework design principles is being referred to.

3. REFLECTION ON – PROVISION (CURRICULUM DESIGN CONTENT AND DEVELOPMENT)

Our portfolio of courses is contemporary, relevant, sustainable, and allows students to thrive in the rapidly-changing 21st century workplace. Postgraduate students will co-create the curriculum.

For each programme under review, how has the School/Subject area addressed the following (where applicable)?

- Effectiveness of design and content of curriculum in delivering programme(s) aims³.
- How has provision changed since last validated/reviewed. Summary of changes for each programme along with rationale/details of student consultation/involvement.
- How learning outcomes demonstrate progression between levels (consistent with SCQF level outcomes).
- The appropriateness of the curriculum for developing knowledge, understanding and skills as identified in the benchmark statement.

³ It is likely that the background detail for much of this section will be in validation reports and documents. It is appropriate to refer to these in this section rather than repeat text.

- Reflect on any Collaborative provision within the subject area under review.

Our graduates are leaders, with world-ready, interdisciplinary meta-skills and flexible, global perspectives.

- The appropriateness of the curriculum for developing cognitive, subject specific and employability skills. Use of personal development planning to demonstrate how graduate attributes are promoted. (See AdvanceHE website for guidance on embedding employability in the curriculum.)
- Integration of placement/work based/work related learning.
- How the UWS Graduate Attributes have been embedded into the curriculum.
- Reflection on PSRB accreditation.
- Employer / industry / student / alumni engagement in curriculum design to ensure currency and validity.
- The appropriateness of the curriculum in relation to inclusiveness, accessibility and internationalisation, sustainability and enterprise.
- Reflection on national and international good practice, including national enhancement themes.
- For those Undergraduate programmes where Level 7 ASPIRE featured in their programme design, to note any reflections.

4. REFLECTION ON – LEARNING, TEACHING & ENHANCEMENT

Teaching and Learning at UWS will be flexible and hybrid, enabling students to engage physically and digitally as suits their needs and opportunities.

The delivery modes of our programmes of study are flexible, and student centred, allowing students to manage the mode, intensity and duration of study. All have hybrid delivery options.

How has the School/Subject area addressed the following (where applicable)?

- Implementation of the UWS Curriculum Framework and Learning & Teaching Thematic Plan.
- The new Learning and Teaching principles.
- Is there any continual impact as a result of the pandemic? Any lockdown legacies which enhance delivery and will be retained?
- To move “beyond hybrid” and back to a model of learning and teaching that recognises we are an on-campus University, returning to the rigour to our pre-pandemic processes for module delivery.
- Use of VLE and staff development planning/opportunities. Input by Digital Learning Technologists?
- Variety, appropriateness, inclusiveness and accessibility of teaching methods across cohorts and campuses, including collaborative institutions, to encourage independent learning, critical thinking and personal development planning.

- Consideration of mobility and flexibility in accordance with individual learners' needs.
- Evidence of research informed teaching.
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of learning and teaching resources.
- Engagement with best practice Equality and diversity policies in relation to issues regarding delivery.
- Comment on the effectiveness of the resources available to facilitate delivery and aid the student experience.

5. REFLECTION ON – RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

How has the School/Subject addressed the following (where applicable)?

- The School research plans for the subject under review.
- Taking into account the Research, Business Innovation & Advancement Thematic Plan 2020-2025.
- The support mechanisms for staff to undertake research, consultancy and knowledge transfer.
- Opportunities for internal and external networking on research issues.
- Research staff profile/publications (Staff population of UWS Research Profile/PURE).
- Research student development and availability of learning resources.
- Supervision and support for research students.
- Support for research students undertaking undergraduate teaching.

6. REFLECTION ON – STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Assessment will be authentic, developmental, and aligned with real-world learning outcomes. UWS will take an authentic, best-practice and forward-looking approach to learning activities and assessment.

How has the School/Subject area addressed the following (where applicable)?

- The appropriateness and effectiveness of the design of assessment to meet intended learning outcomes.
- Range and variety of assessment methods. Any changes to assessment methods?
- Implementation of the UWS Curriculum Framework in relation to authentic assessments.
- Programme overview of variety and volume of assessment.

- Appropriateness of balance between formative and summative assessment including specific commentary on relative balance of summative assessment.
- Quality and timeliness of feedback to students.
- Staff development for assessment practice.
- Reflection on student feedback in relation to assessment design and practice.
- Engagement with appropriate policies and assessment design as outlined in the Assessment Handbook for Staff.

7. REFLECTION ON – PROGRESSION AND ACHIEVEMENT

How has the School/Subject area addressed the following (where applicable)?

- Reflection on progression rates over time identifying positive and less positive performance, including specific comment on progression to Honours. (for ILRs taking place during AY 2023/24, its recognised due to the cyber incident that there may be some limitations in the accessibility of some data sets)
- Commentary on module success rates.
- Reflection on honours classifications and comparison across school/other HEIs.
- Commentary on employment destinations.

7. REFLECTION ON – STUDENT SUPPORT & GUIDANCE FOR LEARNING

Students are at heart of what we do. The UWS student journey is personal, seamless, and supported by outstanding professional and academic staff and functional, student-centred and user-friendly systems and processes.

How has the School/Subject area addressed the following (where applicable)?

- Induction arrangements for new and continuing students, including off campus, such as local delivery/distance learning.
- Approaches to Personal Tutoring.
- Guidance on module and programme choices.
- How lifelong learning modules have been used to support student learning, to support transition.
- Use of effective learning resources (staff).
- Use of the Disability Services.
- Support for students off campus i.e. collaborative and placement.
- Effectiveness of support for the needs of the diverse student body, i.e. international, mode of delivery.

8. REFLECTION ON – QUALITY ENHANCEMENT & ASSURANCE OF STANDARDS

How has the School/Subject area addressed the following (where applicable)?

- Use made of external examiner reports and responses.
- Reflected and acted on Module Review Forms (MRFs), Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs) and Collaborative Annual Reports (CARs)/Programme Annual Reports (PARs).
- Effectiveness of annual monitoring and follow up action.
- Effectiveness of Quality Management arrangements.
- Effectiveness of Student / Staff Liaison Group (SSLG).
- Student input to design and operation of programme and organisation of learning environment.
- Consideration of student surveys including NSS, i-Graduate, Graduate Outcomes and Module Evaluation surveys (MEQs).

9. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT / FIVE YEAR VISION

Programmes will be designed to ensure sustainable delivery and a coherent experience.

- Development of vision for subject and programmes in line with University strategy.
- The outward face of the subject team, e.g. external appointments and engagement with PSRBs.
- Plans for development of the portfolio, new provision, micro-credentialing, ambitions for the future.

10. CONCLUSION

1 Summary of strengths

2 Summary of areas for further development (Action Plan)

APPENDIX 3

PROMPT QUESTIONS TO ASSIST THE SUBJECT TEAM IN PREPARING THE SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENT

- What is the strategy in our subject area driving each of the themes of ILR?
- How is our subject developing in the context of the School Operational Plan – is there a shared vision of the future?
- What use have we made of validation reports on our programmes over the last three - five years? Can we show all conditions and recommendations have been addressed?
- What use have we made of external examiners' reports over the last three - five years?
- What was the value of the last ILR? How have we addressed all the issues in the report?
- What have we learned from student feedback questionnaires and SSLGs over the last five years? What have we done as a result?
- How do we effectively involve our students in the quality management of our programmes? Are the students agents for change?
- How do we ensure the broad spectrum of students are engaged in feedback opportunities?
- What other mechanisms have we found to be effective in securing student involvement/feedback?
- What changes have we made to our provision in this subject as a result of the above?
- What is our understanding of enhancement?
- What deliberate steps have we taken/do we take to continually improve the effectiveness of the student learning experience? Can we give examples?
- How effective are the quality management arrangements in this?
- Do we have basic data for students in terms of age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic group (using SIMD)?
- How have we used this data on students to review practice?
- How do we systematically review student data in terms of progression and retention and multi-campus delivery?
- Have we got formal evidence of the use made of student feedback, external examiner comments, strategies for learning and teaching etc?
- What impact has the UWS Curriculum Framework / Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan had on our practice/our students?
- What impact has the Assessment Policy/Handbook had on our practice/our students?
- How do we evaluate the quality of our students' experience on placement/WBL?
- How do we quality assure the placement setting/select new placements? Is the University guidance (QAA Code of Practice) followed?

- What use have we made of employer feedback?
- How are we taking forward WBL?
- How are we as a subject team engaging with:
 - the national enhancement themes and their outputs?
 - the Advance HE activities?
 - the SCQF?
 - the Subject Benchmark Statements/development of new standards?
 - other external activities such as external examining, acting as external reviewers for other HEIs, QAA activities?
 - our professional bodies/their reports?
 - the University's Single Equality scheme?
- Are we sufficiently outward looking nationally/internationally?
- How are our programmes informed by international good practice?
- How do our programmes compare with international provision?
- What is our relationship/aspirations with relevant professional bodies?
- How have we used previous PSRB reports?
- Are the intended learning outcomes of our programmes still valid? Can we show through quality management arrangements (e.g. Divisional Programme Boards) or elsewhere that these have been reviewed?
- How do they relate to external reference points including relevant subject benchmarks, SCQF level descriptors and PSRB requirements?
- Do we evaluate the maintenance of standards in relation to these reference points?
- How do we ensure the curriculum content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes (ILOs)?
- How are our ILOs communicated to students, staff and external examiners?
- Do our students know what we expect of them?
- Is there clear progression of challenge between each SCQF level/year of the programme?
- Does the design and content of curricula encourage achievement of ILOs?
- Is curricula content informed by recent developments in techniques in learning and teaching, by current research and scholarship and by professional requirements?
- Have changes to curricula been considered to promote inclusiveness, accessibility, and to meet our responsibilities for equality and diversity?
- Have we got a full set of module descriptors and programme specifications fully updated to present for re-approval?
- Do we have a shared vision for learning and teaching, do we discuss this at Programme Boards?
- Does our assessment strategy enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the ILOs?
- Do we use adequate formative assessment?
- Is the feedback we give to students consistent and of high quality?
- Is it provided within the normal University deadlines?

- How do we ensure standards are maintained and seek to help students achieve these at the highest levels?
- How effectively do we draw on our research to confirm our learning?
- How good are the materials we provide to support learning?
- How effective is our use of the University's VLE? Is there a consistent approach by the subject team? How do teams wish to enhance the VLE and maximise its use and effectiveness, especially in light of hybrid delivery aspirations?
- Has the team outlined future plans for hybrid delivery (where appropriate), (i) in a post-pandemic environment? (ii) Future plans to fully address?
- What is the staff development strategy?
- Do we use part-time tutors/recognised teachers of university (RTU)? How are they supported?
- Is there effective induction of these staff?
- Is student support effective?
- How do we effectively support students with additional support requirements (e.g. disabled/international/minority students)?
- Do we provide a parity of student experience at all campuses? How do we know?
- Do we address skills development and employability appropriately as well as developing subject expertise in students? Please expand.
- Are admissions and induction arrangements for students effective?
- Are we confident using RPL arrangements?
- Are resources suitable and appropriately updated to deliver this subject?
- How is PDP embedding into our provision?
- How are UWS Graduate Attributes embedded into provision?
- What is the subject/School research strategy? Do all staff know what it is?
- What is the quality of our research students' experience?
- Do we consider our annual monitoring activities to be effective? Can this be illustrated by providing good examples?
- Are we clear on the five year plan/vision of the subject?
- What are the future plans for developing the portfolio, e.g. postgraduate, collaborative, new markets, and international?
- What makes this subject distinctive at the University of the West of Scotland?

QuEST can provide copies of previous validations and ILR reports if these are not readily available within Schools.

RETENTION OF ASSESSED WORK

This is a confirmed policy statement and currently features in the [Assessment Handbook for Staff](#) (section 6.7). The current procedures are outlined below:

All exam submissions, following each School Board of Examiners (SBOE), to be retained for two months following the final SBOE for the academic session in which the module was delivered. Thereafter, for hardcopy submissions, a sample of assessment material will be retained as outlined below. The Dean of School will be responsible for arranging the collection, storage, retrieval and subsequent secure disposal of assessment material.

For coursework assignments: if not given back to students as part of feedback on assessment it should be disposed of as above.

For quality review purposes, where external or internal assessors may wish to review assessment material from a range of modules or student performance over time, a representative sample of module assessment material should be retained. A sample of module assessment material (following the School Assessment Board) for each module in the University at all levels should be retained on a rolling basis for five years. Mark sheets should be retained along with scripts and other assessed work. Students should not be required to submit two copies of coursework etc. The sample scripts should be copied by the School following marking to capture examiners' comments. The Module Co-ordinator is responsible for identifying the sample and the Dean of School should make administrative arrangements for scanning/photocopying, storage and retrieval.

Where professional and statutory bodies require retention of examination scripts and projects/dissertations and/or other assessed work for a longer period than specified in the University policy, then this requirement should be met: the programme leader will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is met.

It is recommended that all Schools adopt a system for organising the comprehensive storage of module material⁴ for quality review purposes. An ideal 'module pack' would contain:

- Module Descriptor;
- examination paper/coursework outline;
- assessment strategy;
- marking schedule;
- evidence of moderation;
- samples of assessed work and marks/grades (for the previous session).

This policy will be reviewed from time to time in light of the changing requirements of the University and QAA methodologies.

⁴ Definition of Module Sample: For the purposes of this policy, a minimum sample constitutes five pieces of assessment or 5% - whichever is greater (for each assessment method as identified in the module descriptor) for each module. The sample should reflect the range of marks awarded and should be accompanied by a copy of the Gradebook printout.

APPENDIX 5

INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW – DOCUMENTATION 2023-24

Other documentation and evidence to support the review shall be lodged within appropriate folders on a **ILR-specific drive (z:drive)** populated by the ILR team. The content of the z:drive ILR folder will later be transferred to a Microsoft One Drive where Panel members will be provided access rights to this **Advance Information Set (AIS)** prior to the review. This material should be current, up-to-date, accurate, relevant and complete.

NB. File names should be appropriate – these should normally comprise a title and date format.

	CHECKLIST (for Admin use)
Folder Title on Z:drive / Recommended Material	Populated (Yes/No/Date Details useful)
Folder 1 – Self Evaluation Document (SED) & Supporting Material	
Self-Evaluation Document (SED) (<i>current</i>)	eg. Populated Final 12/01/17 SED Version lodged
Footnotes (<i>as referenced in SED</i>) (<i>styles variable, need clarification</i>)	If considered necessary, guidance on footnotes could be included here.
Briefing Pack	
Previous ILR Report	eg. Populated (Title of ILR Report & Date to be included as they may differ from current ILR title)
Previous ILR Follow-up Report/Action Plan	eg. Populated
Folder 2 – Module & Programme Documentation	
Module Descriptors (<i>current</i>) (<i>Plus any proposed New Modules</i>) (Core modules in briefing packs for panel)	
Programme Specifications(<i>current</i>) (All provided in briefing packs for panel)	eg. Populated
Student Handbooks (<i>most up-to-date</i>):-	
➤ Programme Handbook(s)	
➤ Module Handbook(s) (where available) ➤ (Panel member may request access to Moodle to view if not been provided)	
➤ Placement Handbook(s) (where applicable)	
Folder 3– Quality Assurance	
Validation Reports (for all programmes under review)	
External Examiner Reports (3 years)	
External Examiner Responses (3 years)	
Collaborative Approval Reports & Reviews (where applicable)	[Where material is not applicable, relevant sub-folders should be removed prior to transfer onto pen stick]

Annual Monitoring Reports:-	
➤ Module Review Forms / Analysis (<i>any documentation available to demonstrate where analysis of module review forms has taken place</i>)	
➤ Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs) (3 years)	
➤ Collaborative: Collaborative Annual Reports (CAR)/Programme Annual Reports (PARs) (3 years)(<i>where applicable</i>)	
➤ Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body Reports (PSRBs) (<i>where applicable</i>)	
➤ Reports arising from School Annual Monitoring Events (3 years)	
➤ School SMART Targets (3 years)	
Folder 4 – Student Feedback / Involvement	
National Student Survey (NSS) results and analysis	
Other Surveys – record of analysis	
Student Staff Liaison Group (SSLG) minutes (3 years) (<i>may also be in Committees Folder</i>)	
Record of Focus Groups/Year Group meetings etc (where applicable)	
Folder 5 – Committees/Minutes	
Student Staff Liaison Group (SSLGs) minutes (3 years) (<i>may also be in Student Feedback/Involvement Folder</i>)	
Minutes from other School related Committees or Sub-groups: ➤ School Board; ➤ Programme Boards / Divisional Programme Boards; ➤ Other (as determined by School)	
Folder 6 – Research	
Research Student Handbook (<i>most up-to-date</i>)	
Research Student Feedback (<i>analysis may be in Student Feedback Folder</i>)	
School Research Strategy (<i>most up-to-date</i>)	
Research Student Numbers	eg. None (folder removed from z:drive)
Folder 7 – External Engagement	If activities listed are not applicable, useful to indicate this on checklist.

External Engagement activities of Subject Staff:-	
➤ Information on Conferences attendance/presenting (3 years)	
➤ Involvement in Reviews for other Universities (3 years)	
➤ External Examiner appointments – at other institutions (3 years)	
➤ QAA involvement (3 years)	
➤ PSRB Involvement (3 years) (where applicable)	Accreditation reports/visits
➤ HEA Involvement (3 years)	
➤ Employer / Industry Involvement (3 years) (eg. Industrial Advisory Boards etc)	
Folder 8 – Strategic Development	
School Academic Plans and Strategies (most up-to-date) (where available)	
Staff Development Plans (most up-to-date) (NB. This is NOT PDRs ; the SED may make reference to general strategies either in place or being considered in relation to staff development, this folder has been provided in cases where further supporting information is available)	
Folder 9 – Statistics	
Statistical Information:-	Available from Strategic Planning & Development.
**Recognised there may be some limitations in the data sets available during 2023-24 (to review earlier sessions) due to the recent Cyber incident.	
➤ Student Numbers (including full-time/part-time/online learning/campus distribution etc)	
➤ **Programme and Module Success Rates data	
➤ Honours classifications (where applicable)	
➤ **Employment/Destination statistics (where available)	
➤ **School Analysis of data (or reference to relevant minutes etc)	
Folder 10 – Staff Profiles	CVs are no longer solely acceptable. All staff must have a populated PURE profile which exists on the UWS Research Portal.
PURE and UWS Research Portal (Refer to Appendix 10 of ILR handbook) Generic Link: https://research-portal.uws.ac.uk/en/persons/	School to provide full list of teaching and research staff with direct link to individual staff members from each Programme Team under review.

Folder 11 – Examples of Students’ work	
Examples of Student’s work (3 years available) A review of student work is not normally conducted, however, Panel members may request such information so it is recommended that Schools retain samples of student work should any requests arise.	This folder may contain samples of electronic submissions (provided permission given).
Folder 12 – Background documentation	
Background documentation relevant to the subject	This may frequently be empty. However, it may be particularly relevant where professional accreditation exists, among other scenarios.
UWS and Background Documentation	
Campus Maps	
UWS prospectuses	
SCQF information and level descriptors	
UK Quality Code for Higher Education:	
Benchmark Statements	
UWS Strategy 2025	
UWS Curriculum Framework (2022)	
UWS Learning & Teaching Thematic Plans (2021)	
Learning and Teaching Principles 2023	
UWS Quality Handbook: In particular -: ILR Handbook 2023/24	
University Assessment Handbook for Staff (2022/23)	
<u>Student Experience Policy Statement</u> <i>Included on site are the following:</i>	UWS Guidelines, Procedures & Protocols
Policies, Procedures & Guidance UWS University of the West of Scotland	
<u>University Assessment Handbook for Staff</u>	
<u>Regulatory Framework</u>	
Code of Discipline UWS Graduate Attributes UWS Code of Ethics Guidelines for Ethical Practice in Research & Scholarship Student Programme Handbook	
Admissions Procedure; Criminal Charges and Convictions Procedure (title tbc) Disciplinary Procedure Fitness to Practice Procedure Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Procedures and Guidelines Referencing Guidelines Extenuating Circumstances Procedure Appeals Procedure Academic Engagement and Attendance Procedure Plagiarism Procedure Students with Parental Responsibilities Procedure Personal Tutor Guidance Procedures for Supporting Students in Distress Work-Based and Placement Learning Handbook	

APPENDIX 6

University of the West of Scotland Institution-Led Review

Institution-Led Review (ILR) Confirmation Form, to be completed and endorsed by the School on submission of the Self Evaluation document (SED).

School	
ILR Title Programme / Titles for Re-approval	<i>Insert ILR Title</i> • <i>List Programmes under review</i>
School Approval of SED	<i>Insert Date of Approval</i> <i>Specify Forum of Approval (eg. School Board)</i>
In development of the SED, the School must confirm the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate student engagement into SED (include evidence as appendix to SED to support this);• Appropriate Professional Support Service engagement into SED;• Programme specifications and module descriptors are current, up-to-date, accurate, relevant and complete (materials presented to the Panel reflect the provision for re-approval and subsequent delivery in the following academic year);• Specific material lodge on z:drive for the ILR is current, up-to-date, accurate, relevant and complete.	

Guidance for Schools

By signing below the School is satisfied that the above expectations for ILR have been met.

Dean of School: _____

Date:

ILR Lead/Other (as appropriate): _____

Date:

PROPOSED SCHEDULE/TIMELINE – SOCIAL WORK ILR

	ACTIVITY	SOCIAL WORK ILR (School of ESS)
	ILR “Kick off” Event	5 October 2023
	Accreditation: SSSC will participate in this ILR Team to check with SSSC regarding dates and hybrid approach (1 online / 1 on-campus day for Phase 2)	
	External Panel Members – submission of proposed nominees from School	ASAP - By end - Oct 2023 (need early to maximise first choice nominees) (need School Board approval)
	Subject under review to ensure appropriate students and staff input into the SED. (e.g. Workshops, Focus Groups, SSLGs etc.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Engagement – gather additional specific information as part of the evidence base for reviews. Sample questions available. • Appropriate Professional Support Service Engagement into SED (impact on student experience). 	
	Directorate for Learning & Teaching Enhancement (LTE) - Can offer support on Curriculum Framework, Hybrid Delivery, L&T Thematic Plan and Aula.	
	School Scrutiny – of Programme/Module Materials and the SED / Divisional Programme Board (DPB)	w/c 5 December 2022 review window
	School Executive sign-off by Dean and Deputy Dean/Associate Dean (L&T)	26th Feb-1st March 2024 review window
	Divisional Programme Board to endorse SED. SED is a School Document and must be signed off via School Board. Confirmation Form required.	
PHASE 1	SED & Other Documentation (including programme specifications, core module descriptors & supporting documentation / Advance Information Set) Submission to QuEST by: (i.e. 10- weeks prior to Phase 2)	Monday 4th MARCH 2024 A signed Confirmation Form should accompany the SED.
	QuEST distribute SED and AIS to Panel by:	By Friday 8 th March 2024
	Deadline given for Panel to provide Feedback: (Where possible, allowing 4 weeks including postage Online Feedback template included)	Monday 8 th April 2024
	Phase 1 Preparation meeting: (between Chair and QuEST to agree Phase 1 Agenda)	If required - tbc
	Phase 1 Interim Event: (with Chair of ILR/QuEST & DepDean/ILR Subject Team Leads)	w/c 22nd April 2024 <i>(Time: 1-1.5 hours / On-line/Remote)</i>
	QuEST Produce Draft Summary Report (Phase 1)/ Agreement of Phase 2 Programme: (i.e. Completion of Phase 1)	By Friday 26 th April 2024
	Phase 1 Summary Report and Phase 2 Programme sent to Panel (via email by QuEST)	By Monday 29 th April 2024 <i>(2 weeks in advance of Phase 2)</i>

P H A S E 2	Phase 2 Main Event: (with Chair/QuEST/School/Dean/ADs/ Full Subject Team/ Students/ Staff/others)	Monday 13th & Wednesday 15th MAY 2024 (2-DAY EVENT) 1 Day Online /1 Day On-Campus (if suits Panel)
	QuEST Produce Draft Full Final Report (comprising both Phase 1 & 2) (i.e. Within 6-8 working weeks)	Friday 12 th July 2024
	Summary Outcome Reports to AQC/School (i.e. Completion of Phase 2)	School Boards – next available round AQC – by June 2024

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND

NOMINATION FORM FOR APPROVAL OF EXTERNAL MEMBERS OF INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW (ILR) PANELS

Schools are asked to complete the following sections for external nominations to the Institution-Led Review panel.

Please note: If required, subject lead contacts can informally approach nominees for purposes of ascertaining interest in ILR. Where nominees are approached, it is vital that they are made aware that this does not indicate that their nomination will be accepted. Formal contact is via QuEST only – QuEST will approach nominees individually.

External panel members will normally include two academic experts and one professional/employer (see footnotes). Further guidance on criteria can be found in the ILR handbook available from QuEST.

All sections of the nomination form must be completed in full by one nominated person within the subject area and signed off by the School prior to approval by the Head of QuEST on behalf of Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC).

INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW: _____

DATES FOR INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW: _____

Nominee Details:-

Surname:.....

Forenames:.....

Salutation:.....
(eg Mr/Mrs/Dr etc)

Job Title/Designation:.....
(eg Head of Department/Senior Lecturer etc)

Academic and Professional Qualifications:.....

Contact details:-

Institution/Company.....

Department:.....

Full Postal Address:.....

.....

e-mail address:.....

Telephone no:.....

Preference rating - (1 - 4)

Rationale for selection including subject expertise: (please indicate what particular strengths and expertise the School believes this person can bring to this review referring to academic/professional experience and, in particular outlining the subject area(s) within the review they would cover)

Experience of review activity? e.g. Experienced Internal Reviewer, QAA Reviewer

Background: How is the nominee known to the subject area(s)? Furthermore, in what professional capacity has the subject team selected this nomination? (see footnote*)

Completed forms should be submitted to the School Operational Managers for Dean's/School Board approval and thereafter to QuEST.

Confirmation of Endorsement by School:

Approval by Head of QuEST:
(on behalf of LTC)

Footnotes

* Any current/previous connection with the University of the West of Scotland (e.g. previous external examiner, [must be more than 4 years since period completed], previous member of staff, former validation panel member). University Regulations preclude the appointment of any current University external examiners as ILR panel members. Panel members should not be from areas where UWS currently acts as an External Examiner (within the specific subject/programme area). Retired professionals/academics cannot be considered after 12 months has elapsed since their employment in the subject/HE).

** External panel members need to provide evidence to confirm their eligibility to work in the UK; this is a requirement for payment. Passports and/or valid Birth Certificate together with evidence of National Insurance eligibility will be required to participate.

*** Panel members will only be entitled to receive their honorarium fee on appropriate participation and input during both Parts 1 and 2. Details will be provided within the invitation to Panel members.

Learning and Teaching Committee appreciates the time taken to complete these forms. This assistance allows for an appropriate balance of panel members to be established

APPENDIX 9

INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW (ILR)

– EXTERNAL PANEL NOMINATION CRITERIA 2023-24

Selection of External Participants

The selection of externals will be discussed at a preliminary meeting between the Deputy Deans and QuEST; and thereafter verified by the ILR team. Nominations for external panel members should be submitted to QuEST at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that availability of first choice externals is maximised. The School Board should scrutinise the nominations proposed by the ILR team and approve these before they are provided to QuEST.

All nomination forms must be completed in full and signed off by the School Board before being passed to QuEST. QuEST will need this information to confirm the balance, expertise and experience of the panel before recommending approval of the panel. The Head of QuEST will authorise invitations to be issued on behalf of Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC).

There should be a minimum of two academics and one professional/industrialist. The School may request additional panel members to cover the specialisms under review. The following guidance should inform the identifying of potential candidates.

- The full breadth of the subject provision under review must be covered by the externals;
- It is preferred that at least one external is from a non-Scottish Higher Education Institution. At least one panel member should be able to offer an international perspective;
- It is preferred that at least one of the externals should be an experienced QAA Reviewer or an experienced internal reviewer for another University;
- It is preferred that at least one external panel member should be in a senior academic role with an understanding of strategic development of provision in HE;
- In nominating an industrial/professional panel member regard should be given to his/her ability to comment on the currency of the curriculum, the employability of graduates from the provision under review and any relevant expertise such as association with an appropriate professional body and ability to engage fully with the areas to be addressed in ILR;
- It may be prudent not to choose someone from a close or competitor institution as future strategic plans for the subject area will be discussed in detail during the review;
- Once potential external panel members are identified; subject lead contacts can informally approach nominees for purposes of ascertaining interest in

ILR. Where nominees are approached, they should be made aware that this does not indicate that their nomination will be accepted. Formal contact is via QuEST only – QuEST will approach nominees individually;

- It is useful initially to identify more than the minimum number of externals, as not all may be available during the ILR period of review and this will allow QuEST to make subsequent invitations without delay;
- Those precluded from the nomination process include honorary professors, visiting lecturers, recognised teachers of the University, or any person deemed to be in current employment of the University. In addition external examiners, former members of staff or persons who have previously been members of Approval Panels cannot be nominated unless it has been more than four years since their previous appointment. Panel members should not be from areas where UWS currently has colleagues acting as External Examiners within the specific subject/programme area under review. Retired professionals/academics cannot normally be considered after 12 months has elapsed since their employment in the subject/HE, unless exceptional circumstances exist and continuing practice within the sector can be evidenced.
- When nominating individuals, the subject lead should identify any current/previous connection with the University of the West of Scotland.

Eligibility to Work in UK:

External panel members will need to provide evidence to confirm their eligibility to work in the UK; this is a requirement for payment. Passports and/or valid Birth Certificate together with evidence of National Insurance eligibility will be required to participate. Panel members will only be entitled to receive their **honorary fee** on appropriate participation and input during both Parts 1 and 2.

Honorary Fee:

External Panel members are eligible to receive an honorary fee for their participation in an ILR. Details are available in Appendix 14.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND

1. Staff Profiles

The School under review will be required to provide a full list of teaching and research staff involved with the provision. It is recognised that for some areas, there is a view that CVs offer greater breadth and depth of experience to support the programme.

Schools can determine the most suitable means of providing this information; this information may be provided via staff Curriculum Vitae’s (CV’s) and/or use of PURE Research Profiles.

2. PURE and UWS Research Portal

UWS uses [PURE](#) as its Current Research Information System (CRIS) and institutional research repository. UWS researchers can access PURE to populate their profile and upload their research publications and add their research activities.

Students, staff and members of the public can find out about research staff, activity and outputs on the UWS Research Portal. (<https://research-portal.uws.ac.uk/>). PURE arranges staff by School and by Research Institutes where specific staff members can be accessed at the generic link: <https://research-portal.uws.ac.uk/en/persons/>
<https://www.uws.ac.uk/library/research-support/research-repository-portal-pure/>

Staff profiles can be extracted through the UWS Research Portal which pulls information from PURE profiles.

1. Schools to Provide for ILR: Staff Profiles

For each ILR, the School under review will be required to provide a full list of teaching and research staff involved with the provision by providing the CV and/or their research portal link alongside.

Schools will determine whether to use staff CVs or PURE profiles (via the UWS Research Portal), or a combination of both, to provide to ILR Review Panels.

Suggested format -:

	Staff Member	Designation (and role in ILR)	CV provided (tick)	UWS Research Portal Link
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				

INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW (ILR): FOLLOW-UP ACTION PLAN
ILR: INSERT TITLE OF ILR, INSERT SCHOOL (ACADEMIC YEAR: XXXX)

After the ILR the School/ILR team/Programme Board(s) will engage with the recommendations of the report and advise AQC on actions. The final report and Action Plan will be scrutinised by Academic Quality Committee (AQC) on behalf of Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC). LTC will receive assurances through ACQ reporting. Any institutional actions shall be escalated to LTC.

A follow-up meeting will be held, normally within a year of the ILR event, to consider progress against the Team Action Plan, a report from this meeting and an updated action plan will be submitted to AQC.

ILR Event	INSERT DATE OF PHASE 2	ILR Lead: INSERT LEAD
	Activity	Date
Conditions met (where applicable)	Confirmation that any conditions have been met, and all programme material updated accordingly. Requires approval by Chair.	
ILR Team Action Plan	Divisional Programme Board(s) agree Team Action Plan. Action plan submitted to AQC (with link to full report) submitted to AQC within 6 months of the finalisation of the report. (LTC will receive assurances from AQC; ongoing monitoring remitted to AQC)	Date Agreed by Divisional Programme Board: INSERT XX
ILR Outcomes & Action Plan	SSLG: To be highlighted at relevant SSLG meetings with a view to monitoring and review involving student input. (Outcomes and Follow-up)	Date of SSLG meeting(s): INSERT XX
ILR Outcomes & Action Plan	Report received by AQC (for onward reporting to EAC)	Date of AQC: INSERT XX
ILR Outcomes feed into Annual Monitoring	School to ensure ILR outcomes are embedded in School EAM activities.	Date of EAM event: INSERT XX
ILR One-Year Follow Up Action Plan (AQC-led event)	Should normally take place 12-15 months after the ILR . Divisional Programme Board(s) provides update on how actions have been addressed one year later. <i>(This should comprise evidence of impact rather than simply a narrative of change)</i>	Date of One-Year Follow Up: INSERT XX

No. in Full Report	ACTION COMMITTED TO: (Using the numbering contained in the original ILR Report, please list conditions, recommendations, areas of development and observations)	How will this be achieved? Who will take responsibility for this action?	By when will this action be completed? How will the effectiveness of the action be evaluated?	ILR One-Year Follow-up meeting: Update from Team
CONDITIONS				
X				
X				
X				
X				
RECOMMENDATIONS				
X				
X				
X				
X				
AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT				
X				
X				
X				
X				
OBSERVATIONS				
X				
X				
REFLECTION ON POSITIVE PRACTICE				
(the Team is asked to reflect on the positive practice identified during the ILR and provide any updates in the box below, e.g. further development of the practice, evidence as to its impact, sharing of the practice across the School or University.)				
X				



APPENDIX 13

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND

AQC	Academic Quality Committee – as sub-committee of the Learning and Teaching Committee
CF	UWS Curriculum Framework (2022)
LTC	Learning and Teaching Committee – a Standing Committee of the University’s Senate. Proactive in the strategic development and enhancement of learning, teaching, assessment and quality management
External Examiner	An academic or professional expert in the area of study who acts as a member of the Progression & Award Board or Subject Panel or both. No recommendation for the conferment of an award of the University shall be made without the consent of the External Examiner
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
ADVANCE HE	Advance HE (2018) is the Successor to HEA – to support institutions in their strategies to improve the quality of the student learning experience, providing subject and staff development, subject networks and research and evaluation on HE policy
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ITDS	Information Technology and Digital Services
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
ILR	Institution-Led Review – the system of internal review of the academic health of the total taught and research provision in a subject delivered by the University every six years
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LTC	Learning and Teaching Committee
MEQ	Module Evaluation Questionnaire – students complete one towards the end of each taught module
Module Co-ordinator	Responsible for the development of a particular module and monitoring the module descriptors. Member of the SDGs

Module Moderator	Moderates the marks for the module
Multi-campus	UWS operates over five campus sites, Ayr, Dumfries, Lanarkshire, Paisley and London therefore activities are often referred to as 'multi-campus'.
PDP	Personal Development Planning - supports students' learning by recording their learning goals and reflection on these
PDR	Performance Development Review – annual discussion with academic and support staff to discuss activity, planning and key results
PSRB	Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body
Programme Leader	Member of staff appointed by the School who directs the development of the programme.
PABs	Progression & Awards Boards – ceased from session 2019/20. PABs formerly agreed decisions about progression, awards and honours classification for each level of a programme. Replaced by SBEs.
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education for the UK
QuEST	Quality Enhancement & Standards Team – heads the implementation of the UWS's quality framework and directives of the LTC
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAUWS	Students' Association, University of the West of Scotland
School	There are four Schools: School of Business & Creative Industries, School of Computing, Engineering & Physical Sciences, School of Education and Social Sciences, School of Health & Life Sciences.
SAB	School Assessment Board - confirms the mark, grade and decision for each student on each module and to which School Assessment Board external examiners are appointed
SBE	School Board of Examiner - Considers the eligibility of students on a group of programmes

to progress or gain an award and to which School Board of Examiners external examiners are appointed.

SED	Self-Evaluation Document – a document which identifies the areas to be addressed by Institution-Led Review
SIMD	Scottish Index Multiple Deprivation
SSLG	Student/Staff Liaison Group – organised at Faculty or subject level to enable students to raise issues with teaching staff
Senate	The Senate is the academic authority of the University responsible for the overall planning, coordination, development and direction of the academic work of the University
T1/T2/T3	Term 1/Term 2/Term 3 – the University academic year is divided into three 15 week terms
UWS	University of the West of Scotland
WBL	Worked-based Learning – working with a company/provision in a planned and structured way to achieve academic credit
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

APPENDIX 14

External Panel Members ‘Approvers’ Honorarium fee structure

Honorarium fee structure for Institution-Led Reviews

This Honorarium fee structure applies to Institution-Led Reviews (ILRs) for all Programmes that lead to an award of the University. This encompasses all home (UWS-based).

In very exceptional circumstances, QuEST has the discretion to alter the fee. Advice may be sought from the QuEST in these cases.

ILR for Home Programmes

External Panel Members are paid a single £150 fee to prepare for the event, plus a flat attendance fee of £100 for each day they are expected to attend a particular approval or review event (Two-day event: £200). The preparation fee is to remunerate for the time taken for the External Panel Member to read the documentation and submit their written comments to Chair in advance.

By attendance we mean participation at events where the ILR is facilitated by correspondence and by participation during an ILR Panel event – either by physical attendance at a UWS Campus or participation via comparable online proceedings.

We consider ILR events to consist of 1 day preparation and either 1 or 2 day “attendance”.

In summary:

- Preparation fee £150 per event
- Attendance fee £100 per day of attendance, per event -: (£100: one-day event; £200: two day)
- Tax will be deducted

The majority of ILR events comprise two days, so the fees in this case would total £350 per External Panel Member.

Right to Work

In line with Home Office and UKVI requirements, External Panel Members need to provide evidence to confirm their eligibility to work in the UK; this is a requirement for honorarium payment. Normally Passports and/or valid Birth Certificate together with evidence of National Insurance eligibility will be required to participate, however details of the acceptable forms of evidence can be found on the Home Office website. Further information on the University’s right to work checking processes can be provided by People and Organisational Development. Panel members will be entitled to receive their honorarium fee in accordance to their attendance – whether correspondence (preparation fee) or physical attendance.

Expenses

In addition to the fee detailed above for ILR events, External Panel Members that attend a physical event will be reimbursed for any reasonable expenses incurred in connection with their duties. Such expenses may be incurred for travel, subsistence, accommodation or any other purpose agreed by the budget holder and which accords with the University’s Financial Regulations.

Budget Holders

In very exceptional circumstances, there is discretion to alter the fee. Advice may be sought from the QuEST in these cases but it will related to which budget the honorarium is covered by.

- For ILR events, the honorarium fee shall be covered by QuEST.

Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 3
Student Involvement in
Quality Enhancement
Session 2023/24

CHAPTER 3 STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

UWS is committed to engaging students in the enhancement of learning and teaching across the institution. The UWS 2025 Strategy, supported by the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan 2020–2025 sets out a number of objectives that support this commitment:

- Our portfolio of courses is contemporary, relevant, sustainable, and allow students to thrive in the rapidly-changing 21st century workplace.
- The delivery modes of our programmes of study are flexible, and student-centred, allowing students to manage the mode, intensity and duration of study. All have hybrid delivery options.
- Our online and physical learning environments are dynamic, technology-rich and support world-class pedagogy.
- Students are at the heart of what we do. The UWS student journey is personal, seamless, and supported by outstanding professional and academic staff and functional, student-centred and user-friendly systems and processes.
- Our graduates are leaders, with world-ready, interdisciplinary meta-skills and flexible, global perspectives.
- Our talented academics employ innovative, student-centred, teaching and learning practice and engage in continuing professional development in pedagogy, digital learning innovation and student support.

The Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan embraces ‘the concept of “students as partners” in their learning, through co-curricular design, peer learning and support, and the student partnership agreement’.

The QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Advice and Guidance - Student Engagement sets out within its core practices that:

‘The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.’

This chapter of the Quality Handbook details the processes within UWS that ensure fulfilment of this requirement.

1.1 Scottish Funding Council Guidelines

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) published guidance on the engagement and involvement of students in quality processes; something which is fundamental to the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF). All institutions are expected to work with the Student Engagement Framework for Scotland, which sets out the expectations and features of student engagement. This framework consists of five key elements and six features of effective student engagement.

Key elements of student engagement:

1. Students feeling part of a supportive institution
2. Students engaging in their own learning
3. Students working with their institution in shaping the direction of learning
4. Formal mechanisms for quality and governance
5. Influencing the student experience at national level.

Features of effective student engagement:

1. A culture of engagement
2. Students as partners
3. Responding to diversity
4. Valuing the student contribution
5. Focus on enhancement and change
6. Appropriate resources and support.

Institutions should have a coherent and effective strategy to develop their partnership approaches with students and student representatives and enhance student engagement, including seeking opportunities for student engagement in co-creation of learning; empowering students to use evidence to enhance their own learning; extending engagement to new groups of students; and developing the role and capacity of Student Association staff to build sustainability and maintain continuity of support for student officers.

More information and resources can be found here:

<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/culture.php?page=168>

1.2 Reason for Student Engagement in Quality Enhancement

The University's feedback and involvement mechanisms (questionnaires, internal review etc.) give students the opportunity to present their views on their learning experience. This feedback enables staff to reflect on their teaching and professional skills as well as identifying areas for improvement, examples of good practice and opportunities to build on identified strengths.

UWS needs student representatives (reps) at all levels of study to represent the views of their fellow students, whether it be at programme, division, school or University level. The University is keen to know where changes can be made to improve the quality of its modules, students' overall experience and to discover what students honestly think about their time at UWS.

The University welcomes the diversity of the student body and is keen to promote representation for all groups of students. All students are encouraged to become involved in representation activities.

1.3 Benefits, Rewards and Recognition for Student Engagement

Acting as a Student Representative (rep), enables students to learn many new and useful skills, which will enhance their CV. Student reps are encouraged to listen to their fellow students and communicate their opinions. Through attending committee meetings students will gain an understanding of decision-making processes as well as getting to meet new people. Reps are encouraged to be fully involved as partners working towards solutions with staff. Students will have the opportunity to develop a number of key transferable skills including assertiveness, communication, leadership, negotiation, public-speaking, self-confidence and teamwork. The University and the Students' Union offer professional training for reps via *sparqs*, which will also be a positive ¹addition to students' CVs. Further information can be found in Section 3 of this guidance.

Particular incentives to encourage individuals to become student reps include:

- **Certificate of Engagement**

1

Undertaking the Student Representative role provides an opportunity to develop transferable skills. To support showcasing these skills to potential employers, the Student's Union will provide Student Representatives with a 'Certificate of Engagement' at the end of their academic year.

To receive the Certificate, Student Reps must complete the following tasks:

- Attend Student Rep Training (both completing Part 1 and attending Part 2)
- Attend at least one Student Staff Liaison Group / Division Board or School Board as relevant to the role through the academic year
- Attend at least one Student Council through the academic year
- Complete the Student Rep End of Year Evaluation survey

Should Reps undertake additional duties, such as chairing a SSLG or volunteer as part of the Union Rep Team activities, this will also be added to their individual Certificate.

- **Incentives/Rewards**

The Students' Union provides lots of goodies for student reps to promote their identity in this role (e.g. Students' Union merchandise and discounted food and coffee etc at Student Union venues). There are also awards which can be won by Reps at the Students' Union Big Awards, held annually.

2 STUDENT PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The approach to student representation at UWS adopts principles, which ensure that students are represented as widely as possible within institutions' consultative and decision-making forums. A Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) between the Students' Union and UWS is in place to strengthen these principles further and support the vision of the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan of 'students as partners in their learning'.

The SPA outlines the areas in which UWS and the Students' Union will work together in partnership to enhance the student learning experience. The 2023/2024 agreement reinforces the 'commitment to working together to create a contemporary, inspirational and collaborative learning environment where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to enhance the learning experience, both for themselves and future students'.

The SPA is refreshed annually by a student and staff working group, on behalf of the Student Partnership Forum, setting out the key priority areas for the academic year, while reflecting on the successes under the previous agreement. It is anticipated that the SPA, along with the University's Student Experience Policy Statement, will strengthen the partnership. The Student Experience Policy Statement 'identifies how staff and students of the University will work in partnership to build an excellent student experience and enhance opportunities for students to achieve success.'

- [Student Experience Policy Statement](#)
- [Student Partnership Agreement](#)

Partnership working at UWS seeks to:

- promote a mutual agreement about how the institution and students can work together more creatively and move towards an equal relationship with a common purpose;
- develop a deeper understanding of partnership and what the benefits of this could be to both parties;

- promote partnership values: Equality, Democracy, Mutual respect, Diversity, Collaboration and Sustainability;
- be an active, living and dynamic working agreement;
- promote further partnership learning with a view to maximising increased engagement and representation;
- ensure full co-operation by both parties and promote a shared responsibility;
- instigate a new culture of partnership across the institution.

2.1 Student Representation

An active student representative system is essential, allowing a free flow of information from staff to students and back again and is a process whereby students, staff, representatives and the University all benefit.

A strong student representation system empowers students and ensures engagement in University governance structures and quality processes, which guides the enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

The University acknowledges the diverse nature of the student body at UWS, with students spread across 5 campuses in the UK and collaborative and TNE partners across the world. There are also a variety of methods through which students will engage with their studies, including part-time study and distance learning. As part of the Curriculum Framework and new Learning and Teaching principles being introduced throughout academic year 2023/34, the learning and teaching provision is focused on providing excellent digitally enabled learning as a campus-based University. With a diverse student body and variety in the methods of engagement with their studies, it is essential that the University ensures that all students receive the same opportunities to input into the student experience and engage with quality enhancement activities.

The general principles of student representation are considered mandatory for adoption across all Schools, UWS campuses and sites/modes of delivery. Alternative approaches to enable the engagement of all students are continually being explored, adopting VLE platforms, Microsoft Teams and other IT resources as appropriate. Schools are expected to support the representation structure and the recruitment of student representatives across the school.

UWS, the Students' Union and students have worked together to develop the 'Student Representation Roadmap', which provides practical guidance and agreement defining the roles of all partners in Student Representation at UWS. The Roadmap can be found here:

[https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/pageassets/representation/studentresources/Representation-Roadmap-UWS\(1\).docx](https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/pageassets/representation/studentresources/Representation-Roadmap-UWS(1).docx)

Working closely with the Students' Union, the University's Student Partnership Forum will oversee the continued development and enhancement of student representation processes.

2.2 Student Representation on University Committees

There are a number of University Committees that deal with student issues and the University is committed to ensuring appropriate student representation on these Committees. In some instances, student representation is provided by elected Students' Union sabbatical officers, while other committees require student

representatives to be elected. Further information about specific committee representation can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

2.2.1 School Committees

Student representation is crucial to ensuring the continued enhancement of the student learning experience and key to this is representation on school committees. School representation occurs at three levels: programme - through Student Staff Liaison Groups, divisional – through Divisional Programmes Board and school – through the School Board. Details of the remit and membership of these committees can be found in the Senate Committees Handbook. <https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-studies/your-rights-responsibilities/regulatory-framework/>

Course Representative - Student Staff Liaison Group (SSLG)

The SSLG is a forum for students and staff to discuss student-led agendas on learning and teaching issues and to consult with students on its future plans for curriculum development. It is an opportunity for constructive discussion to identify enhancement opportunities in programmes or subject areas. Schools will determine the structure of SSLGs to ensure all programmes are represented and will advise QuEST and the Students' Union of the structure annually. SSLGs will normally be chaired by a student. At a minimum there should be at least one SSLG per School or Subject area per trimester. Consideration should be given to how the meetings will be facilitated to support student participation across campuses and modes of study, using technology where appropriate.

The dates of the SSLG meetings should be published on an appropriate platform along with the reports of meetings to ensure transparency and dissemination of information to all students. All staff should encourage student reps to participate in SSLGs. A member of school staff shall support each SSLG; this person shall be responsible for ensuring that, agendas are proactively developed with the student chair, reports from the meetings are published and feedback is provided to the student body. Divisional Programme Boards will receive reports from relevant SSLGs. Reports will also be used as evidence at Institution-Led Reviews.

Generally Course representatives are elected per programme, campus, and year of study but small programmes, dual honours, or programmes with multiple intakes may be organised differently.

The Rep's role is to:

- Represent the views of students in their year of study on all matters relating to the programme
- Continuously improve the student learning experience in partnership with UWS and the Students' Union by helping create solutions to problems
- Provide both positive and negative feedback to staff, students and the Students' Union
- Act as a communication channel between staff, students and the Students' Union

Divisional Representative – Divisional Programmes Board

Divisional Programmes Boards oversee and monitor the delivery of programmes within the division. Within the Board's remit is the oversight of quality enhancement arrangements, monitoring the student experience and student engagement.

Student representatives are elected from the division to sit on the Divisional Programmes Boards. Their role is to bridge the gap between the course level

representatives and the School Officers. They work with the Students' Union to improve the life of students within their division.

School Officer – School Board

The School Board is the key authority in the School for academic discussion. It oversees the development, performance and delivery of all academic provision in line with University policies and regulations.

School Officers are elected from the school-wide constituency, including one postgraduate research student. Their role is to bridge the gap between the divisional level representatives and the Students' Union sabbatical officers. They work with the Students' Union to improve the student experience at UWS.

For more information on becoming a University Committee representative, students should contact the Students' Union's Student Representation Team at representation@uwsunion.org.uk

2.3 Student Representation in Quality Processes

Academic Student Representation: There are several key quality processes across the University which students play an integral role in:

- Internal Review / Institution-Led Review (ILR)
- Approval of New / Amended Programmes
- Enhancement and Annual Monitoring Activities
- Quality Enhancement Standards Reviews and Enhancement-led Institutional Reviews
- Thematic Working Groups
- Student Feedback Activities

Details can be found within the corresponding sections of the Quality Handbook, QuEST upon request.

2.3.1 Internal Review / Institution-Led Review

As expected by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the University reviews all its subjects on a six-year cycle. At UWS, our internal review process is called Institution-Led Review (ILR). This involves a panel of academic and professional experts from within and out with UWS reviewing the total taught and research provision in that subject.

The views of students are particularly important to the reviewers. The Students' Union is advised of the internal review schedule to allow it to engage with student issues.

At the start of the session in which the ILR is to take place, the School should advise all students of the ILR process. This is facilitated by a leaflet for students, 'Students Matter – Informing and Involving Students', available from the Quality Enhancement Support Team (QuEST). The ILR should be on the agenda of SSLGs to ensure students are aware of the process, how to engage with it and the importance of their involvement. The SSLG also provides a forum for student input into a reflective document produced by the subject team called the Self Evaluation Document (SED). Responsibility for involving students in the ILR process lies with the subject team.

The following ILRs will take place during session 2023/24:

- Business Postgraduate (Scottish) Business & Management

- Business (London Provision)
- Social Work
- Biological Sciences & Health (including Paramedic Science)

For more information on student involvement in the ILR process please contact Donna Taylor in QuEST donna.taylor@uws.ac.uk.

2.3.2 Approval of New/Amended Programmes

As part of the University system for the approval of new programmes, students will be consulted to ascertain views on proposed new programmes and their structure. Schools should make arrangements to include a student member on the drafting team to ensure student involvement in the programme planning and design process. Gathering of student views may also involve discussions via focus groups or via the SSLG or online forums.

Student input also applies to significant amendments/additions to an existing programme (e.g. addition of an Honours level) where students are invited to become involved and provide opinion on proposed developments and the implications for the student experience.

2.3.3 Enhancement and Annual Monitoring (EAM)

Annual monitoring is a fundamental quality function of the University. The University's approach is programme-based and focuses on the quality of the student experience through reflection at both module and programme level. As a result of the Cyber Incident, the usual data range is not available. Schools and teams have been provided Module Data and will have access to other data sources use other directives-such as MRFs, NSS data, External Examiner reports, ILR outcomes, PSRB reports aspects, SSLGs and MEQs to reflect on the past year. Some minor revisions to the Annual Monitoring process introduced in response to the Covid-19 pandemic will continue. The key principles remain but the process offers enhanced flexibility for schools to best manage the workload. School Boards will continue to have increased ownership as to how their school manages its annual monitoring, mainly with school events continuing to be optional. Some new elements relating to triangulation with NSS and survey data will feature for this cycle, with a There will be a significant review of EAM to follow during session 2022/232023/24. Further information can be found in Chapter 7 of the Quality Handbook.

By completion of module and programmatic surveys, students automatically contribute to the EAM process; participants of SSLGs will also contribute. There are often opportunities for students to participate in school-based annual monitoring events. Furthermore, an institutional enhancement and annual monitoring event takes place annually, normally in January, and participation and representation from students is encouraged at this event.

2.3.4 Student Feedback Activities

Meeting students' expectations is the University's highest priority and student feedback is key to this. A variety of student feedback activities exist, which include module feedback mechanisms, completion of internal and external student experience surveys, including the National Student Survey, and providing feedback via the SSLGs or other informal feedback routes. The University/School/SSLG strives to find effective ways to 'close the feedback loop' as required by the *Quality Code Student Engagement – Guiding Principle 7*. This ensures that students are aware of what action has been taken in response to feedback, or where change is not possible, the

reasons why. Student representatives also have a role to play in ensuring their fellow students are informed of feedback actions, section 3 within this document details the support available to Reps in helping them fulfil this role.

All surveys lead to enhancement of the UWS student experience so it is important to take every opportunity to ensure that students make their experiences known.

Whilst the formal and recommended route for receiving student feedback is usually via SSLGs; some areas utilise other informal feedback mechanisms. These mechanisms often include communication with Personal and ASPIRE tutors, lecturers in discussion with class (more applicable to small groups or laboratories), feedback to year leaders or programme leaders. Reflective blogs on VLE platforms are also utilised. In instances where informal feedback exists, it is important to highlight the need to evidence such feedback to ensure that all effective feedback mechanisms are illustrated to internal and external review panel members during internal review or external Enhancement Led Institutional Review. How the feedback loop is closed when these informal mechanisms are used should also be evident.

Students may also be given the opportunity to engage with external examiners, in order to provide feedback on their experiences on a programme or modules. While discussion might relate to assessment experiences, the meeting will not be used to discuss individual assessment outcomes. Such meetings are normally arranged by the school at the request of the external examiner. Students should not contact an external examiner directly, instead queries or concerns should be sent to the Head of QuEST quest@uws.ac.uk. Further information on external examining can be found in Chapter 6 of the Quality Handbook and annual external examiner reports are published for students under the Student Services section of the UWS Student App.

2.4 Involvement with the Students' Union Governance

There are various opportunities to become involved in the Students' Union the specific detail of which is detailed within the Union's Constitution <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/union/constitution/>

Student Council is a key decision-making board of the Students' Union. Membership is made up of all voluntary Student Representatives, and Student Council set Student Union Policy through a simple majority vote. However, any student at UWS can suggest a policy via the Students' Union website.

<https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/pageassets/union/constitution/Bye-Law-2-Student-Council-Final.pdf>

The **Executive Committee** is the political leadership of the Union and membership consists of:

- Four Elected Sabbatical Officers - President, Vice President Education, Vice President Student Development and Vice President Welfare and Wellbeing;

There is also the opportunity for students to be appointed as Student Trustees on the Union's **Board of Trustees**, which is responsible for the management and administration of the Union <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/union/bot/>

Membership of the Board consists of:

- Four elected Sabbatical officers;
- Four Student Trustees who are appointed;
- Four Lay (external) Trustees who are appointed

The Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees are the main decision-making bodies of the Student's Union.

Social Representation: There are several other opportunities for social representation by students via involvement in Students' Union activities.

These include involvement in the following groups and/or activities:

- Student Council <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/pageassets/union/constitution/Bye-Law-2-Student-Council-Final.pdf>
- Societies Council <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/pageassets/union/constitution/Bye-law-5-Societies-Council-final.pdf>
- Liberation Groups:
 - Black & Minority Ethnic (BME)
 - Care Experienced Students
 - Disabled Students
 - Women's
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans (LGBTQI) +

For more information on becoming involved in the Students' Union, students should contact the Students' Union's Student Representation Team at representation@uwsunion.org.uk

3 COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND SUPPORT

3.1 Student Representation Communication Mechanisms

Student reps will be able to communicate with each other and the Students' Union via the Students Rep Teams Group. The Students' Union also provides communication channels that enable student reps to communicate with their cohorts in order to gather and provide feedback.

Student reps are expected to **use their Banner ID email accounts** at all times, specifically, they will use this email account when contacting any member of the University community if they choose not to do this through channels described above.

Student reps should be familiar with the requirements of the University's [Data Protection Code of Practice](#).

3.2 Training for Student Reps

It is necessary for all student representatives to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake this important role and to understand the purpose and benefits to be derived from fulfilling this role.

Rep training is mandatory and is conducted in two parts, online and with a trainer. Reps will be automatically enrolled onto the online Rep Training module within the Reps Teams Group. The live sessions with the trainer will be available to sign up for, with the first round being held between the 2nd and 21st of October. For further information please contact the Students' Union's Student Representation Team at representation@uwsunion.org.uk.

The SFC encourages institutions to continue to work on student participation, with support from sparqs, as it develops its focus to assist institutions and student

associations to fully engage students as equal partners in creating a learner-centred experience.

Additional student representative training can be provided to staff and students on request; for further information about the training events or online training packages please contact the Students' Union's Student Representation Team at representation@uwsunion.org.uk.

3.3 Student Rep Conference and Networking Sessions

Student Rep Training and Networking Sessions are solely for participation by student reps.

For session 2023/24, the initial online dates for training and networking are communicated to reps via the Student Rep Teams Page and updates can be found at <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/representation/studentresources/>.

For further information about the Student Rep Training and Networking Sessions, please contact Students' Union's Student Representation Team at representation@uwsunion.org.uk.

3.4 Authorised Absence

The Student's Union will work closely with Schools to ensure all Reps are fully trained with dates and times of Part 2 training published at the start of each academic term and shared with staff via School Enhancement Developers or School Administrators.

It is expected that elected Student Representatives at all levels are given Authorised Absence from class to attend in person training (Part 2 training) or other training appropriate to their role. Where placement activity prevents attendance, measures should be taken to ensure those Reps are trained accordingly by working with the Student's Union to arrange additional sessions to accommodate these Reps.

Should Programmes or Schools identify clashes with compulsory academic engagement, the Student's Union should be consulted to arrange alternative sessions.

Academic Staff should not unnecessarily prevent their Rep(s) from attending training and if it is deemed essential for the Rep(s) to attend class / other academic engagement activities, Schools should work with the Student's Union to arrange alternative training sessions to accommodate these Reps.

Where Reps are identified as having not undertaken training following the initial round each term, the Student's Union will reach out to those Reps to identify the reasons for their non engagement and arrange alternative sessions.

3.5 Guidance for Staff

Further information for staff on the system of student representation can be found here <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/pageassets/representation/studentresources/Student-Reps-at-UWS-Staff-Guide-2022-2023.docx>

4 CALENDAR OF DATES

Please refer to The UWS website for Term dates for academic session 2023/24 <https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-studies/term-dates/><https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/6413/term-dates-2023-24.pdf>

Please refer to <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/whatson/> for the Students' Union's Calendar of Dates for session 2023/24.

5 USEFUL CONTACTS

<p><u>UWS Students' Union</u> Sabina Lawrie, Student Representation and Communications Team Leader Email: sabina.lawrie@uws.ac.uk</p> <p>Claire Lumsden, Student Representation and Training Coordinator Email: Claire.lumsden@uws.ac.uk</p> <p>Nathan Price, Student Engagement and Representation Coordinator Email: Nathan.Price@uws.ac.uk</p>	<p><u>UWS</u> Helen McLean, Interim Head of QuEST Email: mailto:nina.anderson-knox@uws.ac.uk helen.mclean@uws.ac.uk</p> <p>Donna Taylor, QuEST, Senior Quality Enhancement Officer, Email: donna.taylor@uws.ac.uk</p>
<p><u>Student Partnership in Quality Scotland (sparqs)</u></p> <p>sparqs 12a Union Street EDINBURGH EH1 3LU Telephone No: 0131 622 6599 www.sparqs.ac.uk info@sparqs.ac.uk</p>	

Appendix 1

STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON SENATE COMMITTEES

The University is committed to student engagement in appropriate committees of the University (see the Student Partnership Agreement).

University and School Committees with Student representatives are listed below. A number of the student representative slots are filled by the elected sabbatical officers, but some Committees and Boards require representatives to be elected.

This guide has been produced by the Court and Senate Office and the Union to support the nomination and election of student representatives.

Committee	Student representation
Senate	Members appointed by being elected by the students of the University Up to five members nominated by the Students' Association, with one place reserved for a registered PGR student.
Learning & Teaching Committee (previously EAC)	Union Vice President Education (ex-officio) One sabbatical Officer nominated by The Union
Research & Innovation Committee (previously REAC)	Two members elected from amongst the PGR student population
School Board	Student representatives (up to two elected from a School-wide constituency of taught programmes); One PGR student elected from amongst the PGR students in the School;
Divisional Programmes Board	Student representatives (up to two elected from a Division wide constituency of taught programmes);
Student Staff Liaison Group	Student representation from the programme
University Academic Integrity and Ethics Committee	One sabbatical officer nominated by the Union
Doctoral College Board	Two students elected from amongst the PGR population
Student Partnership Forum	Union President – Co Chair Union Vice President Education Union Vice President Student Development Union Vice President Welfare & Wellbeing

	One PGR student representative (elected from amongst the PGR enrolled student population) Divisional Representatives
Academic Quality Committee	Union Vice President Education (ex-officio) School Officers (co-opted), one Officer from each School to be nominated to attend each meeting
Equality Diversity & Inclusion Committee	Two sabbatical officers nominated by Student President
Senate Disciplinary Committee	Two sabbatical officers nominated by the Union
Senate Appeals Committee	Two sabbatical officers nominated by The Union
Senate Regulations Committee	Union Vice President Education (ex-officio) Two representatives from the Union
Honorary Awards Committee	Union President

Nomination and election of School Board representatives

All enrolled students in the School (PG and UG) are eligible nominate themselves for election as School Board representatives. PGR students in the School are excluded as they have a separate opportunity for representation.

The election will be conducted in partnership with the Union.

Nomination and election of Divisional Programme Board representatives

All enrolled students in the School (PG, UG and PGR) are eligible nominate themselves for election as Divisional Board representatives.

The election will be conducted in partnership with the Union.

Nomination and election to REAC and Doctoral College Board.

The Doctoral College and the Union will liaise to conduct the elections from amongst the PGR student population.

Period of appointment for student representatives

Unless otherwise stated in Committee' terms of reference, the period of appointment is normally two years with eligibility for re appointment for a second term.

Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 4
Approval & Professional
Accreditation
Session 2023/24

CHAPTER 4 APPROVAL & PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

All documents referred to within this chapter are available via the Sharepoint Site:
<https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/QualityHandbook2021-22/EhCW4URwX5pBuN-SslktYXYBDPX80cAyOLDz3lSVaCzujA?e=Sdo7YX>

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PROCESS FROM PROGRAMME CONCEPTION TO APPROVAL

1 INITIAL CONCEPT

Programme Leader Designate (PLD), has concept for new programme / is approached to develop a programme

2 IDEA CONSIDERED

Initial idea paper is considered by School for fit with School priorities/ operational planning

3 PROPOSAL

If approved to progress, PLD completes New Programme Proposal (NPP) in collaboration with Business Partners and Stakeholders

4 SCHOOL APPROVAL

NPP is scrutinised by School Board. If approved, NPP is signed off by Dean of School

5 NPP SUBMISSION

Form is submitted for review to Portfolio Advisory Group chaired by Deputy Vice Chancellor

6 MILESTONES

If NPP is approved, drafting team identify appropriate date for approval and develop a milestones document

7 PANEL NOMINATIONS

PLD provides School with nomination forms for the external panel members at least 6 weeks before the event

 6+ weeks before

8 WORKSHOPS

Drafting team produces documentation in consultation with stakeholders. **MUST** include collaboration with Learning Transformations and business partners.

 6+ weeks before

9 SCHOOL SCRUTINY

Documentation checked for accuracy, currency, appropriate LO's and compliance. Mock panel could be utilised

 4+ weeks before

10 REVISIONS

Revisions to documentation made. Briefing pack and documentation are sent to Panel who are invited to provide initial comments

 3+ weeks before

11 PRE-EVENT MEETING

PLD meets with Chair of Panel to discuss format of event and any feedback received from Panel

12 APPROVAL EVENT

Panel has authority to approve new programmes / title or to suspend /adjourn the event if serious concerns emerge

13 REPORT

Report is prepared by the School and approved by the Chair, Panel and PLD

 within 5 working days

14 RESPONSE TO REPORT

PLD submits response to the report (to Chair) confirming how any conditions have been met along with any revised materials

 within agreed timescales

15 WIDER COMMUNICATION

Once any conditions have been confirmed as met, School communicates programme details to University Professional Support Departments

16 PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Programme is entered into system. Drafting team prepare programme for delivery. Recruitment begins

UWS STRATEGY 2025 & THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

In 2019/20, UWS launched its new ambitious forward-looking strategy. [The UWS Strategy 2025](#) lays out an agenda for educational innovation and excellence that comprise six broad objectives:

1. Our portfolio of courses is contemporary, relevant, sustainable, and allow students to thrive in the rapidly-changing 21st century workplace.
2. The delivery modes of our programmes of study are flexible, and student-centred, allowing students to manage the mode, intensity and duration of study. All have hybrid delivery options.
3. Our online and physical learning environments are dynamic, technology-rich and support world-class pedagogy.
4. Students are at the heart of what we do. The UWS student journey is personal, seamless, and supported by outstanding professional and academic staff and functional, student-centred and user-friendly systems and processes.
5. Our graduates are leaders, with world-ready, interdisciplinary meta-skills and flexible, global perspectives.
6. Our talented academics employ innovative, student-centred, teaching and learning practice and engage in continuing professional development in pedagogy, digital learning innovation and student support.

Key to the achievement of these objectives is an underpinning approach to curriculum design and teaching delivery. The UWS Curriculum Framework adopts the following curriculum design principles:

- **Flexible and hybrid**, using best-in-class technologies and pedagogies, meeting the learning needs of students in contemporary Scotland;
- **Simple and coherent**, providing carefully-designed linear pathways for students whether part-time or full-time; on-campus or online, starting in first year or joining at any time in their degree pathway;
- **Student-centred**, thus designed to meet the diverse needs of the distinctive UWS student cohorts, using a flexible and agile approach to curriculum that responds better to the needs of each student and considers and seeks to impact positively on the wellbeing of all students;
- **Authentic**, using real-world learning activities and assessments to best prepare students for the complex and ever-changing professional world and society in which they live and work;
- **Inclusive**, recognising the diversity of the student body, and the need to be accessible to all.
- **Sustainable**, with efficient structures, pathways and number of modules.

This framework **will be applied to PGT and UGT** programmes and phased in by Schools from **2020/21** onwards as part of a phased implementation within the UWS Student Experience Programme (workstream 1: portfolio renewal), with full implementation achieved by 24/25.

Whilst these principles should inform **all programme design** at UWS there may be occasions where a PSRB requires a different approach in order to secure accreditation or formal recognition. This framework encourages collaborative, partnership working with PSRBs to identify solutions and work together to provide robust and authentic programmes that meet the needs of students, professions and industry, and the ethos of the University.

Supporting guidance in terms of addressing elements of the CF exists in the form of a **CF Alignment Document**, which is available to assist teams.

The **UWS Curriculum Framework 2022** is a key component of the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan and the Student Experience Programme through which the plan will be implemented. It is intended that all provision will be aligned to the CF by end of 2024/25; with teams using varying methodology to align to the CF, some of which will use the programme amendment or programme approval processes outlined within this chapter. Some flexibility in timelines is anticipated for certain elements given external factors out with our control.

1 APPROVAL OF NEW OR SIGNIFICANTLY REDESIGNED PROGRAMMES

Introduction

One of the key ways in which institutions demonstrate their responsibilities for standards and quality is through the procedures for curriculum design, programme approval and programme monitoring and review.

Initial Concept

New programme proposals should be developed in line with school strategic plans, the [University Strategy](#) and the plans and frameworks which underpin it. An initial idea paper should be raised at the Divisional Programme Board before the plan is discussed at the School Board. If other Schools are to be involved in the delivery of the proposed provision then it is important for all relevant programme teams to be involved in the initial consideration of the provision.

New Programme Proposal

When proposing a new programme, schools should complete the [New Programme Proposal form](#) available on [Sharepoint](#). This form is designed to ensure proposals are based on a robust business case and the development is supported by and completed in partnership with relevant professional services. It requires a detailed, evidenced-based business case to be presented with input from several areas of professional services. The form has been created to ensure that the development and assessment of new programme proposals is:-

- Evidence-based: developed in an evidence-based manner to produce a clear rationale with consideration of areas including existing programme health data, indicators of viability, reflection on similar provision at other Higher Education Providers (HEP) and identification of Unique Selling Points (USP), and resources required;
- Transparent: decision making will be cross-school through NPP subgroup (Portfolio Strategy Group - PSG)
- Collaborative: Consultation with professional services is initiated at the outset of the proposal and continued throughout the process to approval stage.

This form should be used for all new named awards both of the University and potential validated programme developments.

Consultation

The NPP form must be completed in collaboration with the relevant professional services teams providing support, guidance, oversight and transparency of the programme portfolio. The NPP Form must be signed off by the appropriate Business Partner prior to submission to the PSG; those not signed off shall not be accepted. Drafting Teams are advised to engage with the following areas in developing their proposal:

External Stakeholders

Programme teams are encouraged to reflect on who the key stakeholders for the programme might be and utilise the best approach for engaging them in the process of design, review and approval. These stakeholders might include potential employers, placement providers and service users. They provide a useful indicator of how successful a programme is likely to be and whether the interest is sustainable or will be transient. They are also key in identifying CPD opportunities. Common practice within the sector involves establishing and engaging with Industry Advisory Boards. These can be formally or informally organised, to discuss programme developments at key stages during the design and approval process; liaising with professional body contacts and education teams to consider alignment to professional standards or requirements.

Students

Current students offer a barometer on what currently works well and what they would look for in a new programme. Guiding Principle 4 of the [UK Quality Code on Course Design and Development](#) expects providers to engage with students in the design, development and approval of programmes and Schools should ensure that the student voice is actively represented. Schools should consult with current students and alumni where possible. Programme teams should reflect on and be able to respond to questions on what contribution students have made to the design and development of their programme(s).

Widening Participation (Student Recruitment)

If the proposed programme has been developed to offer an articulation route from colleges (or could potentially be developed for this purpose), the expertise of Marketing and Student Recruitment is invaluable in managing this relationship and understanding the requirements of creating partnerships.

International Centre

The International Centre are integral in developing international articulation partnerships to recruit international students and build up UWS branding overseas through partnership. The IC can assist by highlighting international opportunities through market identification and development, and by identifying opportunities for all students to have an international experience during the course of their studies by managing Study Abroad and Exchange programmes.

International students

Where the proposed cohort for the new programme will include Tier 4 (non-EEA) students, Teams should ensure the student journey will comply with UKVI definitions of full time study. Further guidance can be provided by colleagues in Marketing and Student Recruitment.

Marketing

The University's Marketing and Communications department provides professional marketing advice to colleagues across the institution. Currently their input does not extend to market research, although they can signpost to available third-party providers and have provided a [Quick Market Research Approaches Guide](#).

Finance

Finance Business Partners can assist in completing the Finance Costing Model for the proposed programme, provide information on student fees and highlight areas that the drafting team may not have considered.

Library

Drafting teams are also encouraged to speak to the relevant Subject Librarian to discuss reading resources, journals and other relevant support texts. For programmes starting in September, the [library](#) requires to know of additional resource requirements by the end of February of the previous session. If additional library resources are required, drafting teams should ensure licensing and maintenance costs have been factored in to costing model.

Information Technology

If there are additional IT resources needed to support the provision, the drafting team should also liaise with Information Technology (IT) to highlight the need for specific software, hardware or other facilities, or any need to increase the number of licenses held, to ensure this new provision can be supported and funded.

QuEST

If drafting teams are daring to be different, a discussion with QuEST will establish what regulatory areas they may need to consider in offering an academically robust yet innovative programme. They can also offer expert advice on collaborative partnerships from franchise to validated models.

Learning and Teaching Enhancement

This Directorate for Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) consists of QuEST and Learning Transformation. The Learning Transformation area supports academic colleagues by offering advice on best practice in curriculum development, change, innovation and hybrid learning. It offers continuous professional development programmes for new and existing colleagues. Within this department, the Digital Learning Technologists are experts in designing and delivering enhancements in learning environments. In addition to bringing new ideas, approaches, and technologies, the team will also provide the 'building blocks' of digital education by providing a range of workshops and self-paced resources on 'how to' for those who teach.

Supporting Documentation

To assist the schools in producing their proposals, the [SharePoint](#) for this chapter has the following support information:

[NPP – Programme Approvals Ready Reckoner Flowchart](#) This spreadsheet-based decision maker enables the user to determine a timeline from concept to launch of a new programme.

Finance Costing Model Referred to in the NPP Form, this spreadsheet allows programme teams to calculate the likely cost of initial set-up and running costs for programmes. It should be submitted alongside the NPP form.

[NPP Flow Diagram](#) (Process from Programme Conception to Approval) This document shows the process from concept to launch. A copy appears at the start of this chapter.

[NPP – Quick Market Research Approaches](#) Referred to in the NPP Form, this is guidance from UWS Marketing that programme teams can use to assist in self-directed market research.

[Programme Scrutiny Checklist](#) This revised checklist whilst lengthy, addresses the typical requirements of a successful approval.

The supporting documentation is crucial in assisting schools in understanding the effort required to bring forward a new programme. Whilst it is entirely feasible to bring forward a programme in very short timescales, there will be implications on the scale of marketing and resources available. For example, to have a presence in the Undergraduate Prospectus, the programme must be approved by June of the previous year. However, should the programme only require a web presence, turnaround can be as little as a few days depending on the complexity of the request. Schools should be cognisant of the timescales required by supporting departments when proposing new programmes.

Approval of New Programme Proposals

It is expected that all NPPs are presented as part of operational planning on an annual basis. However, NPPs can and will be accepted at any point in the academic year. For proposals outside of Operational Planning, once the School Board is satisfied with the proposal it will be forwarded to the Secretary to the Portfolio Strategy Group (PSG). The outcomes of PSG decisions will be communicated to the School to proceed to programme approval, and PSG will report directly to Senate on new programmes and withdrawals. PSG will report regularly on the health and viability of the University's portfolio of programmes. Summary reports are provided to Vice Chancellor's Executive (VCE) to highlight key portfolio recommendations and to enable members of VCE to have strategic oversight of portfolio developments.

The Approval Process

The model for programme approval firmly places ownership and responsibility for development of new provision and associated documentation with drafting teams. Final approval rests with Senate in line with the advice and guidance within UK Quality Code for Higher Education which recommends that ownership and oversight of the approval processes should be the responsibility of a senior academic committee. Senate has vested in the Approval Panel the authority to approve programmes.

The University's criteria for approval, below, are informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. (See www.qaa.ac.uk for more information.) Approval mechanisms have been designed to incorporate the Advice and Guidance from the relevant sections of the revised UK Quality Code.

- a) Schools are responsible for the consideration of proposed new programmes/amendments to existing programmes and for submitting these to Portfolio Strategy Group.

- b) Once confirmed by the Portfolio Strategy Group to proceed to an approval event, the School will be responsible for organising the event.
- c) An approval event MAY also be required where:
- It is an outcome of Institution-Led Review (ILR);
 - **More than 30-credits of core provision at any level of the programme have been amended or replaced via the programme amendment process.** This is to safeguard the integrity of the level outcomes and associated awards of the University. The Divisional Programme Board should always consider the impact on programme specifications where modules are amended or replaced. Any greater volume of change to modules or level outcomes as identified above will require a full re-approval event;
 - Significant changes are being proposed to an existing programme, e.g. change of title, the addition of new modes of delivery including blended, online and face to face, schedule of delivery, or the addition of an Honours level.

Contact colleagues in QuEST for further advice.

Scheduling

All new programmes/titles will be considered at an approval event by a panel acting on behalf of Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and including external peers. The approval of programmes should normally take place between October and March to ensure that programme data is confirmed by the University deadline of 31 March. This deadline ensures that the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) can be advised in good time, programme marketing put in place and programme information added to the Banner student record system and the University's Programme Specification and Module Descriptor catalogue. Where teams wish to ensure that programmes are available for the initial UCAS application deadline in January, they should aim to have programmes approved early in Term 1 for delivery the following year.

The majority of events will be contained within one working day. It may also be possible to group related new programmes into one event. Approval events will normally be held online or at the campus where the programme will run. At the event, panel members have the opportunity to meet formally with senior staff of the University, usually the Dean of School, Deputy Dean, Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) and Programme Leaders, review relevant learning resources and staff concerned with the programme. Panel members welcome the opportunity to meet with students from existing programmes where this is relevant.

Marketing

It is understandable that Schools will be keen to market their programmes as soon as they have had Portfolio Strategy Group endorsement to proceed to approval.

Our Legal team advises that whilst we can advertise programmes 'subject to approval', it is only recommended where we have a reasonable level of confidence there will be no significant changes, e.g. the programme title will remain as

advertised etc. It is **not recommended** that applications are opened until the programme has been finalised following the approval event.

2 PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Senate has confirmed the importance of a strong focus on programme development through the front loading of consultation and engagement with Professional Services, employers and individual representatives, students/graduates and Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body (PSRB) (if appropriate). A key stage in programme development is the establishment of drafting teams which included consultation and engagement with the key stakeholders, employers / industry representatives, students and Professional Services. The Approval Panel will seek assurance that the above have taken place and may wish to see evidence of how this has informed the development of the proposal.

The Drafting Team

POSITIVE PRACTICE: SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES

Positive practice in the School of Health and Life Sciences includes the scheduling of a series of drafting team workshops all with specific focuses where invitations are extended to the relevant stakeholders and professional services depending on the areas being discussed. This input has moulded programmes that from the outset are collaborative, and responsive to the needs of the various stakeholders (e.g. students, employers and service users).

The prime responsibility for the quality of new programmes lies with the drafting team. It is the responsibility of the School to appoint a Programme Leader / Programme Leader Designate and drafting team to prepare programme documentation. Careful consideration should be given to the criteria for programme approval, Programme Scrutiny Checklist and the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) when drafting programme approval documents.

Learning Transformation is available to assist in the drafting of various aspects of new programme documents including curriculum design and developments, drafting of learning outcomes, embedding employability, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) / Online

developments, Personal Development Planning (PDP) process and alignment with the Curriculum Framework. Separate Curriculum Design guidance is available via Learning Transformation. Teams should engage with Learning Transformation early in the programme development process to benefit from expertise in curriculum development, change, innovation and hybrid learning.

Please contact the Head of Learning Transformation, Katy Savage to discussion how teams can benefit from early intervention/consultation from colleagues in Learning Transformation (katy.savage@uws.ac.uk) with respect to development of proposed new programmes.

Schools should put in place support for academic staff developing new programmes who require mentoring, monitor developments and offer support to the drafting team.

Deans of School are accountable for ensuring programmes are presented in time for the agreed deadlines and that documentation, particularly learning outcomes, have been scrutinised well in advance of the deadline for circulation to the panel.

Drafting Team Membership

Drafting teams should include representation from colleagues from relevant Professional Services, for example, LTE, Information, Technology (IT), Student Success Hub and Library. There should also be involvement from professional/industrial colleagues on the programme development activities. Employer and PSRB input to curriculum design and other relevant benchmarking should be evident.

The experience of approval events at UWS is that it is of more benefit to have employer and industry involvement in the development of the programme rather than at the end of the process as a panel member. If the drafting teams can evidence their engagement with employers and industry as part of the pre-event activities, then an industrial representative would not be required on Approval Panels unless requested specifically by the School/accrediting body or PSRB.

Student Engagement in Approval Process

As part of the University system for the approval of new programmes, students should be consulted to ascertain their views on the new programme / programme amendment, its structure and the proposed learning, teaching and assessment methods.

Schools should make arrangements in good time to include engagement with students during the drafting process. Graduates can also provide useful input.

It is acknowledged that it can be difficult to seek students' views for completely new programmes and subject areas, nevertheless, due consideration should be given to the student view for any new addition to the School's portfolio. The drafting team are encouraged to facilitate feedback through Student/Staff Liaison Groups (SSLG), Divisional Programme Boards, cohort consultation meetings (including via VLE / online platforms), wider student and alumni focus groups, individual engagement through systematic inclusion of students as members of design teams for new and existing programme developments, and through the systematic use of student feedback data. It is also good practice to include them on approval panels and review boards.

When approving significant amendments/additions to an existing programme, for example the addition of an Honours level, students on the existing programme will be invited to meet with the panel to provide their opinion on the proposed development and the implications for the student experience.

CASE STUDY: SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN APPROVALS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROVISION

Prior to the approval event, students were engaged in co-creator focus group sessions where existing cohorts of students from all demographics talked openly about a range of issues including contact hours, assessment and assessment types. It became apparent from these meetings that students were keen to experience a mix of traditional and innovative learning and teaching approaches.

The feedback from these sessions informed the programme team's approach to the redevelopment of the undergraduate provision and led to the development of more choice in option modules, including greater use of 10 credit modules. It was hypothesised that these smaller modules would improve progression and retention as students would gain a sense of achievement over less time than the traditional 20 credit module.

Students involved in these sessions were subsequently invited to present at the approval event. The input from students set a very positive tone and provided a genuine flavour for the panel of the business student at UWS. The student input had created an inspiring atmosphere.

Post-approval communications with the students had shown that they had valued being involved in shaping the future of the programme.

The Approval Process

The approval process is organised by the School in consultation with the Programme Leader.



For more information on any stage of approval process, please **contact your EQO**.

Responsibilities of the Programme Leader

Programme Leaders are responsible for providing nominations for external panel members to the Dean of School as soon as possible after the Portfolio Advisory Group authorisation is received.

Programme Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the documentation is prepared in line with the requirements of this handbook and relevant external organisations (such as PSRB or UKVI), submitted for scrutiny, and printed in sufficient quantities to supply the panel, programme team and the relevant Dean of School and the EQO. The Dean of School is responsible for confirming the quality of the final version of the document and fit with [University Regulations](#) and Curriculum Framework before it is forwarded to the panel not less than two weeks before the event. Where panel members have a complaint about the process it is usually that insufficient time has been allocated for reading the documentation and preparing for the event, so if documents are not submitted in time to allow two clear weeks for reading, the event is likely to be cancelled.

The Programme Leader is supplied with copies of all the briefing information sent to the panel by the EQO and is responsible for circulating these to the programme team for information.

The Programme Leader is responsible for identifying and inviting the appropriate members of teaching staff and students (if there is a related existing programme) and others to the event and advising them of the times of appropriate meetings. The programme team should include the programme and subject leaders and should cover all the specialist areas taught.

In making the arrangements for the event, the EQO will normally liaise directly with the Programme Leader who should ensure that the Dean, Deputy Dean and Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching) are fully appraised of all arrangements.

Multi-location Delivery of a Programme

Individual programmes can be delivered across multiple locations; the panel will consider this as part of their discussions around the student experience. The programme specification and prospectus should make explicit the delivery approaches for each programme, with a more detailed breakdown provided for the panel to consider. This detailed breakdown should also be included in the student handbook.

Whilst teams can develop programmes for delivery across multiple locations it is important for students to be associated with a single campus for programme management purposes. The importance of clear information in the programme specification and prospectus is vital to allow Schools to manage student expectations. Detailed information on programme delivery is to be made available to students in advance of enrolment.

3 DOCUMENTATION FOR PROGRAMME APPROVAL

Introduction

There are a number of documents required in the programme approval process:

- Programme Design and Development Plan (PDDP);
- Programme Specification(s);
- Module Descriptors;
- Report from the Final School Scrutiny;
- Specific documentation to satisfy the requirements of PSRBs.

Programme specifications and module descriptors should be completed via your EQO. These documents are detailed on the following pages.

The panel will also be provided with the most recent appropriate Institution-Led Review report.

The School should ensure that:

- the documents are fully subject to a scrutiny process and signed off by the Dean of School;
- all documents are page numbered and include a contents page;
- a final proof check for typographical and spelling errors has taken place prior to printing;
- each document has a front cover with the following information included - University logo, name of the document, title(s) of the award(s) including single/major/joint/minor, name of School and the date of the event;
- watermarks do not appear on the documentation as this can interfere with the recipient's ability to read the text;
- the Programme Leader has provided the EQO with an appropriate number of hard copies of materials for the panel in line with timescales.

Circulation to the Panel

The EQO will ensure a briefing pack for all panel members is circulated which will include:


- An event programme;
- Panel membership;
- A briefing note for panel members;
- Background information on UWS;

- Expenses claim information;
- A campus map (if appropriate).

Programme Design & Development Plan (PDDP)

The PDDP describes how the proposed programme is to be introduced and developed to enable the panel to fully understand the drafting team's intention and how the provision links to aspirations of the UWS Strategy. The programme specification is incorporated within this document.

The following information should be included within all PDDP documents:

- The standard front page;
- A programme structure table for each title outlining full and part-time journeys as appropriate and in line with UKVI requirements as necessary;
- Rationale for the title and level of the programme, with reference to the subject benchmark statement and the market for the award. The title should be consistent with University Regulations (Chapter 1), UWS Awards and SCQF, in that the name given to any qualification should represent appropriately the level of achievement, reflect accurately the field(s) of study, and not be misleading;
- Confirmation and evidence that the proposal has taken full account of the UWS Strategy, Curriculum Framework, Thematic Plans, Regulatory Framework, Quality Handbook, Assessment Handbook, Graduate Attributes  and relevant [UWS policies](#), e.g. Copyright; Code of Ethics
- Confirmation of the use of external reference points including Benchmark Statements, PSRB requirements, employer and graduate feedback;
- Delivery approaches including blended learning and single cohort delivery on multiple locations;
- A matrix to show the mapping of module outcomes and content to the programme learning outcomes should be included in the documentation;
- A mapping of assessments to ensure that assessment load has been considered and mitigated against;
- Information relating to resources such as physical and lab space, equipment and consumables, the library and computing facilities;
- Where a programme is to be offered at more than one campus or mode of delivery, the PDDP should articulate how the equivalence of student experience would be managed;
- Inclusivity in the curriculum;
- Internationalisation of the curriculum;
- Reflection on ethical issues within the curriculum;

- Management of the student experience including references to annual monitoring, student feedback opportunities and the specific needs of part-time/online blended learning. Arrangements and support for direct entrants via RPL /admission requirements;
- Staff CVs / Pure Profiles.

Presentation to the Panel

Each event will start with a meet and greet to allow the panel to meet the Programme Leader and drafting team over coffee before the event commences formally. Following on from the meet and greet there should be a presentation by the School to provide a clear introduction to the proposal and focus the panel onto the development. If the presentation covered the following issues it would remove the need for them to be covered explicitly in the PDDP:

- Background to the development;
- Introduction to the Drafting Team;
- Programme development activities (stakeholder & student engagement);
- Staff expertise and resourcing;
- Research underpinning strategy;
- Student support and guidance;
- Future Plan and 5 Year Development;
- Alignment with the UWS Strategy and Curriculum Framework

Following the presentation the panel will be invited to ask any questions or discuss what they had heard from the School.

The programme for each event will provide an outline of what issues would be considered at each meeting to allow the School to ensure appropriate attendance and representation.

Programme Specifications

Programme specifications are required for all programmes and titles of the University.

Teams should note that the programme specifications will be public documents made available to potential students, employers and other stakeholders via PSMD. It is imperative that Programme Specifications and linked documentation complies with the [Competitions and Markets Authority guidance to HE providers](#). The Legal team have created helpful guides to CMA and material changes available here: [Supporting Docs - Chapter 4](#)

Exit awards (CertHE/DipHE/Degree/Grad Cert/Grad Dip/PgC/PgD) may be included in the programme specification for the higher level award but learning outcomes should be delineated for each award.

Learning outcomes for each title and each award should be explicit, clearly articulated and distinct.

The programme specification will contain detailed information on:

- Admissions requirements;
- Teaching, learning & assessment approach;
- Employability, Graduate Attributes and PDP;
- Work Based Learning (WBL)/ Placement opportunities;
- Engagement and Attendance;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
- Pointers to further study.

Teams are reminded of the importance of the specifications containing detailed accurate information on the above as this will no longer be addressed in the PDDP.

Guidance on Programme Specifications

- All programme specifications for Honours programmes should make reference to the appropriate Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark (see [QAA website](#) for most recent version);
- Schools should ensure that Programme Specifications are explicit with regards to progression and award criteria including any fall-back awards available. This is particularly pertinent given the future further automation of assessment boards;
- Cognisance should be taken of the SCQF, with particular attention to Level Descriptors, which set out the characteristic outcomes, which would be expected to be found at each level of study;
- Academic support for developing all areas of the Programme Specification including the wording of level specific learning outcomes is available from Learning Transformation;
- Further guidance on completing Programme and Module documentation, can be found on the [Sharepoint/Teams](#) page. For training and advice, please contact your EQO in the first instance or a member of QuEST staff.

Module Descriptors

Module descriptors should be included as part of the programme approval documentation in a separate bound document. This includes existing and new modules. The drafting of all modules should be completed via the materials on the Sharepoint site, liaising with EQOs as necessary. It is not necessary to include all option modules open to prospective students, although recommended option modules should be included. Others should be available if requested by the panel.

The panel will review the core modules for the title/programme, both existing and new modules. New modules should be considered by the Divisional Programme Board before the event. The panel will provide the required external input.

Guidance on Presentation of Module Descriptors in Programme Approval Documentation

To enable the panel to easily navigate through the module descriptors submitted for approval it is recommended that:

- The modules be ordered by level and then by core/option. It would also be useful if any new modules could be easily identified either by making bold or underlining the titles;
- The learning outcomes stated in the module descriptors are appropriate for the level of the programme and in keeping with the expectations of the SCQF and include all exit awards;
- Programme teams should consider carefully the use of pre-requisites within their programme structure and module specifications as this can prevent student progression;
- References and reading lists are up to date;
- Academic support for developing all areas of the module descriptor including the wording of Learning Outcomes is available from Learning Transformation within LTE.

Module Descriptors – Assessment Detail

To ensure that module descriptors are responsive to change, it is recommended that the detail on assessment is kept **minimal** and that the specific assignments are detailed in the module handbooks. As module handbooks are understandably not usually available for approval events, this can make the process of understanding the assessment strategy difficult for panels. It is therefore recommended that a **summary of the assessments** is provided for panel members separate from the module descriptor.

For example,

- What is the balance of formative and summative assessment?
- How will formative assessment take place?
- What kinds of summative assessments will students encounter on the module (written? practical? presentation? project? individual? group?) and why are these assessments the ones that are used?
- Is assessment staggered across the module's delivery, or does it all take place towards the end?
- How will assessments support the learning that takes place within the module?
- What innovative or novel types of assessment are being used within the module?

- If your module offers choice of assessment, how is parity assured? Are the marking rubrics available for scrutiny by the panel?

Whilst it is recommended that module descriptors do not detail the assessment, if the module descriptor simply states “Assignment 1”, it is difficult for the panel to establish what and how the assessment enables the student to meet the learning outcomes. Therefore, within the descriptor there should be some detail, but not enough to make the module static, e.g. you might specify “essay of 2000 words”, but not the specific essay question. It can be helpful to provide an example of a module handbook to reassure the panel that students are provided with appropriately detailed information.

School Scrutiny

All programme documentation will be subject to scrutiny before being circulated to the panel. It is recommended that continual scrutiny occurs during the different phases of programme development and a final scrutiny should take place at least four weeks before the event to allow for timely circulation to the panel. The importance of timely, effective scrutiny should not be underestimated. It is recommended that a final scrutiny event is chaired by a senior member of the School and that the Programme Leader, drafting team, academics from outside of the immediate drafting team and other staff from within the School as appropriate are invited to attend. The EQO will attend the scrutiny meeting to advise on regulatory matters and will write a report documenting the revised requirements prior to the approval event.

Schools are responsible for the **completeness, accuracy, integrity and quality of programme documentation**. Schools are urged to take advice from the range of support services available on early drafts of documentation and use the Programme Scrutiny Checklist to guide their developments. If final scrutiny raises any reservations about the proposal proceeding at this stage these should be raised immediately with the Head of QuEST via the Deputy Dean or EQO in order that a decision can be taken as to whether the event should be postponed. Deans of Schools are responsible for signing off the documentation before despatch to the panel and for confirming resources and academic planning within Schools are in place as required to support the new programme and that the School is satisfied with the quality of the submission.

The [Programme Scrutiny Checklist](#) is available to assist programme teams in meeting the typical requirements for an approval event. It is recommended that this is used early in the programme development in addition to the [Criteria for Programme Approval](#). Recent thematic reviews of programme approvals have highlighted that the majority of conditions resulting from events relate to documentation revisions.

A copy of the scrutiny report should be made available for the panel to review.

4 PROGRAMME APPROVAL EVENTS

Panel Membership

The panel is convened by the School on behalf of Senate and is usually chaired by a senior academic member of University staff. Internal members (University staff) are not normally specialists in the discipline under consideration but will usually have experience of programme approval and quality assurance systems. The panel will normally comprise two externals (two academics) and three internals including the Chair. A member of QuEST will be present to advise on regulations and the academic infrastructure. There may be different panels for events that include professional body accreditation.

External members are invited to participate on the basis of their subject expertise as an academic or professional. There should normally be a minimum of two externals though the School or professional body may request additional panel members to cover the specialisms brought forward for approval.

The Programme Leader is asked to make external nominations to the panel using proformas at least six weeks in advance of the event. Second choices should also be identified. If nominations are not submitted by this deadline, the event may be cancelled. There is an Honorarium fee for external panel members, as detailed in appendix 1, and expenses are covered with overnight accommodation when required.

While existing External Examiners may make helpful comments at various stages of curriculum design and review, they may **not** be involved as members of Approval Panels.

The panel membership is balanced to reflect the nature and objectives of the event and the characteristics of the programme.

Panel members require to receive the full programme documentation, an outline programme and briefing notes three weeks in advance of the visit. They are invited to highlight issues to be raised during the event in advance to assist the Chair in preparing for the event.

Format of the Event

Approval events are normally held over a full day (e.g. 9.30am to 4.00pm) to give the panel appropriate time to meet with senior staff, to hold discussions with the programme team, review the facilities and possibly meet with students and other stakeholders.

There are some events where it may be appropriate to hold a half day event. This would usually be considered for awards where the panel was considering six modules or less such as:

- addition of an honours level;
- graduate certificate or diploma award;
- postgraduate certificate or diploma award.

However, if the provision constitutes a **new subject area** for the institution then this would still normally require a full day event.

The length of the event and timing may also be influenced by the requirements of any professional and accrediting bodies involved in the approval.

Criteria for Appointment of Panel Chairs

The Chair of the panel has a key role in managing the agenda for the day, directing questions and ensuring all members of the panel have the opportunity to participate fully in discussions.

Consequently, there are certain minimum criteria which Senate would normally expect to be satisfied by panel chairs. Chairs will normally be able to demonstrate at least two of the following characteristics:

- 1 Be a member of LTC and therefore conversant with the national and internal policies and activities supporting the enhancement-led agenda;
- 2 Have experience as a University Programme Leader who has taken one or more programmes through the approval process;
- 3 Be a trained QAA or PSRB Reviewer;
- 4 Be a Dean, Deputy Dean, Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching), Divisional Programme Board Chair or Senior Lecturer at the University of the West of Scotland, or a Director or Deputy Director or Head of a Professional Service Department.

All panel chairs will be expected to participate in the training event provided by QuEST before chairing an event for the first time.

Criteria for Appointment of External Panel Members

Nominations for external panel members should be submitted to the School at the earliest opportunity to ensure that availability of first choice externals is maximised. There should normally be a minimum of two externals, though the School or professional body may request additional panel members to cover the specialisms brought forward for approval. The School should scrutinise the nominations proposed by the programme team, taking into account the following:

- It may be prudent not to choose someone from a close or competitor institution;
- The full breadth of the programme's provision must be covered by the externals;
- At least one external panel member should have experience of programme development and leadership in HE;
- Engagement with an AdvanceHE Subject Centre and/or QAA Subject Benchmarking activity would be an advantage.

Once external panel members are identified, the programme team should not consult with them. The EQO or nominee will be responsible for inviting external panel members to be involved in the approval event.

Those precluded from the nomination process include honorary professors, visiting lecturers, Recognised Teachers of the University (RTU), or any person deemed to be in current employment of the University. In addition external examiners, former members of staff or persons who have previously been members of Approval Panels cannot be nominated unless it has been more than four years since their previous appointment. Panel members should not be from areas where UWS currently has colleagues acting as External Examiners within the specific subject/programme area under review. Retired professionals/academics cannot normally be considered after 12 months has elapsed since their employment in the subject/HE, unless exceptional circumstances exist and continuing practice within the sector can be evidenced.

Selection of Internal Panel Members

The internal panel members will usually include the following:

- An internal Chair who meets the criteria noted above;
- Two members of staff from outwith the School proposing the new programme, at least one of whom is an academic who has experience of programme development and/or leadership;
- A senior member of QuEST will be in attendance at all events.

Criteria for Programme Approval

The following criteria are drawn to the attention of Approval Panel members, Schools and drafting teams and will be explored during the event:

- a) The programme team should understand the principles, philosophy and processes underpinning the programme. There should be evidence of external reference points having influenced the curriculum and, where appropriate, there should have been industrial/professional input in the drafting process and exploration of the likely demand for the programme. They should have thought through the intellectual development and the planned experience of a student taking the programme and they should have addressed the implications for direct entrants into the programme via RPL. The rationale for the future development of the programme should be clear.
- b) The programme should be able to realise its educational aims and intended learning outcomes and meet the framework set out in the appropriate QAA Subject Benchmark Statements. Learning outcomes for each level and exit award proposed should be explicit.
- c) The curriculum should be coherent, realistic and of comparable academic standard to similar programmes and awards of other UK Higher Education providers. The content of the programme should be relevant to its title and outcomes. There should be an appropriate balance between academic and practical elements. The sequence,

level and progression of content should be appropriate and in line with the SCQF and appropriately articulated in programme and module learning outcomes at each level. The balance between the depth and breadth of the curriculum should be appropriate to the award.

- d) The programme should be suitable for a range of learners in addition to full-time students. Consideration should have been given to equality, diversity and inclusion matters. Programme Specifications and Module Descriptors should be complete and clear to their intended audiences.
- e) The title and content of any exit awards including minor/joint specifications must be addressed by the panel and discussed in the report of the event. These should be in line with the SCQF and Chapter 1 of the University's Regulatory Framework.
- f) The intended methods of teaching, learning and assessment should be explicit, appropriate and effective.
- g) Specification of the requirements that need to be met by prospective students to enable them to study must be clear e.g. Computer Hardware & Software Specifications.
- h) The regulations regarding student admission, programme structure, progression, assessment and examination should be those of the University Regulatory Framework. Any deviations that are identified at scrutiny should be brought to the attention of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Success). The scheme of assessment should make it possible to test the extent to which students have achieved level and programme outcomes.
- i) The level of study proposed in the final stage of the programme should be appropriate in relation to the award to which it will lead. There should be distinct outcomes for single/major/joint and minor awards at all levels.
- j) The facilities and resources should be sufficient to support the programme adequately and appropriate resource planning in place with any risks identified and addressed. Staff development and research should be ongoing at an appropriate level. Staff CVs/Pure profiles are included in approval documentation.
- k) Learning and teaching strategies should be compliant with equal opportunities policies and promote a critical understanding of discrimination, diversity, ethics and other related concepts in the context of education and society.
- l) There should be appropriate student support systems in place.
- m) Clear mechanisms should be in place for the maintenance of the standard of the award(s) and the continuing enhancement of the quality of the students' programme of study.

- n) The objectives and integration of sandwich or other work-based learning or professional placement arrangements should be articulated.
- o) How employability skills and graduate attributes, including the principles of Global Citizenship and PDP, are integrated into the programme and how information on career opportunities is communicated to students should be included.
- p) There should be clear systems in place to gather and respond to student feedback and for broader student engagement in learning, teaching and assessment.
- q) Embedding of research skills and relevant underpinning should be evident across all programmes.

The extent to which particular issues will need emphasis will vary according to the event in question. The panel will also take cognisance of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education on [Course Design and Development](#).

The panel has the authority to approve the proposal on behalf of Senate where the criteria for programme approval have been adequately addressed and to specify any conditions which require to be met before the programme can commence as well as any recommendations and observations to enhance the programme and the student experience. The panel is also invited to highlight elements of good practice.

Alternatively, the panel may reject the proposal if it has serious reservations about its structure, content, quality or standard. The Chair may request an adjournment of the programme approval process at any point during the proceedings if it looks unlikely that the panel will be able to reach a positive outcome.

Outcomes of the Approval Event

During the final private meeting of the panel, it is essential that the main points of agreement or disagreement are identified, and decisions reached about the future action required. Guidance is available from the senior QuEST panel member, if required. There are several possible decisions which the panel may agree on behalf of Senate:

- **Adjournment:** the Chair has authority to adjourn the event at any point during the day if the proposal is not of the standard or quality required to achieve approval but the panel has confidence that this can be rectified in the short-term and is willing to reconvene at a later date to consider a revised proposal;
- **Approval for a period not exceeding six years subject to University monitoring and review procedures:** thereafter the programme will normally be incorporated in the University's periodic Institution-Led Review which operates on a six-year cycle;
- **Conditional approval:** approval may be made conditional upon the fulfilment of certain requirements by a specified date. The panel should

agree and specify how such conditions will be met. If however, there appears to be a large number of conditions emerging then the panel, directed by the Chair, should consider if the programme can be approved at this stage or if the event should be adjourned. This would be appropriate for example if more than **four conditions** appeared necessary;

- **Approval for a limited period:** exceptionally, the panel may decide that approval should be limited if there remain particular concerns that have not been fully satisfied by the programme team. In such cases the panel should make a recommendation on the process to achieve a full approval when the specified period is concluded. This decision is also appropriate for programmes jointly approved with professional bodies or for collaborative provision;
- **Refusal of approval:** approval may be refused if there is evidence that the programme does not meet minimum acceptable standards and the panel does not have confidence that this can be rectified in the short-term.

There will normally be "**Recommendations**" (which require a response from the School) and "**Observations**" attached to the report - these may highlight areas of good practice and/or be issues to draw to the attention of parts of the University outwith the programme team.

Appeals against Approval Decisions

If a drafting team wishes to contest a decision made by an Approval Panel it should first seek to resolve the issue at the level at which the decision was originally made by contacting the Head of Quality Enhancement and Standards Team (QuEST). The drafting team may escalate an appeal to LTC, the decision of LTC shall be final. An appeal to LTC should be regarded as a last resort.

Conditions Relating to Programme Approval

Chairs will summarise the approval conditions and recommendations upon which the panel have agreed: this will form the basis of the report of the event. Once these statements are agreed by the panel, they are communicated orally to the Programme Leader by the Chair at the conclusion of the event.

If conditional approval is given to a programme, Chairs are asked to establish the mechanisms and timescales by which the conditions are to be met:

- Where the documentation requires substantial revision, it is appropriate for the whole panel to approve the amendments;
- Where minor amendments are required to a programme, it is appropriate for the Chair, with or without other panel member(s), to approve the amendments;
- Where conditions have been set, the School is required to provide assurance that these have been satisfactorily addressed within the required timescale.

It is a requirement that programme teams address the conditions made at approval stage urgently and produce revised programme documentation if required by the deadline specified by the panel.

If conditions are not met by the deadline set by the panel, the programme may not commence.

Procedures after the Event

Conclusions Memo

The panel gives its conclusions and recommendations verbally at the end of the event and a conclusion memo is completed by the EQO – see [template](#) and circulated to the panel, programme team and School the day after the event to allow the team to start addressing any conditions or recommendations.

The Report

The EQO or nominee also compiles a detailed written report of the event outlining:

- The presentation by the School;
- Rationale for development and target audience;
- Confirmed programme structure and student journey;
- Confirmed title and delivery mode;
- The discussions which took place including the conclusions recommended by the panel;
- Outline any conditions and/or recommendations set by the panel & context.

Approval reports demonstrate the University's public accountability for the standards achieved by their programmes. Peer groups' academic judgements, and the evidence on which they are based, must be substantiated and accessible through reports.

Approval of the Report

- The draft report must be approved by the Chair of the Panel and checked by the Programme Leader for accuracy before circulation to all members of the panel. The panel's comments are returned to the School for incorporation into the draft.

Programme Leader Response to the Report

- The Programme Leader is responsible for providing a brief response to the report on behalf of the drafting team and the School to address how conditions/recommendations have been/will be addressed, this will be attached to the report and confirmed by signature of Chair of panel.
- LTC may review any report and consider the Programme Leader response having reviewed the annual summary of programme approval outcomes report which is prepared by QuEST.

Circulation of Approved Final Report

- The approved report is circulated to the Programme Leader. The School also notifies Admissions / Student Recruitment, QuEST, Strategic Planning, Marketing & Communications, Finance, Banner and colleagues in Registry that the programme(s) has/have been approved and conditions met and provides copies of revised materials if requested;
- The Divisional Programme Board should review the report in detail on behalf of the School Board and take forward and record longer term issues for enhancement;
- The first Programme Monitoring Report prepared following the approval event should address the issues in the report.

Final Programme Documentation

The University is required to have on file the documentation relating to each programme as it is currently being taught and administered.

One copy of the approved PDDP is required by QuEST. Copies of previous programme documents which relate to former versions of programmes will be stored for future reference within Schools. The definitive version of programme and module documents should be retained on the University document catalogue. (currently under development)

Student Handbook

Following the approval event the Programme Leader will ensure a student handbook is drafted. Core text for this is provided by the Court & Senate Office.

LTC and Senate Overview

Annually QuEST will prepare a report for LTC and Senate providing an overview of recommendations and conditions to ensure Senate has a complete understanding of the approvals and the range of issues arising at approval events. LTE will use this information in taking forward staff development to support future approval of programmes.

Programme Approvals Conducted Online or On-Campus

Over recent years the University and the sector has become more proficient in holding online events. Whilst online events can be beneficial, teams are invited to consider the option of holding approval events online or of holding these on the main campus of delivery – this should be determined by the School. The following FAQ may come in useful for those planning similar events.

What platform did you use?

We used a combination of Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Zoom worked better where there were more attendees as you cannot see as many participants in Teams> Teams has the advantage of being integrated with Microsoft Office 365 and is good as a repository for sharing documentation.

What worked well (from the institutional perspective, from the review-team perspective, from the participants' perspective)?

- Depending on the scheduling of your event, you may have time between initial review by the panel and the event to receive early feedback. This can be used by teams to prepare responses in advance of the event and to “bank” certain areas prior to the formal event if the panel are content that the response they had received had adequately addressed the area. It can also be useful to survey students prior to the event to ensure that there is evidence of student participation should they be unable to attend the session. Front-loading the event facilitated time for more focused, in-depth discussions. It also meant that the evidence base for report writing is already captured and that some of the less academic conditions can potentially be avoided. (e.g. “update your programme spec to be specific regarding exit titles” can be fixed between the initial receipt of materials and the actual event).
If you are considering stretching an approval event over several days, this approach could be adapted for your event.
- As part of our process, we do ask the review team to feedback on what worked and what didn't.
 - They appreciated that we kept in touch throughout the process, particularly with the earlier events when it was unclear what was likely to happen with lockdown.
 - Use a strong Chair to keep the panel in line and focused.
 - Setting online etiquette is a must. It is well worth familiarising yourself with the guidance from the Court and Senate Office.
- Participants were able to use the chat facility to include further context to some of the topics.
- Student participation has been excellent at these events. It was also more balanced. When we do manage to get participation from students overseas, it often feels like those on the VC don't get as much attention – this levelled that particular playing field.

How did you adapt your original programme to suit it being online?

- With the first event, the programme was very similar to a face to face event in terms of timings and areas for exploration. However, some meetings took less time than anticipated because much of the information was provided upfront.

What have the outputs been like?

- The format of the reports has been similar whilst acknowledging the change in delivery mode. And as above, fewer conditions related to documentation.

What would you do differently the next time?

- Two full days of VC is a lot of screen time, but two days together means that the issues are fresh in the minds of the panel. With the Career-Long Professional Education event, we have a gap of 10 days (Day 2 of phase 2 was on 18th June due to calendar conflicts). It did allow further opportunity for the team to provide additional documentation which can reduce the conditions attached to the programme and allow further

opportunity to discuss areas for development and highlight positive practice. It also allowed an opportunity to tweak the Day 2 programme and focus more on certain pedagogical areas and invite additional participants.

Did you have a protocol / set of house rules?

- Similar to typical house rules at face to face meetings and the guidance provided by Court and Senate Office. Once the panel have identified areas for exploration, it can be helpful for the Chair to ask a particular panel member to lead on an area. For larger events, it is similarly helpful if the question is directed to the programme lead and then they can recommend specific people to speak to the area. Ensure that all staff know how to either raise their hand physically, or using the emoticons in whatever platform is used. Zoom can be better for larger meetings as you can physically see everyone and see if someone is trying to raise a point. In Teams, it's not as easy to spot. Participants should be encouraged to use the chat to flag any further points and the administrator(s) can highlight these to the Chair to explore.

5 PROGRAMME APPROVAL FOR ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMMES

The normal approval procedures will apply to online learning programmes in terms of new programme proposal requirements, guidance and submission paperwork which are addressed above in this handbook. Programme Leaders will be expected to follow the timescales for submitting external panel member nominations, submitting documentation etc. The EQO or nominee will be responsible for organising the internal panel, and preparing the report.

Approval issues specific to online learning to be addressed are noted below:

Online Learning Programme Development

- 1 Before any online learning programme is developed, consultation should take place between the drafting team, Learning Transformation and IT to test the viability, scope and necessary development investment relevant to the proposed programme.
- 2 If the proposal is considered viable, the School should process the proposal via the usual new programme proposal procedures. The Portfolio Strategy Group should also be advised of the proposed new mode of delivery for the programme even if the proposal is to deliver an existing programme via online delivery. The development and ongoing support activities do require to be fully costed.

There should be clarification on whether:

- there will only, or mainly, be the use of online learning materials;
- communication and academic support of students is to be wholly, or mainly, online;

- the support of a local agent is to be used for students to access resources, academic support or administrative functions.
- 3 Learning Transformation can provide advice and guidance on online learning and the use of Aula. The production of programme materials and student handbooks is the responsibility of the drafting team and the School.
 - 4 The team is asked to take cognisance of the relevant expectations of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and provide a clear commentary within the PDDP.

Quality Assurance

The principles for the quality assurance of online learning programmes are identical to those covering the planning, development and approval of all other taught programmes at UWS.

[UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education should be used by all developers of online learning programmes.

This should include comment on the following:

- Arrangements for learner support, academic guidance, online tutoring and supervision of any research element;
- Resources to support the programme including how online learning students will access them;
- Specification of the requirements that need to be met by prospective students to enable them to study e.g. Computer Hardware & Software Specifications.

Approval Panel for Online Learning Programme

The membership of the panel, unless otherwise recommended at the earlier stages of the approval process, will be the same as specified in section 4 of this handbook, with the additional proviso that there should be at least one external academic panel member from another UK Higher Education Provider experienced in the operation of an online learning programme, normally, in an area cognate to the proposed programme.

Additional Materials

Before the event the external panel members will receive the documentation (Programme Specification, PDDP and Module Descriptors). The panel members should also be enrolled onto the VLE to establish an understanding of the facilities students will be able to access should the programme be approved. The team should have at least one fully developed online module available for the panel to review to be able use as an example of the approach being taken to the teaching, learning and assessment, and student support. This will enable the panel to confirm the appropriateness of the approach being taken for this online programme and to protect and enhance the student experience. Where an online route is being

developed from an existing blended or fully face to face programme that is already approved, the panel would need clear evidence of how the team have ensured equivalence of experience, access to resources, and learning and assessment methods.

The drafting team and School should also have prepared a plan with clearly identified timescales for the preparation of the programme materials to ensure that the materials are ready in time for the programme to commence and, where possible, have exemplar materials for the panel to review. The panel may also decide as a condition of approval that the final materials are circulated to all members of the panel to review.

The Event

The event will follow the usual University format for the approval/review of programmes but should also include a demonstration of the VLE for the panel, especially for any members of the panel who have little or no previous experience of working with a VLE. It is the responsibility of the drafting team to facilitate this demonstration.

Outcomes of the Event

The outcomes for an event of an online learning programme are the same as those for any blended/face to face taught programme.

6 POSTAL APPROVAL (Modules & Programmes)

There are occasions where it may be appropriate to undertake a postal approval rather than an event-based approval. This type of approval typically requires the current external examiner to review the revised or refreshed module(s) / programme and complete a postal approval report (template available from QuEST). The School are responsible for paying the external a set fee of £150.00 (subject to tax and NI) for completing the postal approval report. There are a number of scenarios where a postal approval may be the most efficient and effective approach – please note this list is not exhaustive:

- When the team wish to make a change to a programme that is more significant than that permitted through the amendment process and the programme has recently been subject to an ILR;
- Where the programme team wish to change a small number of core modules associated with the requirements for award but where the programme learning outcomes are not significantly affected;
- Where the team wish to add in an additional bracket, pathway or named specialism to an existing programme framework (NB: if this specialism is a new area for the University, a full event may be required);
- Where the team wish to make a number of changes to a suite of cognate modules due to professional body or accreditation requirements.

Please consult with colleagues in QuEST to explore other options where a postal event may be appropriate.

Process for Postal Approval

Once it has been agreed to review and refresh the programme/module(s) the programme leader/module co-ordinator should consult with their EQO and QuEST to determine if a postal approval event is appropriate. The EQO will review the postal approval template in consultation with QuEST and adjust the content to ensure the focus of the reporting is targeted as appropriate before sending to the external approver. The external approver may be an existing external examiner or an external academic subject expert.

The programme leader/module co-ordinator will identify the relevant external examiner and the EQO will send an invitation (template letter available) to ascertain if the external would be willing to support a postal approval. If the external agrees to undertake the review they should be sent a copy of the documentation (see below) and given a deadline for submitting the completed postal approval report template. The EQO should be identified as the first contact for the external to speak to should they require any further support or information. Once the report has been received and any subsequent required action has been undertaken to the external's satisfaction, the completed form should be sent to the Head of QuEST who will confirm approval. (As there is no Chair for postal approval, QuEST has been identified as appropriate to endorse University sign-off). Thereafter, the EQO will raise the fee for the external. The postal approval event has the same status as an approval report from an event and should be reviewed by the School Board and considered at annual monitoring. The postal report should be retained by the School. QuEST will seek to retain a copy to for their records.

Documentation for a Postal Event

Depending on the changes being considered by the postal approval event the documentation may vary. As the external will wish to understand the changes that are being proposed, the following material will be required:

- Current approved version of the module descriptors/programme specification;
- Revised version of module descriptor (s)/programme specification;
- Overview document outlining the rationale for the change;
- Tailored postal approval template (available from EQO/QuEST);
- Postal Approval Briefing Note

Additional material such as PSRB approval requirements, outcomes of ILRs or Divisional Programme Board minutes may also help support the proposal.

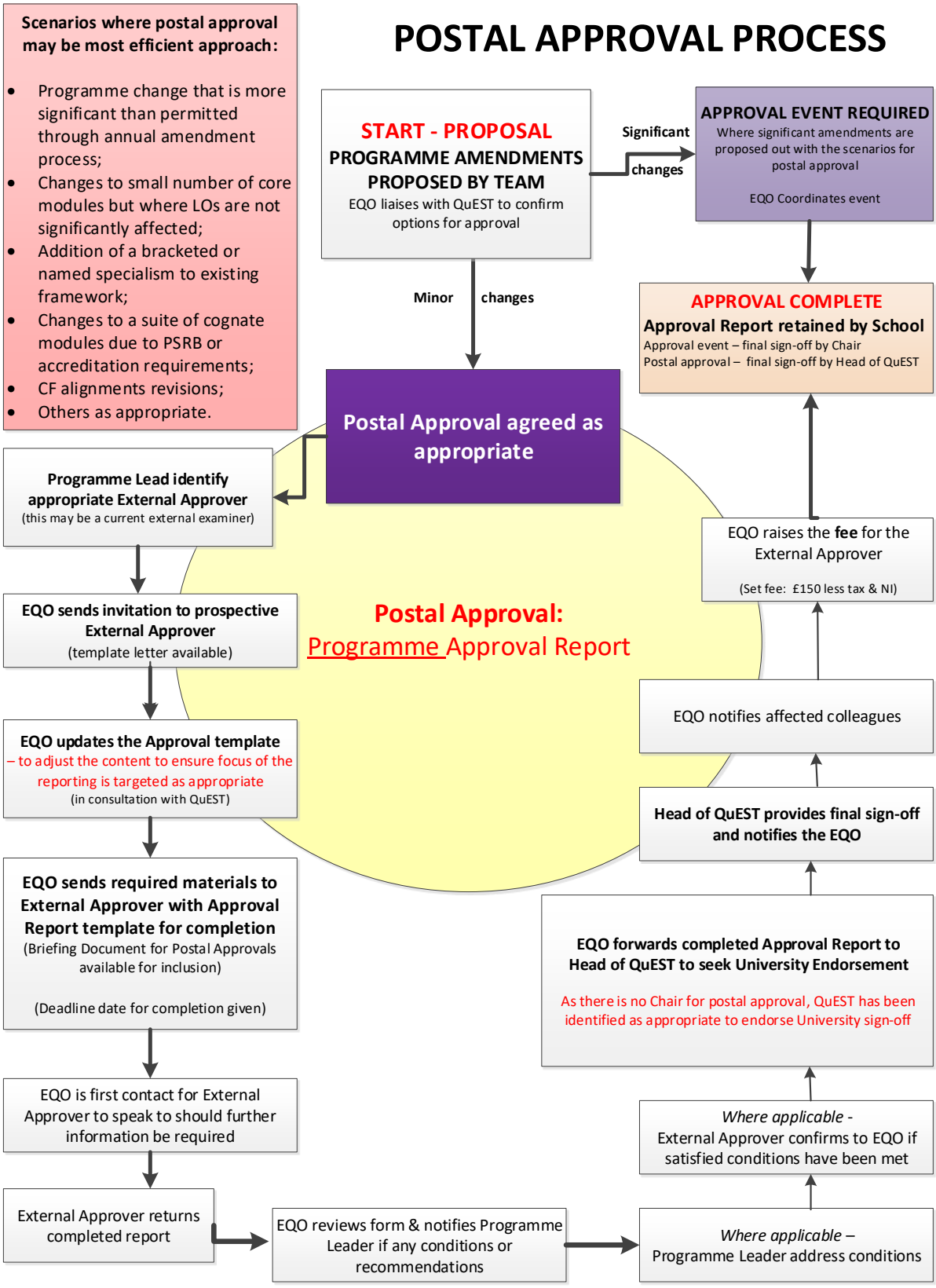
Please contact QuEST if you have any questions or queries regarding postal approval.

A summary of the postal approval process has been illustrated in a flowchart overleaf.

Honorarium Fee:

External Panel members are eligible to receive an honorarium fee for their participation in an academic approval event, a collaborative approval event and reviews. This approach has been introduced from session 2022/23 onwards. Details are available in Appendix 1.

POSTAL APPROVAL PROCESS



7 APPROVAL OF WORK-BASED LEARNING CREDIT BEARING PROVISION

In line with the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan, approval panels will explore with drafting teams how they are recording and supporting work-based learning and placement opportunities within their programmes for all students whether in the UK or abroad.

The University recognises a range of work-based and placement learning – the [University procedure](#) should be reviewed and adhered to.

8 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF SHORT COURSES (NON-CREDIT BEARING) AND EXTERNAL ACCREDITATION

Short courses are defined as **non-credit bearing** and which do not lead to a University award.

Approval of Short Courses

The School Board will be responsible for the approval and monitoring of any short courses within their portfolio, i.e. those covered by the SCQF.

The School Board will establish mechanisms for the approval of such courses. Approval by the School Board will normally be sufficient unless the short course leads to a University award, in which case, it will be subject to the normal University approval process.

Annual Monitoring of Short Courses

School Boards are responsible for the annual monitoring of any short courses within their portfolio including those which do not lead to a SCQF award of the University.

School Boards should decide what method of annual monitoring is most appropriate for each short course and to confirm the ongoing quality of provision in the learning and teaching. Consideration of any short courses should form part of the Divisional Programme Board annual monitoring processes. There may also be additional annual monitoring requirements as determined by professional bodies.

NMC Approved Short Courses

Such cases must be jointly approved by the University and NMC requirements. Normally a representative from EAC will represent the University at these joint approval events.

9 PROGRAMME CLOSURE / WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PORTFOLIO

When a School wishes to close a programme for whatever reason the following procedure will normally apply:

- a) The School Board prepares a report or completes the [Programme Withdrawal Form](#) outlining the following:
 - Rationale for closure;
 - Proposed date for closure;
 - Arrangements for and consultation with students currently on the programme – at all levels of the award and campuses/sites of delivery/students on suspension/ students enrolled as resit only;
 - Consideration of part-time/direct entry students;
 - Impact of closure on other provision within the School/other Schools;
 - Any potential Equality Impact should be considered through the [agreed procedure](#);
 - Implications on staffing resources;
 - Professional Body Associations that may need to be informed of the closure;
 - External Examiner appointments which may need to be terminated early (or may need to be extended for resits of last cohort);
 - Explanation of transitional arrangements, particularly for part time students and proposals for ongoing resit/reassessment needs.
- b) The School will then submit the form to Portfolio Strategy Group which will make a recommendation directly to Senate on programme closure.
- c) Once Senate has approved the closure of the programme, the School should undertake a further consultation with all affected students highlighting the options they have in terms of completing the programme or transferring to other awards if they desire. Transitional arrangements for part-time students or students who receive a resit decision in the final year of operation should be discussed. The written agreement of students wishing to transfer to another programme should be obtained. All students currently enrolled on the programme should have the opportunity to exit with the award. The School should inform Admissions that the award is being withdrawn; they will then inform UCAS. The Admissions Office will also produce letters for students offering alternative programmes.
- d) The School should then inform Recruitment / Admissions, Strategic Planning, Information Technology, Registry and QuEST that the programme is being withdrawn from the portfolio and that there will be no new recruitment to the award. The School should outline when the programme will finally be withdrawn from the portfolio and programmes having taken into account part-time student completion times and any resit/re-assessment issues.

10 PROGRAMME AMENDMENTS

Amendments to existing Programme of Study

Divisional Programme Boards are responsible for agreeing changes to programmes on behalf of the School. At the beginning of each session, Schools should review their programme Catalogue.

When processing programme amendments, the following should be noted:

- The appropriate Programme Amendment form should be completed. Schools should retain completed forms;
- All programme amendments must be considered and approved by the Divisional Programme Board with current responsibility for the programme. It is recommended that programme amendments are considered annually by the Divisional Programme Board, usually in March;
- The EQO must be consulted regarding all proposed programme amendments. It is recommended that consultation with the EQO takes place prior to the Divisional Programme Board where approval of the programme amendment is being sought to allow any quality assurance matters and regulatory matters to be highlighted and resolved in advance;
- Consultation with External Examiners to the modules / programme(s) should form part of the process for all programme amendments;
- Any change to [programme title](#), structure, significant content or assessment regulations, which will affect progressing students, will require **formal consultation with affected students** and an [Equality Impact Assessment](#) should be carried out, an [Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit](#) is available for use;
- In cases where the programme structure and requirements are to be amended, module co-ordinators for modules involved in the changes (i.e. modules to be removed or added, modules to alter core/option status change to learning outcomes) must be consulted. Other affected Divisional Programme Boards must also be consulted in these instances;
- Consultation with the School Board and QuEST is **necessary** where proposed changes will result in more than one core module at each level of the programme being amended or replaced. The impact on the programme specification must be addressed when modules are amended or replaced. Any greater volume of change to modules, level outcomes or programmes will require a full re-approval event.
- When a change to an existing programme title is proposed, the Portfolio Strategy Group must be consulted. The Programme Title Change form is available here: [Programme Title Change Form.docx](#)

- Following approval of all programme amendments, revised programme specification(s) must also be lodged on the School Programme Catalogue for reference purposes;
- Relevant Professional Services (e.g. Strategic Planning, QuEST, Registry, Marketing & Communications and Student Recruitment / Admissions) will thereafter be notified of any pertinent changes

It is imperative that programme changes are cognisant of the Competitions and Markets Authority guidance to HE providers. Those seeking to make changes to programmes are directed to the Material Changes guidance provided by UWS Legal Services. (see [Supporting Docs - Chapter 4](#)) Consideration should be given to the timing of material changes and our obligations with respect to gaining student approval.

Proposed Programme Changes

The procedure for amendments to programmes as described indicates that Divisional Programme Boards are responsible for agreeing changes to programmes on behalf of the School and must complete the appropriate Programme Amendment form. However, where significant changes to an existing programme are being proposed such as more than one core module being changed per level, changes to the title, philosophy, content or learning outcomes - or the addition of new modes of delivery such as significant online learning or WBL elements, or addition of an Honours Level - it is likely to be appropriate to formally review the programme via a re-approval event. For significant changes, it is recommended that the Portfolio Strategy Group are kept informed.

New UWS Campus/Mode of Delivery

Where a School wishes to offer existing provision at another campus or via a new mode of delivery, programme leaders must consult with key partners across the institution, students, external examiners and PSRBs where required. A form has been created to support this activity which removes the requirement to undertake a formal approval event.

The “[Additional Delivery Form – campus/mode](#)” can be found on Sharepoint. The form should be completed by the programme leader and signed off by the School Board and confirms that all relevant steps have been completed and all affected stakeholders have been consulted. This removes the requirement to undertake a formal approval event.

If the approval of additional campus(es) results in the withdrawal from another campus(es) this **needs** to be addressed separately to ensure that the students’ rights under **consumer law** are protected and to confirm the appropriate support and transition arrangements have been developed. An [Equality Impact Assessment](#) will be necessary. Please see UWS’s guidance on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). for further details. An [EDI CPD module](#) operates which may provide opportunities for staff development in this field.

If Tier 4 students (non-EEA) are to be taught on additional campus(es) it is **essential** that consultation with the **UWS UKVI Key Contact and Compliance Officer**¹ has been conducted before teaching commences. All new teaching sites for Tier 4 students **must** be registered in advance with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

Once the additional campus/route for delivery has been approved by the School Board, the programme leader is responsible for updates of all relevant documentation and materials such as the programme specification, module descriptors, student handbooks and VLE sites. The programme leader is also responsible for advising Registry, Marketing and Recruitment, IT, Strategic Planning, affected students and the relevant external examiner of the approved changes.

New Pathway / bracketed title / named specialism

Where a School wishes to offer a new pathway to an existing programme, programme leaders must consult with key partners across the Institution, students, external examiners and PSRBs where required. This may be the addition of a bracketed pathway in relation to an existing award title. A form ([Proposal for Additional Pathway](#)) has been created to support this activity which should be completed by the programme leader and reviewed by School committees and the Portfolio Strategy Group. Teams will be asked to provide a rationale for the proposed pathway, outlining the fit with the existing programme structure; evidence of market research and appropriate consultation with stakeholders will be essential. If the new pathway is utilising existing expertise within the University, it is likely that a postal approval may be sufficient. Where the programme is seeking to add a new specialism, it is likely that an event will require to be scheduled. The approval mechanism for proposed changes may vary depending on the nature and volume of change. Teams should consult with their EQO and QuEST for guidance.

Blended Learning, Face to Face and Online Approval

Programme leaders should follow the standard programme amendment process for the additional of a blended learning route to an approved face to face or online programme. However, for the creation of a wholly online or wholly face to face route for an approved programme, an internal approval event will typically be required to consider the learning and teaching approaches, assessment methods, supporting resources and the student journey and experience.

Change to Existing Programme Titles

Where a new programme title is proposed for an existing programme, LTC approval (on behalf of Senate) will be required due to potential resource and strategic planning implications even if the award comprises all or mostly existing modules. Ultimately Senate must ensure it has an overview of the University's portfolio of awards.

In such instances, submission of a [Programme Title Change Form.docx](#) approved by the Divisional Programme Board and School Board, comprising rationale in support of the proposal is required for submission to the Portfolio Strategy Group for

¹ Currently Alison Devlin

consideration. The group will then make a formal recommendation to Senate. Whilst PSG reports directly to Senate; LTC will be interested to note such title changes. A draft of the updated Programme Specification should also be submitted with this form.

Programme Specification and Module Descriptor (PSMD) Catalogue and Ownership of Material

From session 2023-24 onwards, the former PSMD Catalogue will **no longer be operational** across the institution. The University is exploring alternative software options to undertake this essential function and a replacement system is currently under development.

For session 2023-24, the source for published version of programme specifications will be within a central catalogue lodged in MS Teams.

Ownership of the definitive electronic version of material lodged on the interim MS Teams catalogue will shall also be retained by the School.

11 APPROVAL OF NEW MODULES/MODULE AMENDMENT

It is imperative that module changes are cognisant of the [Competitions and Markets Authority guidance to HE providers](#). Those seeking to make changes to programmes are directed to the [Material Changes guidance](#) provided by UWS Legal Services.

Module Amendment Process

At the start of each academic session, the Module Structure Database Administrator² will provide Schools with a module spreadsheet for consideration. The spreadsheet of modules is submitted to the Divisional Programme Board for consideration during the academic session by the School Executive Manager. Any module amendments are recorded on the spreadsheet (including a description of the change being made) and noted in the Divisional Programme Board minutes. The responsibility for the approval and recording of module amendments remain with the relevant Divisional Programme Board.

Module amendments should be clearly articulated in the spreadsheet and captured in the Divisional Programme Board minutes and then formally noted on the Module Review forms which are completed on an annual basis as part of the annual monitoring cycle.

The EQO / nominee should check the list of amendments against the reporting in the Programme/Module Catalogue to establish accuracy.

Major/Minor Amendments to Modules

For minor module amendments (i.e. updating of reading lists or a change to module moderator), no additional detail would be required in the Divisional Programme Board minutes, but for major changes (see below), a rationale should be noted in the minutes to capture the deliberate steps being taken to enhance the student experience as part of the subject development:

- Change of Divisional Programme Board;
- Module title;
- Credit level of the module;
- Credit points of the module;
- Methods of assessment/weighting of assessment;
- Learning outcomes.

Major changes to LTA approaches or learning outcomes should involve consultation with the relevant External Examiner and other appropriate stakeholders e.g. applicants, students and regulatory bodies. An [Equality Impact Assessment](#) may also be appropriate. **Where substantial changes are made to an existing module, it is essential to modify the title of the module and obtain a new module code.**

² Currently Emma Munday

N.B. These amendments may be made locally within the School; however it should be highlighted that such changes will be implemented in the next AY, and should be lodged within the Interim MS Teams Programme/Module Catalogue.

External Examiner Module Allocation

If the School wish to make changes to the allocation of an external examiner or add an external examiner to a new module, this must go through the approved process and the appropriate reallocation form should be submitted to QuEST.

New Module Approval & Module Amendment Guidance

The procedures below take full cognisance of the University's commitment to quality assurance and enhancement and that the approval process ensures that the credit level of new modules is given appropriate consideration in line with SCQF.

New modules should be created via the Module Descriptor word template and should be accompanied with a completed [New Module Proposal Form](#). The approval and quality assurance procedures for new modules/amendments will remain the same. If you have any questions or queries with regards to the new module creation, please contact your EQO in the first instance.

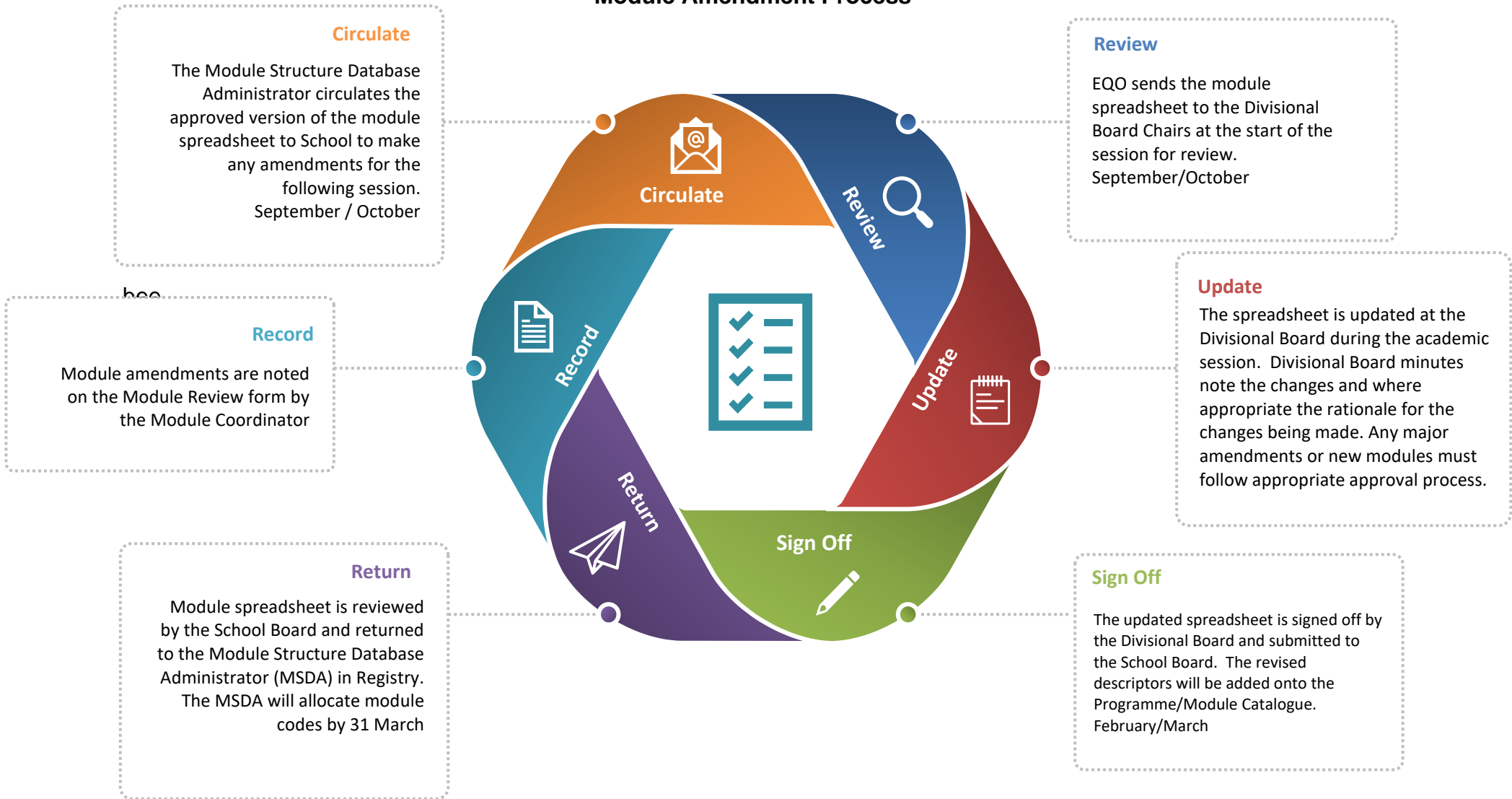
- 1 Before the start of each session, the **Module Structure Database Administrator** will supply each School with a spreadsheet summarising the modules approved for delivery in the forthcoming academic session. This master spreadsheet will be a list of all approved modules together with information about the School Assessment Board and Divisional Programme Board to which they are attached and the date they were last amended.
- 2 In September, the School will confirm the allocation of Divisional Programme Boards and School Assessment Board Panels to the modules as being correct for the forthcoming session.
- 3 During the period from September to February, Schools will amend the spreadsheet to update the status of modules for the forthcoming academic session. The spreadsheet will record module descriptors which remained unchanged, those with amendments and those to be deleted. New modules will be added.
- 4 For module amendments the spreadsheet will specify the changes made. The School should check the spreadsheet for accuracy against the reports available in the Programme/Module catalogue.
- 5 Approval for new modules and amendments to existing modules will be the responsibility of the Divisional Programme Board. The Divisional Programme Board Chair's signature will confirm module additions and amendments. Where new modules are proposed as part of an approval programme, the panel acts as the external input to the process. However these should first be processed through the Divisional Programme Board in the same way as all other new modules and module amendments.

- 6 Input by external advisers and students is a key component in the approval of new modules or major amendments.
- 7 When the Divisional Programme Board has approved new modules and amendments, the overall spreadsheet will be signed off by the School Board. In particular, new modules should be brought to the attention of School Board.
- 8 New and updated material should be retained within the School but also lodged in the interim on the MS Teams central Programme/Module Catalogue. Any withdrawn modules should be removed and archived appropriately. This task should be undertaken by the designated School Administrator(s).
- 9 The completed spreadsheet will be returned to the Module Structure Database Administrator, who will access relevant new and amended module descriptors as required.
- 10 The deadline for submission of the School module spreadsheets and updating module descriptors on the catalogue will be **31 March**.
- 11 The allocation of module codes is the responsibility of the Module Structure Database Administrator.
- 12 Where modules (new or amended) will lead to a change greater than one core module being amended or removed per level, this must be flagged to the EQO as a formal re-approval may be required.
- 13 Ownership of the definitive electronic version of material lodged on the interim MS Teams central Programme/Module Catalogue, and shall also be retained by the School.

Timescales for Approval

In order to ensure modules are confirmed for the following session, approval of all new and amended modules must take place by **31 March annually**.

Module Amendment Process



12 PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITY PROGRAMMES

Professional accreditation is the official recognition awarded by a PSRB as a result of the University meeting specific standards or criteria. Alongside University approved programmes, the aim of professional accreditation is to secure for students a high quality of academic and professional experience and also to provide enhanced opportunities for graduates entering their chosen profession, either through confirmation of fitness to practice exemption from professional examinations or fast-tracking towards chartered or similar status.

Agencies such as SFC annually request information regarding programmes that have been accredited by professional bodies and the issues raised. This information is also relevant to ILR and annual monitoring. Details of accredited programmes therefore need to be held by Schools.

The development and drafting of documents for submission to PSRBs (both before and after accreditation visits) is the responsibility of the School.

Responsibility of the School

The responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the process of professional accreditation lies with the School. Schools are also responsible for ensuring that the accreditation documents meet the requirements outlined in the Key stages flowchart, in conjunction with the quality and standards and the deadlines prescribed by the PSRB.

As part of the School Board remit for overseeing and developing its portfolio of programmes, information on all programme accreditations by PSRBs is normally reviewed early in the academic session. The School will use this information to maintain the School-wide data on professional accreditation and the calendar of visits to inform the SFC response.

For existing programmes, Schools should be aware of when accreditations expire as they are responsible for ensuring programmes remain accredited. Schools are responsible for making all arrangements concerned with accreditation and to ensure that the stages of accreditation have been followed.

Responsibility of the Programme Leader

The Programme Leader (or Programme Leader designate for new programmes) will normally take the lead in the preparation of accreditation documentation, for correspondence with the PSRB and for making the arrangements for an accreditation visit where necessary. Where it is hoped to incorporate the professional accreditation with the initial or re-approval, this should be flagged in the New Programme Proposals form. The Programme Leader is responsible for keeping the School Board and the Divisional Programme Board informed of all PSRB activity.

Care should be taken to ensure that the appropriate documents take into consideration the range of issues to be addressed in submission documents and address recommendations made during the accreditation.

Responsibility of Deputy Dean

The Deputy Dean will be advised by the programme leader of all matters relating to professional accreditation and will ensure appropriate monitoring in line with the University's annual monitoring system.

The Deputy Dean will inform and advise the School Board on issues arising from PSRB visits and reports as appropriate.

A **new Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching)** role is being established in session 2023-24 across each School. It is anticipated that on appointment that the Deputy Dean may delegate certain key functions to this post holder within their School.

Responsibility of the Divisional Programme Board

Divisional Programme Boards are the bodies responsible for monitoring programmes. Divisional Programme Boards will have an oversight of matters relating to and arising from professional accreditation activities and reports and will comment on such in the annual Programme Monitoring Report (formerly Programme Annual Report).

Responsibility of the Quality Enhancement and Standards Team (QuEST)

QuEST has an advisory role in relation to professional accreditation. The Team is able to offer guidance on University Regulations, quality assurance and enhancement approaches and, can attend the accreditation event in an advisory capacity, if required.

Responsibility of the School Education and Quality Officer (EQO)

The EQO can comment on both the draft accreditation document in terms of any reference to regulations and quality provided, and the draft School response to the report as outlined in the key stages below.

The EQO will also seek information from colleagues in the Schools on the schedule of forthcoming accreditation visits. This information will be used to collate the annual SFC response (September) and ensure LTC is kept informed of issues raised by PSRBs.

Responsibility of School Board

The School Board has oversight of professional accreditation and will sign off the final version of the accreditation documentation prior to it being sent to the PSRB. LTC will maintain an overview of matters raised and any issues for ILR and staff development.

Details of Professional Accredited Provision at UWS

The School is responsible for maintaining a schedule of accreditation status for all relevant awards and for providing this information annually to QuEST as required for the Annual report to the Scottish Funding Council. This facilitates not only the tracking of accreditations due, but also the monitoring of existing accreditations, and a University-wide understanding of the issues being raised by professional accrediting panels.

PSRB reports provide valuable feedback on the quality of the University's provision which can usefully be shared more widely.

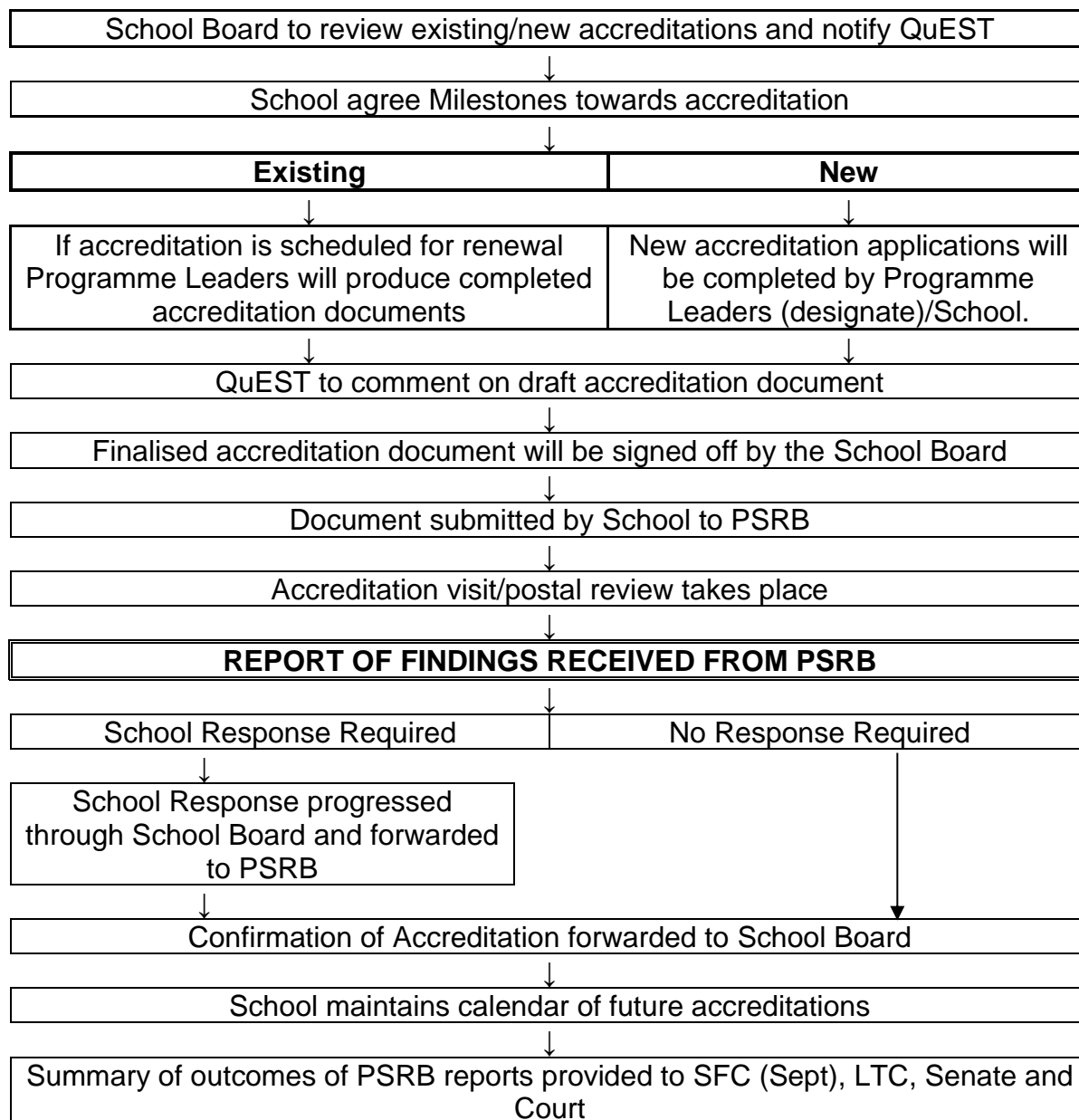
Professional Accreditation Processes

There are a range of accreditation arrangements offered by PSRBs. For certain programmes the accreditation process involves a formal visit to the University while for other programmes the arrangements are less formal and can be updated by post. LTC has agreed the importance of the University being able to track all accreditation activities.

EQO will liaise with the Deputy Dean/or Associate Dean (L&T) at the end of each academic year to confirm the professional visits due to take place in the following session, together with any new proposed professional accreditations. The first School Board of the session should consider the list of professional accreditations for the year ahead.

The EQO or nominee will support the development of milestones for submission of paperwork to the PSRB, incorporating the required review of draft documentation and final sign off by School Board. Programme accreditations should be clearly flagged to the first meeting of School Board and QuEST each session.

KEY STAGES FOR APPROVAL/REAPPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION



Professional Accreditation Document

The EQO should be asked to comment on the draft documentation before its submission to the PSRB and can consult with colleagues in QuEST if necessary. Once agreement is reached, School Board will sign off the documentation. The School will then be responsible for submitting the documentation to the PSRB.

Professional Accreditation Event

Arrangements for the accreditation visit will be managed by the School in consultation with the PSRB. The EQO can attend such events if required to advise the panel on quality and enhancement arrangements. However, in all cases, Schools are asked to advise QuEST of the dates of all accreditation events on request.

Professional Accreditation Responses

Following the accreditation process, the School will be responsible for authoring a response (if appropriate) to the PSRB report. School responses to the accreditation/PSRB report should be progressed through School Board before the final version is forwarded to the PSRB. School Board will receive both the final report/correspondence from the PSRB and the agreed School response.

External Panel Members 'Approvers' Honorarium fee structure

Honorarium fee structure for School Academic Approval Events, Collaborative Approval Events and Reviews

This Honorarium fee structure applies to Academic Approval Events or Reviews for all Programmes that lead to an award of the University (including collaborative), or renewal of an award. This encompasses all home (UWS-based).

External Panel Members are paid a single £150 fee for full participation and input into the event.

In summary:

- Full honorarium fee of £150 per event
- Tax will be deducted
- The type or approval event/review will determine whom shall hold responsibility for processing and coordinating payment (see budget holders).
- For new programme proposals (NPPs), Finance will embed such costings into financial guidance.

Right to Work

In line with Home Office and UKVI requirements, External Panel Members need to provide evidence to confirm their eligibility to work in the UK; this is a requirement for honorarium payment. Normally Passports and/or valid Birth Certificate together with evidence of National Insurance eligibility will be required to participate, however details of the acceptable forms of evidence can be found on the Home Office website. Further information on the University's right to work checking processes can be provided by People and Organisational Development. Panel members will be entitled to receive their honorarium fee in accordance to their attendance – whether correspondence (preparation fee) or physical attendance.

Expenses

In addition to the fee detailed above for Academic Approval Events events/Reviews, External Panel Members that attend a physical event will be reimbursed for any reasonable expenses incurred in connection with their duties. Such expenses may be incurred for travel, subsistence, accommodation or any other purpose agreed by the budget holder and which accords with the University's Financial Regulations.

Postal Approvals

There are occasions where it may be appropriate to undertake a postal approval rather than an event-based approval. The School is responsible for paying the 'external approver' a set fee of £150.00 (subject to tax and NI) for completing the postal approval report.

Budget Holders

In very exceptional circumstances, there is discretion to alter the fee. Advice may be sought from the QuEST in these cases but it will related to which budget the honorarium is covered by.

- For School Approval events, the honorarium fee shall be covered by the respective School(s).
- For School Validated Approval events/reviews, the honorarium fee shall be covered by the respective School(s).
- For School Franchise Collaborative Approval events/reviews, the honorarium fee shall be covered by QuEST.
- For Postal Approvals, the honorarium fee shall be covered by the respective School(s).

Chapter 4 – Catalogue of Pro-formas and Guidance Documents

Title Folder /Sub-folder /or Document title	Purpose (Sharepoint site - Hyperlink)	Version/ Date (Last Modified)
New Programme Proposal (NPP): Supporting docs:		
NPP – decision tree flow	For info - guidance	13 Oct 22 S.Cosh
NPP – finance costing model blank	Teams should consult their Finance Business Partner	6 Oct 23 C.Winter
NPP – Programme Approvals Ready Reckoner	For info - guidance	6 Oct 23 E Harrison
NPP Flow	For info - guidance	20 April 23 H.McLean
NPP Form FINAL (Version 1.8)	The NPP Form <u>must be signed off</u> by all appropriate Business Partners PRIOR to submission to the Portfolio Strategy Group (PSG).	6 Oct 23 C.Winter
Quick Market Research Approaches	For info - guidance	20 April 23 H.McLean
Programme Amendment Forms: Supporting docs:		
Additional Delivery Form	Proposal to add a new UWS campus for delivery of an approved programme, or add a full time / part time delivery route, to an approved programme.	6 Oct 23 C.Winter
Programme Amendment Form v2	<p>Deadline annually for completion – 30 April. School Board to endorse via DPBs. School EQOs progress via School spreadsheet. Need to provide summary of proposed changes and rationale, Depending on change, will determine whether PSG should be informed. Need to document / evidence in terms of who has been consulted on the proposal.</p> <p>Approval mechanism for proposed changes may vary depending on the nature and volume of change.</p>	11 Oct 23 C.Winter
Programme Title Change Form	<p>Deadline annually for completion – 30 April. Need to provide rationale for programme title change. School Board to endorse via DPBs. School EQOs progress via School spreadsheet. Need to document / evidence in terms of who has been consulted on the proposed award title change. If high level of support including External Examiner then no approval event normally required.</p>	6 Oct 23 C.Winter
Programme Withdrawal Form	<p>Need to provide rationale for programme closure/withdrawal and outline any implications.</p> <p>Need to document / evidence in terms of who has been consulted on the proposed closure/withdrawal of award.</p>	15 Nov 23 C.Winter

	<p>Impact on current students from this closure.</p> <p>Arrangements for students currently on the programme – at all levels of the award and campuses/sites of delivery/students on suspension/interruption/ students enrolled as resit only.</p> <p>Impact on other Schools / any partnerships / PSRBs. Does it use resource from another School. EIA – any considerations</p>	
Proposal for Additional Pathway Form	<p>Will normally be addition of a bracketed pathway in relation to an existing award title.</p> <p>Need to provide a rationale for proposed pathway, with details of how this would fit in with current programme structure.</p> <p>Evidence of market research / consultation with stakeholders is essential.</p> <p>Approval mechanism for proposed changes may vary depending on the nature and volume of change.</p>	11 Oct 23 C.Winter
Collaborative Provision: Rationale for Franchising Pro-forma	<p>Refer to QH Chapter 9: Collaborative Provision for details. Applicable for: NEW franchise Partners.</p> <p>This form should be completed by the lead School proposing delivery of an existing UWS programme at a new Partner delivery location (Franchise Model). The completed form should be presented to PSG. To be completed in partnership with relevant UWS Business Partners.</p>	18 Oct 23 D.Taylor
Programme & Module Documentation Templates (formerly PSMD)		
Template – Module Descriptor	<p>Module Descriptor (MD) template</p> <p>As no PSMD functionality - Programme teams should create new modules using a word version of the MD template and liaise with their EQO for guidance.</p>	19 Oct 23 C.Winter
Template – Postgraduate (PG) Programme Specification	<p>Postgraduate Prog Spec (PS) template.</p> <p>As no PSMD functionality - Programme teams should create new Programme Specifications (UG or PG) using a word document of the appropriate template and liaise with their EQO for guidance.</p>	19 Oct 23 C.Winter
Template – Undergraduate (UG) Programme Specification	<p>Undergraduate Prog Spec (PS) template.</p> <p>As no PSMD functionality - Programme teams should create new Programme Specifications (UG or PG) using a word document of the appropriate template and liaise with their EQO for guidance.</p>	19 Oct 23 C.Winter
New Module Proposal Form	<p>Deadline annually for completion – 30 March.</p> <p>Rationale for new module required (i.e. Is it new or does it replace an existing module?)</p> <p>External Expert must be consulted & supporting evidence provided.</p>	19 Oct 23 C.Winter
PSMD Guidance 21-22	Note: PSMD NO LONGER OPERATIONAL	20 April 23 H.McLean

	However, this guidance provides some useful generic information relating to sections within programme specifications so may still be of use to teams.	
Registry Module Spreadsheet	Registry (via Module Structure Database Administrator) provide this spreadsheet to Schools in early January for completion by EQOs by end March annually (within the normal update window). This records any new, withdrawn,/suspended modules and changes to modules.	Registry / Schools
Approval Process Resources:		
Postal Approval Flowchart	Postal Approval considered where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme change is more significant than permitted through annual amendment process; ▪ Changes to small number of core modules but where LOs are not significantly affected; ▪ Addition of a bracketed or named specialism to existing framework (depends on volume of change); ▪ Change to a suite of cognate modules due to PSRB or accreditation requirements; ▪ CF alignment revisions; ▪ Others as appropriate. 	10 Oct 22 D.MacA
Programme Approval for Existing Programmes – adding Online Delivery	Currently under development	
Programme Scrutiny Checklist abridged.doc	Checklist used by Schools to scrutinise programme materials PRIOR to programme materials being firmed up and circulated to approval panel for review. Useful for Teams/Panel members to have sight of this.	11 Oct 23 C.Winter
Template – Conclusions Memo	Template for use by School EDQs – at the conclusion of approval events. To ensure consistency of approach. This is the summary memorandum, and should be supplemented with a full report.	6 Oct 23 C.Winter
Template – Programme Approval Milestones	Schools may wish to use/complete this milestone document to gauge progress in the approval process.	6 Oct 23 C.Winter
Consumer Law Guidelines		
CMA Guidelines – Material Changes.doc	Competition & Markets Authority (CMA) applies now to both UG and PG. This outlines changes as of April 2023.	11 Aug23
Consumer Law in HE UWS Guidelines	This outlines the position in 2015 – so should be superseded by above.	11 Oct 23 C.Winter
Consumer Law Advice for HE	CMA Document: Published 31 May 2023 Advice on consumer protection law – helping you comply with your obligations.	11 Aug 23 H.McLean

Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team (QuEST)
Chapter 5
International Academic
Student Exchange
Session 2023/24

CHAPTER 5 INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC STUDENT EXCHANGE

TEMPLATES RELATED TO THIS CHAPTER CAN BE FOUND HERE:

[https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared Documents/CHAPTER 5 INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC STUDENT EXCHANGE?csf=1&web=1&e=Ssutr9](https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared%20Documents/CHAPTER%205%20INTERNATIONAL%20ACADEMIC%20STUDENT%20EXCHANGE?csf=1&web=1&e=Ssutr9)

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2	OUTGOING STUDENTS	3
3	INCOMING STUDENTS	5

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1	HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNING AGREEMENT FOR STUDIES	6
APPENDIX 2	RECORDING RESULTS FOR STUDENTS STUDYING OVERSEAS	12

ANY QUERIES CONCERNING THIS BOOKLET SHOULD BE RAISED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WITH QUEST. THIS BOOKLET CAN BE PROVIDED IN OTHER FORMATS ON REQUEST.

THE PROCEDURES DESCRIBED WITHIN THIS BOOKLET HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR EQUALITY IMPACT AND CONFIRMED AS BEING AT LOW RISK OF HAVING ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

CHAPTER 5 INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC STUDENT EXCHANGE

1 INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC STUDENT EXCHANGE

This section of the handbook covers the approval and quality assurance arrangements for academic exchange programmes. Overseas industrial placement is covered in the University's Regulation on Work-Based Learning & Placement Learning (see [WBL Procedure](#)). In terms of quality assurance of academic student exchange where academic credit will be awarded for successful completion of the exchange, Schools should take account of:

- The potential risk to the security of the academic standards of the University of the West of Scotland award;
- The match between the level and quantity of credit deriving from the period of study at the exchange site;
- The fit with the content and learning outcomes of the programme here at the University as defined in the programme specification;
- The quality of the student experience.

More information on the process and the responsibilities of sending and receiving institutions can be found in the Learning Agreement in **Appendix 1**. A Learning Agreement sets out the programme of study to be forwarded and is approved by the student as well as the sending and receiving institution (exchange host). More information is also available from the TNE and Mobility Department.

2 OUTGOING STUDENTS

Students can gain considerable benefits both academically and in terms of transferable skills from an exchange programme. These may be in terms of a term or academic year at another institution and allow students to undertake study leading to equivalent academic credit being achieved if an agreed programme of study is successfully completed. As part of the student's UWS programme is effectively being provided by a partner institution (the exchange host), such provision may be described as collaborative. As a registered student of UWS, students have the right to expect that this period of study at another institution is of equivalent level, standard and quality as they could expect if taking that period of study here. A number of safeguards are necessary to ensure the overall quality of the student experience overseas as well as the level and amount of credit. In addition to the arrangements set out in the University's standard Inter Institutional Agreement, the following issues should be addressed by Schools for student exchanges:

- Confirmation of the modules and the levels to be taken at the exchange host. **The Programme Leader and Global Opportunities Coordinator must confirm before arrangements for the exchange are finalised that**

these are appropriate to the learning outcomes and SCQF credits at the appropriate level in line with the approved programme specification for the award. A Learning Agreement should be completed for all students going on exchange or coming to UWS. ECTS points (European Credit Transfer) or equivalent credit tariffs may not be associated with level so this must be established by UWS staff;

- Without the Learning Agreement, the student's programme of study cannot be confirmed and the award of the UWS may be at risk. School staff must seek to ensure the Learning Agreement is completed before the student departs. Any changes to the Learning Agreement on arrival at the host Institution must be affected within one month of studies commencing (and one month of commencing term two studies if participating for one academic year). The participating student will be instructed to have both forms signed by the Host Institution and themselves before immediately sending it back for ratification by the school;
- How credit will be transferred to the UWS academic record;
- Any implication for the final award resulting from the exchange;
- The arrangements for students failing particular aspects of assessment at the exchange institution and the opportunities to resit;
- How the exchange experience will be incorporated in the UWS transcript and certificate;
- The arrangements for communication between UWS academic staff and students on exchange;
- Briefing for students on different assessment and study cultures;
- Meeting the requirements of professional bodies (where applicable);
- Students must be enrolled by Schools as UWS students prior to departure or by post during the UWS enrolment period;
- Students will be given access to the student exchange sharepoint website which will contain all of the important information relating to achieving a successful mobility.

It is the responsibility of the School to ensure students receive appropriate information as identified above and that the programme of study overseas is confirmed and notified to Registry by Schools for the production of future transcripts (refer to **Appendix 2** for guidance on recording students results). School Boards of Examiners will require such transcripts to enable them to award credit/progression at the conclusion of the exchange.

An inter-institutional agreement must be completed for all partnerships.

3 INCOMING STUDENTS

Incoming students, primarily on the ERASMUS exchange programme, may come for selected terms of the academic year. After successful nomination students will complete the standard University admissions application procedure and obtain a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) if the duration is greater than one Term, from Europe or if their nationality requires a VISA to study in the UK.

Incoming students who are at UWS in a graduating year may from time to time approach the School for consideration for the award of UWS. This is not an automatic process. In such instances, the School must provide academic counselling at the start of the academic year and ensure the incoming credit can be verified and recorded and an appropriate selection of modules made to satisfy the requirements of the programme specification relating to the named UWS award which the student is aiming for. Schools shall ensure that a Transcript of Records is duly completed for the additional modules required and that students are registered on the award not just the modules.

Recommended elements for the Transcript of Records:

- name of student;
- ID and/or contact details of the student;
- names and contacts of the Institution;
- field of study of the student and/or name of the programme;
- current year of study;
- educational components taken at the institution (with codes, credits and local grades);
- description of the institutional grading system;
- grade distribution information for the reference group identified;
- date of issue and signature of the responsible person.

Exchange students who have indicated from the outset that they intend to graduate from UWS will be given guidance by the School Global Opportunities Coordinator on the application process. The Admissions Officer for the academic programme of study shall verify the credit already achieved in relation to the level of entry. NOTE there is an additional fee of £1500 for an Exchange student wishing to graduate.

Schools should ensure appropriate information is given at the induction event for incoming ERASMUS and other exchange students to ensure such students are fully and appropriately informed.

Further information on the requirements for incoming students is available from the Admissions Office and the School Global Opportunities Coordinators.

Higher Education
Learning Agreement for Studies



Student	Last name(s)	First name(s)	Date of birth	Nationality ⁱ	Sex [M/F]	Study cycle ⁱⁱ	Field of education ⁱⁱⁱ
Sending Institution	Name	Faculty/Department	Erasmus code ^{iv} (if applicable)	Address	Country	Contact person name ^v ; email; phone	
Receiving Institution	Name	Faculty/ Department	Erasmus code (if applicable)	Address	Country	Contact person name; email; phone	

Before the Mobility

Study Programme at the Receiving Institution				
Planned period of the mobility: from [month/year] to [month/year]				
Table A Before the mobility	Component ^{vi} code (if any)	Component title at the Receiving Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue ^{vii})	Semester [e.g. autumn/spring; term]	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) ^{viii} to be awarded by the Receiving Institution upon successful completion
Web link to the course catalogue at the Receiving Institution describing the learning outcomes: [web link to the relevant information]				

The level of language competence^{ix} in [indicate here the main language of instruction] that the student already has or agrees to acquire by the start of the study period is: A1 A2 B1 B2 C1 C2 Native speaker

Recognition at the Sending Institution				
Table B Before the mobility	Component code (if any)	Component title at the Sending Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue)	Semester [e.g. autumn/spring; term]	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) to be recognised by the Sending Institution
Provisions applying if the student does not complete successfully some educational components: [web link to the relevant information]				

Commitment					
By signing this document, the student, the Sending Institution and the Receiving Institution confirm that they approve the Learning Agreement and that they will comply with all the arrangements agreed by all parties. Sending and Receiving Institutions undertake to apply all the principles of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education relating to mobility for studies (or the principles agreed in the Inter-Institutional Agreement for institutions located in Partner Countries). The Sending Institution and the student should also commit to what is set out in the Erasmus+ grant agreement. The Receiving Institution confirms that the educational components listed in Table A are in line with its course catalogue and should be available to the student. The Sending Institution commits to recognise all the credits gained at the Receiving Institution for the successfully completed educational components and to count them towards the student's degree as described in Table B. Any exceptions to this rule are documented in an annex of this Learning Agreement and agreed by all parties. The student and the Receiving Institution will communicate to the Sending Institution any problems or changes regarding the study programme, responsible persons and/or study period.					
Commitment	Name	Email	Position	Date	Signature
Student			Student		
Responsible person ^x at the Sending Institution					
Responsible person at the Receiving Institution ^{xi}					

During the Mobility

Exceptional changes to Table A (to be approved by e-mail or signature by the student, the responsible person in the Sending Institution and the responsible person in the Receiving Institution)							
Table A2 During the mobility	Component code (if any)	Component title at the Receiving Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue)	Deleted component [tick if applicable]	Added component [tick if applicable]	Reason for change ^{xii}	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent)	
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	

Exceptional changes to Table B (if applicable) (to be approved by e-mail or signature by the student and the responsible person in the Sending Institution)						
Table B2 During the mobility	Component code (if any)	Component title at the Sending Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue)	Deleted component [tick if applicable]	Added component [tick if applicable]	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent)	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

After the Mobility

Transcript of Records at the Receiving Institution						
Start and end dates of the study period: from [day/month/year] to [day/month/year]						
Table C After the mobility	Component code (if any)	Component title at the Receiving Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue)	Was the component successfully completed by the student? [Yes/No]	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent)	Grades received at the Receiving Institution	
					Total: ...	

Transcript of Records and Recognition at the Sending Institution

Start and end dates of the study period: from [day/month/year] to [day/month/year]

Table D After the mobility	Component code (if any)	Title of recognised component at the Sending Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue)	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) recognised	Grades registered at the Sending Institution (if applicable)
			Total: ...	

- i **Nationality:** country to which the person belongs administratively and that issues the ID card and/or passport.
- ii **Study cycle:** Short cycle (EQF level 5) / Bachelor or equivalent first cycle (EQF level 6) / Master or equivalent second cycle (EQF level 7) / Doctorate or equivalent third cycle (EQF level 8).
- iii **Field of education:** The ISCED-F 2013 search tool available at http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/isced-f_en.htm should be used to find the ISCED 2013 detailed field of education and training that is closest to the subject of the degree to be awarded to the student by the Sending Institution.
- iv **Erasmus code:** a unique identifier that every higher education institution that has been awarded with the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) receives. It is only applicable to higher education institutions located in Programme Countries.
- v **Contact person:** person who provides a link for administrative information and who, depending on the structure of the higher education institution, may be the departmental coordinator or works at the international relations office or equivalent body within the institution.
- vi An **"educational component"** is a self-contained and formal structured learning experience that features learning outcomes, credits and forms of assessment. Examples of educational components are: a course, module, seminar, laboratory work, practical work, preparation/research for a thesis, mobility window or free electives.
- vii **Course catalogue:** detailed, user-friendly and up-to-date information on the institution's learning **environment** that should be available to students before the mobility period and throughout their studies to enable them to make the right choices and use their time most efficiently. The information concerns, for example, the qualifications offered, the learning, teaching and assessment procedures, the level of programmes, the individual educational components and the learning resources. The Course Catalogue should include the names of people to contact, with information about how, when and where to contact them.
- viii **ECTS credits (or equivalent):** in countries where the "ECTS" system is not in place, in particular for **institutions** located in Partner Countries not participating in the Bologna process, "ECTS" needs to be replaced in the relevant tables by the name of the equivalent system that is used, and a web link to an explanation to the system should be added.
- ix **Level of language competence:** a description of the European Language Levels (CEFR) is available at: <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>
- x **Responsible person at the Sending Institution:** an academic who has the authority to approve the Learning Agreement, to exceptionally amend it when it is needed, as well as to guarantee full recognition of such programme on behalf of the responsible academic body. The name and email of the Responsible person must be filled in only in case it differs from that of the Contact person mentioned at the top of the document.

^{xi} **Responsible person at the Receiving Institution:** the name and email of the Responsible person must be filled in only in case it differs from that of the Contact person mentioned at the top of the document.

^{xii} **Reasons for exceptional changes to study programme abroad (choose an item number from the table below):**

<i>Reasons for deleting a component</i>	<i>Reason for adding a component</i>
1. Previously selected educational component is not available at the Receiving Institution	5. Substituting a deleted component
2. Component is in a different language than previously specified in the course catalogue	6. Extending the mobility period
3. Timetable conflict	7. Other (please specify)
4. Other (please specify)	

UWS Student Mobility Charter

This charter highlights your rights and obligations and informs you about what you can expect from your sending and host institution at each step of your mobility.

During your mobility period

- You should take full advantage of all the learning opportunities available at the host institution, while respecting its rules and regulations, and endeavor to perform to the best of your ability in all relevant examinations or other forms of assessment.
- You can request changes to the Learning Agreement only in exceptional situations and within the deadline decided by your sending and host institutions. In that case, you must ensure that these changes are validated by both the sending and host institutions within a two-week period after the request and keep copies of their approval by e-mail. Changes due to an extension of the duration of the mobility period should be made as timely as possible.
- Your host institution commits to treat you in the same way as their home students and you should make all necessary efforts to integrate into your new environment.
- Your receiving institution will not ask you to pay fees for tuition, registration, examinations, access to laboratory and library facilities, that have not been highlighted in advance, during your mobility period. Nevertheless, you may be charged small fees on the same basis as local students for costs such as insurance, student unions and the use of miscellaneous material.

After your mobility period

- You are entitled to receive full academic recognition from your sending institution for satisfactorily completed activities during your mobility period, in accordance with the Learning Agreement.
- If you are studying abroad, your host institution will give you a Transcript of Records recording your results with the credits and grades achieved (normally within five weeks of completion of your studies).
- You must complete a questionnaire to provide feedback on your mobility period to your sending and host institution.

Appendix 2

Recording results for students studying overseas

The following points outline the steps which Schools should follow to record credit achieved by UWS students when studying at other institutions.

- 1 School Global Opportunities Co-ordinators are responsible for ensuring that each student has an approved and signed Learning Agreement prior to commencing their study overseas, and that each student has been informed of the way in which credit achieved abroad will be translated and recorded on their UWS transcript.
- 2 Results from the partner institution abroad should be sent direct to the School Global Opportunities Co-ordinator as soon as possible after the assessments grades have been approved by the partner institution.
- 3 On receipt of results from the partner institution, the School Global Opportunities co-ordinators are responsible for ensuring that the results are translated into UWS grades (where appropriate) and recorded in an appropriate format (see below).
- 4 The results must show the academic year and the name of the institution at which the results were attained (e.g. 2018/19 at University of Grenoble).
- 5 The level and number of credits attained must be recorded using the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and not the European Credit Transfer Scheme (ECTS). As a guide, one ECTS credit is equivalent to two SCQF credits or 15 USA Credits is equivalent to 60 SCQF credits.
- 6 The actual results from study abroad may be recorded on the UWS transcripts in a variety of ways. For example,
Total amount of credit attained
(e.g. 90 SCQF points at Level 9 and 30 SCQF points at Level 8)

or

Number of points attained in individual modules
(e.g. Analytical Chemistry 25 SCQF points at Level 9)

or

Actual mark achieved in an individual module (provided that there has been an agreed equivalence in marking schemes between the exchange institutions).
(e.g. Analytical Chemistry 67%, Grade B1, 20 SCQF points at level 9)

-
- 7 The information outlined above should be forwarded by the School Global Opportunities co-ordinator to Registry for input onto the student's academic record.
 - 8 The credit attained abroad will then be recorded as Exchange Credit on the student's transcript under the section "Transferred Credit".
 - 9 Any questions relating to the recording of credit for students studying at partner institutions should be directed in the first instance to Registry.

Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 6
External Examining
Session 2023/24

www.uws.ac.uk

University of the West of Scotland is a registered Scottish charity. Charity number SC002520.

CHAPTER 6 EXTERNAL EXAMINING

All forms related to this chapter are available here:

<https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared Documents/CHAPTER 6 EXTERNAL EXAMINING?csf=1&web=1&e=SrsCqW>

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ANY QUERIES CONCERNING THIS BOOKLET SHOULD BE RAISED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WITH QUEST. THIS BOOKLET CAN BE PROVIDED IN OTHER FORMATS ON REQUEST.

THE PROCEDURES DESCRIBED WITHIN THIS BOOKLET HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR EQUALITY IMPACT AND CONFIRMED AS BEING AT LOW RISK OF HAVING ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

CHAPTER 6 EXTERNAL EXAMINING

The UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment, supported by the Quality Assurance Agency, launched a set of [Principles for Effective External Examining](#) in August 2022. UWS external examiner practice will be reviewed regularly to ensure it aligns with these Principles.

1 EXTERNAL EXAMINING AT UWS

The University operates a two-tier system of assessment boards: School Assessment Boards (SABs) which confirm the mark, grade and decision for each student on each module and to which School Assessment Board external examiners are appointed; and School Boards of Examiners (SBEs) to which a School Board of Examiners external examiner is appointed and considers the eligibility of students on a group of programmes to progress or gain an award.

In addition to SABs and SBEs, the University also operates Degree Assessment Boards (DABs) to which a Degree Assessment Board external examiner is appointed. It is normally the responsibility of DABs to provide an overall judgement on student performance and the quality and standard of validated programmes delivered by the University's collaborative partners. In some circumstances, however, such as for newer collaborative partners, it may be more appropriate to implement the standard UWS approach and use the two tier system of SAB and SBE, as detailed above. This approach will be reviewed regularly, to ensure that both parties are comfortable that the University's academic standards are being upheld and to determine if a move to establish a Degree Assessment Board (DAB) would be suitable. The system to be implemented for each collaborative partner will be decided on an individual basis to ensure that the UWS academic standards and assessment requirements are maintained and assured.

2 APPOINTMENT¹

'3.48 External examiners are appointed in accordance with the criteria and procedures outlined in the Quality Handbook.' UWS Regulatory Framework 2023/24

No person may act in any capacity as an external examiner until their appointment has been confirmed by the Academic Quality Committee (AQC) on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and a formal letter provided by the Quality Enhancement and Standards Team (QuEST).

2.1 Term of Office

The external examiner term of office is normally four years (October - September) to enable the external examiner to consider four successive

¹ The majority of the information in "Appointment" is appropriate for our collaborative partners, it is expected that they will take the lead (and work closely with the School) when proposing external examiners for validated programmes.

cohorts of students. Exceptionally, the external examiners may be asked to act as external examiner for one further year for reasons of continuity. If there is a requirement to appoint an external out with the normal Oct-Sep timings, the nomination must not exceed 4 years in the first instance. For example, a nomination could not run April 2023 – September 2027 as this would be 4 years and 5 months, the most appropriate tenure would be to run from April 2023 to September 2026.

Newly appointed external examiners should take up their appointments on or before the retirement of their predecessors. Retiring external examiners should remain available until after the last assessments with which they are involved to deal with any subsequent reviews of decisions that arise.

2.2 Nomination Scheduling

Nominations for new or replacement external examiners should be made at least six months before the appointment is due to commence. It is recommended that schools review their allocations at the start of each year to identify those whose tenure is concluding. AQC provides a list of outgoing external examiners to the school representatives at every meeting. Nomination forms are available for relevant School colleagues within the Microsoft Teams External Examiner page or alternatively upon request from QuEST and should be completed in consultation with the proposed external examiner. Collaborative partners should request the Degree Assessment Board External Examiner Nomination Form from their UWS school contact.

2.3 Identifying Appropriate Candidates

As the external examiner should be an impartial 'critical friend', it is unwise to approach potential candidates with whom a member of staff has a close professional or personal relationship. Nominations can come from previous approval or Institution-led Review (ILR) panel members if evidence is provided that they meet the criteria.

Should difficulty be experienced in identifying a suitable candidate, a brief advert can be provided to QuEST who will circulate this to other higher education providers subscribed to the JISC mailing list.

2.4 Nomination Form

The nominee should be asked to complete the first part of the nomination form and submit this along with a current CV and evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK to ensure compliance with the requirements of the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI). All nomination forms are available here: <https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared Documents/CHAPTER 6 EXTERNAL EXAMINING?csf=1&web=1&e=nvl3Pt>

2.5 Governance

The School (and collaborative partner where appropriate) should then complete the remaining sections of the form and obtain approval through the most appropriate governing committee within the School (normally a Divisional Programme Board). This is then submitted to the Secretary to AQC along with

the CV and UKVI evidence for consideration by AQC. Should AQC have any concerns, these will be relayed to the School for further exploration, which may require additional rationale or evidence to be provided.

2.6 Approval

If AQC approves the nomination, a letter confirming the appointment is sent to the new external examiner by the Head of QuEST and copied to the appropriate School contacts. External examiners are directed within the letter to the UWS Policy and Procedures webpage, which will provide access to the External Examiner Handbook and other relevant documentation such as University Regulatory Framework and Quality Handbook <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>. The External Examiner Handbook provides general information about the history and academic structure of the University, the quality assurance system, the role of external examiners, information about external examiner reports, expenses and fees, and the assessment regulations.

2.7 Eligibility to Work in the UK (for domestic arrangements only)

As part of the appointment process, external examiners must provide evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Home Office. Most right to work checks can be conducted online and the process used will depend on the documentation provided by the external examiner. External examiners will be informed of the current process to be undertaken at the time of their appointment. Please note that EU Passports alone can no longer be accepted as proof of right to work in the UK and additional documentation and online checks will be required. For further information on right to work checks and acceptable forms of evidence please see the [Home Office website](#)

In addition to this, the University is required to have had sight of official documentation which confirms the external examiner's National Insurance number, such as a National Insurance card or payslip.

External Examiners cannot commence their appointment or receive any payments without the necessary checks being completed.

Staff must not involve proposed external examiners in any element of the assessment process prior to the appointment being confirmed by AQC.

2.8 Criteria for Appointment

Colleagues recommending approval of new external examiner nominations should ensure that the following criteria are evidenced in their form:

- ❑ knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality;
- ❑ competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study, or parts thereof;
- ❑ relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive

- practitioner experience where appropriate;
- ❑ competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures;
 - ❑ sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers;
 - ❑ familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed;
 - ❑ fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s) (unless other secure arrangements are in place to ensure that external examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements);
 - ❑ meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies;
 - ❑ awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula;
 - ❑ competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

Individuals in the following categories or circumstances will not normally be appointed as external examiners:

- ❑ a member of the University's Court or of the governing body of a partner institution, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners;
- ❑ anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study;
- ❑ anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study;
- ❑ anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study;
- ❑ anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question;
- ❑ former staff or students of the institution unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s);
- ❑ a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution;
- ❑ the succession of an external examiner by a colleague from the examiner's home department and institution;
- ❑ the appointment of more than one external examiner from the same department of the same institution;
- ❑ anyone who has previously served as an external examiner for the University / collaborative partner, except in exceptional circumstances and only after a period of five years or more has elapsed since the end of their last appointment;
- ❑ anyone who will hold more than two external examiner appointments for

- taught programmes/modules during the appointment;
- ❑ retired professionals/academics after 12 months has elapsed since their employment in the subject/HE, unless exceptional circumstances exist and continuing practice within the sector can be evidenced.

There may be certain circumstances, for example in specialist subject areas where there is a small pool of potential examiners, where a School / Collaborative Partner will want to submit a nomination that contradicts the criteria above. In such circumstances a clear rationale as to why this nomination constitutes an exception must be provided. AQC will consider the request but may on balance choose not to approve or may approve but with additional safeguards to avoid potential conflicts.

2.9 Reciprocity of Examining

Please note that reciprocal external examining between the same or closely related subject areas in the University/Collaborative Partner and another institution or organisation is not permitted. If such an arrangement becomes apparent, it should be drawn to the attention of the Head of QuEST as it would not be possible for both appointments to continue.

Schools / Collaborative Partners should ensure that an up to date list of staff and their current external examining appointments is maintained and provided to QuEST (the 'Internal External' spreadsheet).

If there are any staff within the School / Collaborative Partner that have external examiner responsibilities at the nominee's institution, this should be noted on the Nomination Form with a clear rationale for why the nomination is being proposed and how the existing conditions do not preclude their appointment.

UWS academics should consult with their School before taking up an external appointment at another institution to ensure there is no risk of reciprocity with external examiners currently appointed within the School.

2.10 External Examiner Nominations with No Previous Experience

Whilst we would want to encourage academic development, if the nominee has no previous external examining experience, the School / Collaborative Partner must indicate how they will support the nominee to fulfil their duties. e.g. will the appointment be mentored by a team of existing external examiners? What additional briefing will be provided and by whom?

2.11 SAB / DAB External Examiner Nominations

Assigning modules to the nominee must be done in collaboration with the nominee. When listing the proposed modules staff should consider the following:

- ❑ Are the modules in an appropriate subject area?
- ❑ Does the nominee have experience of examining / teaching at this level?
- ❑ Does the allocation seem appropriate in terms of number of modules and number of times a module will run?
- ❑ If some of these modules are options and may not run every year, this

- should be highlighted.
- ❑ If the number of modules seems excessive are there other factors that AQC should be apprised of?
 - ❑ If the number of modules seems light is this because the modules are in a very specific area that cannot be covered by another existing external examiner?
 - ❑ What is the assessment load of the modules? If a module has several pieces of assessment, has this been considered in the allocation?

2.12 SBE External Examiner Nominations

The School Boards of Examiners (SBE) consist of groups of programmes within a School. New appointments should normally be based on the requirement that there is a single SBE external examiner associated with a group of programmes. Once a SAB external examiner has served at least one year at UWS they may be invited to become a SBE external examiner. This approach aims to recognise the contribution that the external examiner has made at the subject level, acknowledging also that they now have a greater understanding of the University's assessment processes and systems. Usually the external examiner will take on a dual appointment, continuing as a SAB external examiner as well as taking on the SBE role.

When nominating an SBE external examiner the School should review the external's workload and consider the allocation of programmes, and modules if the external is also to continue with their SAB duties, to ensure that it is appropriate. The external examiner should be consulted during this process to ensure they are comfortable with the proposed allocation.

If a SAB external examiner moving to a SBE role is not continuing with their SAB duties, please ensure that the section of the form to withdraw modules is completed.

If the SBE nominee has not previously been a SAB external examiner at UWS, rationale and reassurance of appropriateness must be provided. e.g. is there no SAB external examiner willing/able to take on the duties?

2.13 Extensions to Tenure

The standard tenure for an external examiner is 4 years. Extensions to tenure are not typically permitted and will not be sanctioned for an external who has already been extended to the maximum 5 year tenure. A rationale for the extension must be provided, which explains why exceptional approval is sought.

2.14 Re-Appointment

An External Examiner may be re-appointed provided that five years have elapsed since the end of the previous term of office and that the second appointment will not exceed four consecutive years. Caution is advised in reappointing the same examiner as potentially this may narrow the opportunities for sharing of positive practice, which could be provided by alternative external examiners and is not conducive to supporting the nurturing of new external examiners.

2.15 Change in Circumstances

QuEST should be notified by the External Examiner of any change in circumstances which may impact their appointment such as changes in employment or new professional connections with UWS staff. The appointment will be reviewed to ensure the criteria as detailed within this Chapter continues to be met.

2.16 Reallocation of Duties

There is a separate Allocation Amendment Form available here:

[https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared/Documents/CHAPTER 6 EXTERNAL EXAMINING?csf=1&web=1&e=nvl3Pt](https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared/Documents/CHAPTER_6_EXTERNAL_EXAMINING?csf=1&web=1&e=nvl3Pt) . This form is used to add or remove modules or programme responsibilities from an existing external examiner. It should not be used to nominate an existing SAB external examiner as an SBE external examiner.

If adding modules / programme responsibilities to an existing external examiner, the School must consider the following:

- The external examiner has been consulted on and agrees with any amendments to their remit/workload
- Do these additions raise concerns over the workload?
- Are these additions suitable for the external examiner's area of expertise?
- Are any modules / programme responsibilities being removed?

Following approval by the Divisional Programme Board the completed form should be submitted to the Secretary of AQC for the Committee's approval.

2.17 Resignation of an External Examiner/Termination of Appointment

Should the external examiner for any reason (e.g. workload, conflict of interest, ill health etc.) need to conclude their role earlier than the confirmed period of the appointment, they are asked to advise the Head of QuEST who will make the necessary arrangements. In order to allow sufficient time to find a replacement, the University requires that external examiners advise the Head of QuEST of their intention to resign by no later than the end of December of the year in progress but recognises that in certain circumstances this may not be possible e.g. sudden ill health.

If the External Examiner resignation is over a matter of principle, academic standards or concerns over maladministration, then the Head of QuEST will report the matter to the relevant School Board, Learning and Teaching Committee and Senate.

The University may, in exceptional circumstances, terminate the contract of an external examiner with agreement from LTC. This action may be taken when the programme or module portfolio has changed significantly since the original arrangement or where there has been demonstrable persistent failure to meet the requirements of the role, e.g. through non engagement with the processes of the Boards, or repeated lack of response to draft assessment instruments, or the provision of false information in annual reports, or due to a significant

change of circumstances of the external examiner.

It will be the responsibility of the Deputy Dean in the first instance to advise the Head of QuEST of any concerns.

If an annual report that is due for submission on 15 September has not been received, without due explanation, by 20 November, or if the report has not been received after a comparable interval in the case of another due date, the external examiner may be deemed by the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee to have resigned their appointment and will be advised accordingly. Where illness or other personal reasons have been notified by the external examiner to the Head of QuEST as preventing them from meeting requirements of the role, the relevant School will in the first instance seek to agree appropriate revised arrangements, such as a revised timescale for submission of an outstanding report.

2.18 Powers of UWS External Examiners

No University award shall be granted without the written consent of the SBE external examiner, or DAB external examiner in relation to collaborative partners (Regs 3.16 & 3.47).

All student marks and grades are confirmed by SABs, to which SAB external examiners are appointed, following consideration of the performance of students on the modules assigned to the Board (Reg 3.44).

The University requires that external examiners report annually on:

- whether the academic standards set for its awards, or part thereof, are appropriate;
- the extent to which its assessment processes are rigorous, ensure equity of treatment for students and have been fairly conducted within institutional regulations and guidance;
- opportunities to enhance the quality of learning opportunities provided to students;
- where appropriate, the comparability of the standards and student achievements with those in some other higher education institutions;
- positive practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment.

On any matter, which an External Examiner has declared to be a matter of principle, the decision of the External Examiner concerned must either be accepted as final by the SAB or SBE in question or be referred to the Senate.

2.19 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

External examiners on programmes with professional accreditation may be required to comment on additional areas. For example, NMC external

examiners should provide comment on clinical practice.

3 SCHOOL ASSESSMENT BOARD EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

3.1 Role and Responsibility

The overall responsibility of each School Assessment Board (SAB) external examiner is to ensure that each module is assessed impartially and fairly and that the standards of the University's awards (or parts of awards) are maintained.

Each module will be assigned to **one** SAB external examiner, who will be appointed to consider the results for a group of related modules. For reasons of consistency, a module **cannot** be assigned to more than one external examiner. It is recognised, however, that it may be necessary for some modules to have additional external examiners review an assessment, for which they have specialist knowledge e.g. in a dissertation module where the appointed external examiner could not be expected to have knowledge of all topics covered within the dissertations. This process is intended to provide comfort to the appointed external examiner that the content is appropriate.

3.2 School Assessment Boards

School Assessment Boards (SABs) confirm the mark, grade and decision for each student on each module assigned to the SAB. Results from SABs are released to students as final approved results.

School Boards are responsible for ensuring that Schools have allocated modules to an appropriate SAB and Divisional Programme Boards ensure an External Examiner has been assigned to each module. SABs normally fall at the end of each term, however, there are programmes where boards occur at different times in the academic year and Schools will communicate the exact timings to external examiners once appointed. The membership and terms of reference of SABs are located in the University Senate [Committees Handbook](https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/) <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

The University is keen to ensure that external examiners can undertake their responsibilities in the most efficient and sustainable way, using technology where appropriate to undertake their role and reduce the need for physical attendance at the University. The external examiner's approval of marks, grades and decisions for each module (including resubmissions and resits **and not just those at L9 or above**) will therefore normally be sought electronically. It is recognised, however, external examiners may still want the opportunity to attend campus, in order to meet with staff and students, allowing for wider quality enhancement discussions and activities to take place. The external examiner should discuss this with the School in order to make the necessary arrangements and agree an appropriate frequency for such visits, usually a maximum of once per academic year. If overnight accommodation is required **this is normally within student residences.**

Each SAB External Examiner will:

- review and approve the form, content and standard of the assessment instruments and, where appropriate, the distribution and balance of coursework and other assessments. These should be in accordance with the published module descriptors
- provide electronic approval of marks, grades and decisions and attend meetings of the SABs as appropriate
- moderate the marks awarded by the internal examiner(s) on each module assigned to them (see details of sampling under *Reviewing Student Work*)
- have the right to inspect the work of all students and to call for such papers as he or she thinks necessary when sampling the work of students
- be entitled to modify the marks proposed by internal examiners provided that such modifications should be applied to all students undertaking the module unless all scripts have been reviewed by the SAB External Examiner.

Please note that standardisation may only be applied by the relevant SAB and with the agreement of the relevant SAB external examiner.

3.3 SAB External Examiner Induction

On appointment all external examiners receive details of the online induction and link to the External Examiners Handbook <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

This general induction produced by QuEST, provides an introduction to the institution, an overview of the Quality Enhancement Framework in Scotland, the operation of exam boards and role and responsibilities of external examiners, including completion of the annual report.

Schools should ensure that the examiner is fully apprised of the specific arrangements relating to the subject area they are examining, including the following:

- the design and delivery characteristics of the module and associated programme as set out in the module descriptors and programme specifications
- marking protocols (question and assignment setting; model answers; double marking; blind marking; moderation)
- sampling and selection of student work to provide the evidence base for the external examiner
- procedures for oral examination or formal review of student work or performance
- opportunities for meeting students on a more informal basis

- arrangements for participation in SABs
- terms of reference for SABs
- rules and penalties for academic misconduct
- procedures for student appeals and complaints
- access to recent external examiner reports
- contact protocols and details for key staff (especially important for external examiners of collaborative provision)

It is the responsibility of the School to provide the SAB External Examiner with access to appropriate module descriptors and supporting documentation as soon as the appointment is confirmed.

It is recommended that Schools facilitate either a visit or online meeting with all new external examiners on commencement of their appointment, in order for them to meet with staff and familiarise themselves with the provision, as well as the wider institution and its processes.

3.4 Initial Teacher Education Programmes

For Initial Teacher Education programmes, the School of Education and Social Sciences contact will make the day-to-day arrangements regarding assignments and school visits, which are required by the SAB external examiners.

3.5 Standards in Social Work Education

The School of Education and Social Sciences should be cognisant of any impact of the Standards in Social Work Education (SiSWE), which underpin social work degree programmes in Scotland, on the external examiner role and that examiners are informed of any additional requirements.

3.6 Reviewing Assessment Instruments

SAB external examiners will be invited to approve all assessment instruments at all levels, including coursework and examination question papers. **Schools should make all forms of assessment available to external examiners for approval prior to their being distributed to students.** Where this involves sending exam questions or unseen tests outside of the University, Schools should ensure appropriate encryption is deployed. SAB external examiners must be given at least **four weeks** to review draft assessment instruments.

3.7 Reviewing Student Work

Schools should ensure that SAB external examiners review a sample of student work, including coursework and examination scripts during the year. The sample of student work considered by external examiners should include material from part-time students and all modes of delivery and campuses and include collaborative franchise partners. **External examiners should review samples**

of student work for all the modules that they have been allocated, this includes the lower SCQF levels. Schools must ensure that they provide SAB external examiners with appropriate material for all the modules to which they have been appointed. While there are no firmly established sector norms for sampling, the University provides guidance on sampling methodology for the purposes of internal moderation, which is also a useful guide for external examiner sampling and can be found within section 5.3.3 of the Assessment Handbook <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

While the University has provided sampling guidance, External examiners are still encouraged to liaise with colleagues in the School to agree what method of sampling is acceptable and to request any other evidence they deem necessary to discharge their responsibilities. The reassurance of due process and procedure having been followed may come from sampling work from some, but not all cohorts who have taken a particular module in a particular year. The external examiner has the right of access to all students' assessments, but there is no expectation that they will sample work from multiple cohorts studying a module in the same year unless they wish to do so. If a SAB external examiner is content that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the proper operation of the SABs, and that assessments are being marked and moderated consistently, then they may sign off the results for a cohort without necessarily having sampled work from that same cohort.

It is helpful if an external examiner's review of student work can be staggered throughout the year rather than accumulated at the end of the session at the time of the final panel meeting. Assessments should be submitted online wherever possible, making externals' access to student work easier. Online access to samples enables externals to fulfil their role at a distance making the process more efficient and sustainable. It is hoped that this process will also provide quicker access to samples, giving externals more time for review. Some externals may, however, still wish to visit the University to meet with staff and students and the benefits of this, for wider quality enhancement purposes, are recognised. SAB Chairs should liaise with the SAB external examiner in good time on the approach he/she wishes to take.

Any queries about dates of meetings and arrangements for moderation should be raised with the School.

3.8 Recognition of Prior Learning

The University Regulation 2.16 states 'APEL assessments shall be open to external examination and confirmation by SABs (see Regulation 3.44) on the same basis as the formal assessment and examination of students.'

It is expected that suitably experienced external examiners will review APEL assessments and student submissions as appropriate. As with any other assessment, the external examiner should have the opportunity to approve the method and marking rubric to confirm that the process of assessment is robust. APEL student submissions must be seen by an external examiner and go through an appropriate SAB. Whilst the External Examiner Handbook does

notify examiners that they may be asked to review APEL claims, the submissions can be infrequent and time consuming to review. It is therefore courteous to provide the external examiner with early notification, adequate time and appropriate supporting documentation to assist them in their review.

3.9 Work-based Learning / Work – Related Learning/Placement Learning Arrangements

Where a programme contains elements of work-based learning (WBL)/ placement learning (PL) experience, the instruments of assessment must still be approved by the external examiner. Assignments and assessments connected with WBL/PL should be properly considered by the academic programme team and the appropriate external examiners and there should be consideration of parity of assessment with the University based route where this exists.

The award of credit for WBL/PL will be confirmed by SABs and will involve external examiners who should comment on WBL/PL in their annual reports. When appointing external examiners, it is important that they are fully aware of the extent of WBL/PL within the portfolio of modules that they are being assigned to and what their input to these modules is expected to involve.

3.10 Module Amendments

In addition to confirmation of standards and comparability of awards, external examiners are also invited to comment on areas for enhancement. For example, it is common for Schools to seek the opinion of external examiners on proposed changes to assessment structure/format within a module or programme and particularly when there are professional body requirements. External examiners may also occasionally be invited to contribute to postal approvals.

3.11 Approval of Marks by SAB External Examiner

In order to approve the results from a SAB, external examiners are expected to assure themselves that marking and moderation of assessment on all modules to which they are assigned has been carried out appropriately, in line with the University's Regulations and procedures, and that academic standards have been maintained.

The SAB is responsible for confirming the marks and grades for modules assigned to it. The SAB external examiner confirms their approval of the marks and grades during attendance at the SAB or by other appropriate means as determined by the Chair. In exceptional circumstances, where it has not been possible to get the approval of the external examiner, the Chair must consult with the School's Deputy Dean and QuEST in order to agree a process for confirming the results from the SAB.

3.12 SAB Paperwork

The production of the results paperwork for the SAB is the responsibility of the School, in consultation with staff in Registry.

3.13 Reporting

Minutes of the deliberations and outcomes of the SAB will be forwarded to

the next meeting of the appropriate Divisional Programme Board. Guidance on the format of the report will be provided to the Chairs by Registry.

Results are communicated to students after each SAB electronically via Self Service Banner.

4 SCHOOL BOARDS OF EXAMINERS EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

4.1 School Boards of Examiners

School Boards of Examiners (SBEs) consider the performance of students on a programme and determine a student's eligibility to progress to the next stage of their programme or to gain an award. An SBE will recommend the granting of an award for a student who has satisfied the requirements for the award as outlined in the Programme Specification (see Regulations 1.15 & 3.15). The SBEs apply University Regulations on progression/awards but do not have the authority to alter marks or grades.

The membership and terms of reference of the SBEs are located in the Committee Handbook <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

4.2 Combined Studies Award

SBEs are empowered to grant an exit award of CertHE/DipHE,BA/BSc or PgC/PgD in Combined Studies where a student has met the credit requirements for an award in line with SCQF credit minima (see Regulation 1.61) but cannot continue on the named award.

4.3 SBE External Examiners

The overall responsibility of each SBE external examiner is to ensure that each candidate for a particular award is considered impartially and fairly in accordance with University Regulations and guidance, and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained.

The role of SBE external examiners also involves the overview of the analysis of trends in award and progression data and the comparison of standards across different cohorts and campuses.

SBE external examiners do not review student work and cannot change marks – they confirm progression and award decisions based on outcomes of the SBE. No recommendation to grant an award can be made without the written approval of the external examiner appointed to the SBE (see Regulation 3.47). SBE Chairs should ensure that the external examiner signs off the paperwork for all boards. If the external examiner is not present at the board, then the Chair is responsible for ensuring approval through other appropriate communication approaches, students will not be entered onto the graduation roll until this has been obtained. This approval is for all awards of the University.

Each SBE External Examiner will:

- attend (usually online) meetings of the SBE as appropriate and, in light of information received from the SBE, approve award and progression decisions
- be consulted about, and have the right to approve or prevent, any proposed changes in the assessment regulations which will directly affect students currently on a particular programme of study
- contribute to such viva voce examination of any candidate (as is deemed necessary in relation to a student appeal) on review of a decision of a SBE
- participate, as necessary, in reviews of progression and award decisions with respect to individual candidates
- comment, as required, on aspects of cohort performance, honours classification distribution and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the University's assessment board processes.

Any queries about dates of meetings and arrangements should be raised with the School.

Occasionally SBE external examiners may also be invited to contribute to postal approvals, comment on amendments to the programme content or changes proposed to the assessment structure/format.

4.4 SBE External Examiner Induction

As SBE external examiners are usually appointed following experience as an SAB external examiner with the University, the induction need only cover the areas that differ from the SAB role.

Schools should ensure that appropriate documentation including the programme specifications for the programmes allocated to the SBE is made available to the SBE external examiner as soon as the appointment is confirmed.

It is positive practice for the SBE Chair to contact the newly appointed external examiner to talk through what to expect and their role on the board. Registry has supporting documentation available for those attending SBEs. Schools should ensure that their external examiners have access to this documentation.

5 DEGREE ASSESSMENT BOARD EXTERNAL EXAMINERS (FOR VALIDATED MODEL COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS)

5.1 Role and Responsibility

The overall responsibility of each Degree Assessment Board (DAB) external examiner is to ensure that the standards of the University's awards are maintained and, where applicable, the University Regulations are applied.

Degree Assessment Boards confirm the mark, grade and decision for each student. The Board also considers the performance of students on the validated programme and determines whether the student is eligible to progress to the next stage of their programme or to gain an award.

Degree Assessment Board External Examiners will usually attend all DAB meetings. These typically occur at the end of terms 2 and 3. Additional meetings may be required for programmes where results, progression and award points occur at other times in the academic session.

Each Degree Assessment Board External Examiner will:

- Attend meetings of the Degree Assessment Board as appropriate, and moderate the marks awarded by the internal examiner(s) and make award and progression decisions, in line with Regulations
- Have the right to inspect the work of all students
- Comment as required on aspects of cohort performance, honours classification distribution and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the DAB.

The Collaborative Partner, in consultation with the School, will liaise with external examiner(s) regarding dates of Boards and will arrange overnight accommodation if required.

Any queries about dates of meetings and arrangements for moderation should be raised with the Collaborative Partner.

If they are unable to attend a Board, the external examiner should liaise with the Partner, in consultation with the School, to ensure that other means of reviewing work and approving results can be established.

An attendance fee of £100 per visit is payable to the DAB external examiner for attendance at the Degree Assessment Board. The payment of attendance fees will be processed on the claim form, which must be endorsed by the Panel Chair following the Board. Any queries regarding this process should be raised with the School.

5.2 Degree Assessment Board External Examiner Appointments

The process for appointment of Degree Assessment Board External Examiners is similar to that of SAB and SBE External Examiners (See Section 2 of this Chapter) although there is a separate nomination form to be completed, which is available to relevant School colleagues within the Microsoft Teams External Examiner page or can be obtained directly from QuEST.

The key difference with DAB appointments is that in most cases the Collaborative Partner (having the subject expertise) will lead in identifying possible candidates. As with all appointments, the nominee must meet the

criteria for external examiners and the Partner **must not** engage the nominee in any external examiner activities until the Academic Quality Committee has approved the nomination.

The nomination form should be completed by the nominee, Partner and School together to ensure that there is a common understanding of the role and responsibilities attached.

5.3 Degree Assessment Board External Examiner Induction

On appointment, all external examiners receive details of the online induction and link to the External Examiners Handbook <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

It is expected that the School and Partner will provide additional information to the DAB external examiner on the specific requirements related to the programmes they will oversee.

As a minimum, Schools and Partners should ensure that the examiner is fully apprised of the following:

- the design and delivery characteristics of the modules and associated programme as set out in the module descriptors and programme specifications
- marking protocols (question and assignment setting; model answers; double marking; blind marking; moderation)
- sampling and selection of student work to provide the evidence base for the external examiner
- procedures for oral examination or formal review of student work or performance
- opportunities for meeting students on a more informal basis
- requirements for attending panels
- terms of reference for attending panels
- rules and penalties for academic misconduct
- procedures for student appeals and complaints
- access to recent external examiner reports
- contact protocols and details for key staff

It is the responsibility of the School and Partner to provide the DAB external examiners with access to appropriate programme specifications, module descriptors and supporting documentation as soon as the appointment is

confirmed.

5.4 Reviewing Assessment Instruments

DAB external examiners will be invited to approve all assessment instruments at all levels, including coursework and examination question papers. **Partners (with oversight from the relevant School) should make all forms of assessment available to external examiners for approval prior to their being distributed to students.** Where this involves sending exam questions or unseen tests outside of the Partner Institution, Partners should ensure appropriate encryption is deployed. DAB external examiners must be given at least four weeks to review draft assessment instruments.

5.5 Reviewing Student Work

Partners should ensure that DAB external examiners review a sample of student work, including coursework and examination scripts during the year. The sample of student work considered by external examiners should include material from part-time students and all modes of delivery and campuses and include collaborative franchise partners. **External examiners should review samples of student work for all the modules that they have been allocated, this includes the lower SCQF levels.** Schools must ensure that they provide SAB external examiners with appropriate material for all the modules to which they have been appointed. While there are no firmly established sector norms for sampling the University provides guidance on sampling methodology for the purposes of internal examining, which is also a useful guide for external examiner sampling and can be found within section 5.3.3 of the Assessment Handbook

While the University has provided sampling guidance, External examiners are still encouraged to liaise with colleagues in the School to agree what method of sampling is acceptable and to request any other evidence they deem necessary to discharge their responsibilities. The reassurance of due process and procedure having been followed may come from sampling work from some, but not all cohorts who have taken a particular module in a particular year. The external examiner has the right of access to all students' assessments, but there is no expectation that they will sample work from multiple cohorts studying a module in the same year unless they wish to do so. If an External Examiner is content that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the proper operation of the Degree Assessment Boards, and that assessments are being marked and moderated consistently, then they may sign off the results for a cohort without necessarily having sampled work from that same cohort.

It is helpful if an external examiner's review of student work can be staggered throughout the year rather than accumulated at the end of the session at the time of the final panel meeting. Partners are encouraged to utilise technology wherever possible to provide external examiners with access to student work offsite. This will enable externals to fulfil more of their role at a distance and make the process more efficient and sustainable. A number of external examiners have commented that they would wish to have more time to look at student work and it is hoped that utilisation of technology will help to facilitate this. DAB external examiners will usually still visit the Partner Organisation at

least annually in order to meet with staff and students, and the benefits of this, for wider quality enhancement purposes, are recognised.

Any queries about dates of meetings and arrangements for moderation should be raised with the Partner.

6 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

6.1 UK Quality Code for Higher Education

The revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which was launched in 2018, sets out the expectations all providers of UK Higher Education are required to meet. The University has undertaken an extensive mapping exercise to confirm the requirements of the revised Quality Code are being met and this will be kept under regular review by the Academic Quality Committee. The Code requires that 'degree awarding bodies engage external examiners to provide impartial and independent advice, as well as informative comment on the degree awarding body's standards and on student achievement in relation to those standards. External examiners confirm that the provider consistently and fairly implements their own policies and procedures to ensure the integrity and rigor of assessment practices. They also comment on the quality and standards of the courses in relation to the national standards and frameworks and comment on the reasonable comparability of standards achieved at other UK providers with whom the examiner has experience...' The specific requirements of the Code underpin the UWS approach and have informed our external examiner appointment process, with reference to the person specification, and the powers, responsibilities and reporting requirements of external examiners, as detailed in the Quality Handbook.

7 ANNUAL MONITORING & ANNUAL REPORTING

7.1 Reporting

Each external examiner is required to report annually to the University on the conduct of the assessments concluded during the year and on issues relating to those assessments, in a form determined by the Senate.

An online survey platform is used for the reporting, which allows the questions to be tailored to the external examiner's role. The survey can be accessed from a variety of platforms including smart phones and tablets. A link is sent to the external examiner at the end of term 2. If the external examiner would prefer to use a report form in Microsoft™ Word format, blank report forms are available on request. Reports should be completed by 15 September. On receipt by QuEST, the external examiner reports, with the response form incorporated for completion by Schools, will be posted on a platform, usually Microsoft Teams, which is accessible to relevant School personnel. QuEST will inform Schools annually of the platform being used.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that external examiners are provided with

a written formal response to their annual report. All reports, including responses, are also made available for students on the UWS Student App.

If external examiner reports are not received by 15 September, QuEST sends a reminder to the external examiner. A further reminder will be sent to external examiners during November and if necessary, thereafter by the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

Any queries about receipt of annual reports should be directed to QuEST in the first instance.

External examiner reports should be considered at the appropriate Divisional Programme Board within their annual monitoring activities.

7.2 Raising Concerns

Where there is concern about standards and performance, particularly if there is a suggestion that assessments are being conducted in a way that jeopardises either the fair treatment of individual candidates or the standards of the University's awards, an external examiner has the authority to submit a report directly to the Principal. The external examiner may also invoke the QAA's concerns scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body. This will be communicated to the external examiner at the time of appointment.

If colleagues are advised of any concerns external examiners have about the reporting process, please contact the Head of QuEST.

7.3 Programme Amendments

The primary role of external examiners relates to the standards of awards and the quality of assessment processing. However, the external examiner will be expected to comment on amendments to the programme content or changes proposed to the assessment structure/format.

As a matter of courtesy, the School should advise the appropriate external examiners of **all changes** to the programme(s) associated with their appointment during the year and provide access to an updated programme specification in advance of each Board.

8 EXTERNAL EXAMINER FEES & EXPENSES

8.1 Payment of Fees

Payment of the fee will be authorised when the annual report is received, which is due by 15 September each year.

Payment is made through the University's payroll system, which is usually paid on the 28th of each month. Payment is made direct to bank accounts and we request bank details prior to each payment. The external examiner will be asked to complete the relevant forms each session following receipt of their annual report to enable payment of the fee. All external examiners are subject to PAYE. A P60 can be supplied on request. Tax will be deducted at source

from the fee. National insurance is not deducted from external examiner payments.

For session 2023/24, the fee structure for annual reporting is as follows:

School Assessment Board External Examiner	£500
School Board of Examiners External Examiner	£300
Dual Role (SAB & SBE External Examiner)	£600
Degree Assessment Board External Examiner	£500

8.2 Placement Visit Fees

In addition to the fee for annual reporting, SAB external examiners who undertake placement visits, as required by a professional, statutory or regulatory body, such as the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), will be paid an additional £100 per day. All placement fees must be claimed on the appropriate form and authorised by the Board Chair. Any queries regarding this process should be raised with the School.

8.3 Expenses

Travel and accommodation expenses will be paid in addition to the fees noted above. All claims should be submitted within 3 months of the expense being incurred. More information on claiming expenses can be found in the External Examiners Handbook <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

8.4 Postal Charges

On rare occasions it may be necessary to send physical copies of assessment material to external examiners. When returning assessment material to the University or the Collaborative Partner, they should be returned by the same manner in which they were forwarded. For UK partners, this would usually be through services offered by the Royal Mail. Couriers need not be used.

The School will reimburse Royal Mail postal expenses and all claims should be clearly detailed on the expenses claims form. Proof of payment must be submitted with the expense claims form.

Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 7
Enhancement and Annual
Monitoring
Session 2023/24

All appendices referred to within this chapter are available via SharePoint Site:
https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f/s/QualityHandbook2021-22/ErPskH2dLzVBh7QXRv2WDTEBsUfF_49k3cUE0qrXtubOIA?e=ZkO8Hs

CHAPTER 7 ENHANCEMENT AND ANNUAL MONITORING

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ANY QUERIES CONCERNING THIS BOOKLET SHOULD BE RAISED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WITH QUEST. THIS BOOKLET CAN BE PROVIDED IN OTHER FORMATS ON REQUEST.

THE PROCEDURES DESCRIBED WITHIN THIS BOOKLET HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR EQUALITY IMPACT AND CONFIRMED AS BEING AT LOW RISK OF HAVING ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

CHAPTER 7 ENHANCEMENT AND ANNUAL MONITORING

1 ENHANCEMENT AND ANNUAL MONITORING (EAM)

Our annual monitoring processes take account of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, in particular the [‘Monitoring and Evaluation Chapter’](#) within the revised 2018 edition – *“Monitoring and evaluation of higher education is an essential process within providers internal quality assurance mechanisms, covering all provision that leads to their awards and assuring the standard of those qualification. Relevant sector-recognised standards form a baseline for monitoring and evaluation systems;”*

The University’s approach to enhancement and annual monitoring is programme-based and focuses on the quality of the student experience through reflection at both module and programme level. In line with the UK Quality Code, *“The provider actively reviews its core practices for quality regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.”* Strategic principles have been agreed *“to ensure processes are applied systematically and operated consistently.”*

The Programme Monitoring Report and Action Plan is the main EAM report offering reflective commentary and assurance, as well as a forward-looking approach to provision and support arrangements. The report also facilitates consideration of any future development of the programme. Some new elements relating to triangulation with NSS and survey data will also feature for this cycle; with a significant review of our EAM processes anticipated to follow during session 2023/24.

The main forums for consideration of annual monitoring information and reports will be at Divisional Programme Board level and through School Board. The culmination of matters arising from EAM and other student-related activities will be concluded at University-wide Institutional Enhancement and Annual Monitoring Event. A timeline flowchart outlining details of the process can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

The rationale in support of a programme-based approach to annual monitoring is to look holistically and coherently at the student experience. This approach also allows a more local perspective to be taken on programmatic and modular issues, encouraging colleagues to reflect on all aspects of provision and support with a view to continuous improvement.

It is recognised that not all students follow traditional programmatic routes; and some programmes have collaborative local and joint delivery arrangements at other institutions. Separate programme reporting is required for programmes validated for delivery at other institutions and specific input is required from collaborative partners where such provision is offered. (Further details on collaborative provision can be found in **Chapter 9** of the Quality Handbook).

EAM APPROACH FOR 2023/24

Annual monitoring remains a fundamental key quality function of the University. Given this, over the last two sessions, only a small number of adjustments have been made to the process, some of which will be continued in the forthcoming cycle for 2023/24. The key principles remain but the process continues to offer **enhanced flexibility for Schools** to best manage the workload. School Boards will continue to have increased ownership as to how their School manages its annual monitoring, mainly with School events continuing to be optional. A focus this year will be to ensure that NSS actions will be closely aligned with those arising from annual monitoring and therefore demonstrate a coordinated approach to action planning.

2 ANNUAL MONITORING DOCUMENTATION AND DATA

All key enhancement and annual monitoring guidance will be lodged at the following sites:

- **UWS QuEST site Currently unavailable)**
This will include guidance and templates related to module review, programme monitoring, External Examiner reports, Collaborative Annual Reports, Institution-led Review reports, among other material.
- **[Academic Data Service Applications](#) site**
The [Academic Data Service Applications](#) site is the main source to facilitate all Programme monitoring and review. This site can also be accessed from the UWS Connect Home page under core systems.

This site will enable Schools to complete their **Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs)** electronically within this bespoke online site. The site provides the PMR template and the associated data (grouped by School/programme). PMRs from previous cycles are archived and remain on the site for viewing.

a) Key Dates and Documentation

Key documents include the following:

- **Module Review Forms (MRFs)**
- **Programme Monitoring Report (PMR) / Action Plans**
- **NSS/Survey Action Plans**
- Programme Annual Reports (PARs) (validated collaborative partners only)
- Collaborative Annual Reports (CARs) (franchise collaborative partners only)
- **External Examiner Reports & Responses**
- Summary of Analysis of External Examiner Reports (QuEST)
- **Divisional Summary Overview**
- School EAM Report / Summary Outcomes (either from School Event/or Board)
- School SMART Targets
- Institutional EAM Report (QuEST)

Further details are outlined within the main text of this chapter.

b) Module Review Forms

Module Review forms an integral part of the annual monitoring process. The MRF pro-forma is **currently under review** to ensure this is refreshed and that it appropriately addresses our flexible delivery approaches. We are also exploring whether MRFs can be online for staff access. A full review of annual monitoring processes will include exploring options for an online MRF and building on work previously considered by Academic Quality Committee (AQC).

The aim of module review is to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the delivery and assessment of a module. The identification of strengths will allow for the dissemination of good practice and the identification of weaknesses will allow action to be proposed to both increase module pass rates and to enhance the quality of the student learning experience. In order to be able to do this, an evaluative rather than a descriptive approach is expected. It is anticipated that **Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ)** survey data will be analysed as part of module review.

MRFs should be completed as soon as possible after the module runs for the last time in a session, with a final submission deadline **routinely being the end September**. Module co-ordinators are expected to complete MRFs as soon as possible to ensure that a qualitative evaluation is undertaken at a timely stage

within the process. Centrally produced module success rate data will be made available via the Dashboard soon after Terms 1 and 2. Overall centrally produced module success rate data and Term 3 data will be available routinely by early-mid September; thereby this submission date should allow sufficient time for evaluation.

The MRF should indicate any module amendments made for the next session. The module co-ordinator has responsibility for ensuring that the moderator and School Assessment Board Chair is in agreement with the content of the MRF prior to lodging the completed form on the School drive by the above submission date. Programme leaders will access the relevant MRF on the School drive to inform the writing of Programme Monitoring Report and Action Plan. Thereafter the appropriate Divisional Programme Board shall convene to consider annual monitoring Programme Monitoring Reports/ Action Plans and MRFs collectively prior to School-wide consideration (either at a School annual monitoring focused event or at School Board).

Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs)/ Action Plans

Approach for Session 2023/24 (to review 2022/23):

The [Academic Data Service Applications](#) site is the main source to facilitate all Programme Reviews. Also features on core systems on Connect Home page.

- For this cycle, a pilot to increase the links between the PMR/EAM outcomes with any actions arising from **National Student Survey (NSS) results** will take place; each School holding a meeting with Senior Management to inform actions. It is hoped to evidence more effective use of data to inform outcomes.
- **School/NSS Monitoring:** As an Institution, we want to triangulate the NSS actions plans and EAM targets. School responses should ensure NSS outcomes correlate with EAM activities. Whilst NSS Action Plans will be required per programme, NSS Divisional Action Plans will only be required where there are actions identified across a set of programmes.
- This site will enable Schools to complete their Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs) electronically within this bespoke online site. The site provides the PMR template and the associated data (grouped by School/programme).
- **The site will “Go Live” on Monday 9th October 2023.**
- Programme health and student data will be provided to schools via this site to inform the drafting of the PMR/Action Plans. The data provided on this site is overseen by Strategic Planning. Please note that due to the Cyber Incident that there will be no data available on the PMR site. Module level data was provided to Schools in September 2023.

One PMR/Action Plan will be prepared for each taught University programme as determined by Schools. This will ensure that an action plan is developed encompassing reflection of all data sources including programme performance progression data and survey outcomes, ILR outcomes, among others. The flowchart in [Appendix 1](#) outlines the main sources of information.

- For the upcoming cycle, the PMR mirrors the streamlined approach adopted last session. The shorter version with fewer questions of a more generic nature was well received by colleagues and for this reason it has been retained. It provides

general questions allowing increased flexibility in its completion. Two additional questions; one linked to NSS and one linked to the Curriculum Framework now feature. We are piloting a system which will pull through PMR actions and NSS actions into one definitive place for monitoring purposes and tracking. Further information on this will follow.

- **Completion of PMR: Each** Programme Review is grouped per School and a drop-down menu exists to select individual programmes. Once selected, the PMR for this programme will appear and will be ready for completion. For each programme, the designated Programme Leader will have lead responsibility for completion of the PMR, in close consultation with members of the programme team.

The PMR will seek to identify influencing factors affecting programme performance and the student experience (aligned closely with the data). An indication of questions embedded within the PMR are identified in [Appendix 3](#).

- **School Approver: Each** School will have a School Approver whose role will be to sign off each PMR once finalised prior to School Annual Monitoring Events. The School Approver will *normally* be the Deputy Dean of School/ or relevant Head of Division.

The Programme Leader will have writing/editing rights and will allocate Programme members to the group thereby providing individuals with writing/editing rights. Affected Programme Team members will automatically be notified by email.

- **Final submission deadline of PMR/Action Plan is Monday 30th October 2023**
- Only once the School Approver has confirmed the final PMR will the Programme Leader receive automated notification.
- **Access for All Staff across UWS: Once** approved, the PMR will be available to view by colleagues across the University (as read-only).
- Heads of Division will produce a brief **Divisional Summary Overview of PMRs/EAM activity** ([Appendix 4](#)) in their Division for School Board (covering all relevant provision). This overview should be completed **by 30 November**, with School-level discussions either at School Event or School Board completed by February 2024.

Student engagement should also form an integral part in the development of the PMR to ensure a holistic overview of the student experience is encompassed. It is recommended that PMRs be considered at Student/Staff Liaison Groups (SSLGs) and Divisional Programme Board to capture the student voice, but Schools have flexibility to determine the most appropriate method of student engagement.

The PMR will require approval by the **School Approver** prior to agreement by the appropriate Divisional Programme Board and should be submitted to the Chair of the Divisional Programme Board by the **submission deadline of 30th October 2023**. Where necessary, the Divisional Programme Board will make recommendations for amendments to modules and programmes in light of observations. Completed PMRs will form public documents available for staff to view internally on the [Academic Data Service Applications site](#) (once signed off and finalised by School).

Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs) /Action Plans will be used as follows:

- Divisional Programme Board (must endorse PMR/Action Plan) via Divisional Enhancement & Annual Monitoring

Summary Overview

- To lodge NSS/Survey Action Plans
- School EAM Event (Optional event) or School Board (will *normally* receive Divisional Summary Overviews)
- SSLGs (to receive & consider) (*to capture student voice*)
- School Board / Institutional EAM Event (will receive assurances on various quality aspects for reporting to Senate)

c) Annual Monitoring Documentation of Collaborative Provision

In terms of annual monitoring of collaborative partnerships, UWS adopts a robust internal monitoring system to safeguard its academic awards and ensure standards are appropriate across all areas of local delivery.

Two reports exist for different models as follows:

(i) Collaborative Annual Report (CAR): (Applicable to Franchise/Dual models)

The Collaborative Annual Report forms an important part of the university's annual monitoring cycle for its franchise provision and will be used by UWS Programme Leaders to inform the Programme Monitoring Report (PMR).

A CAR on the operation of franchised/or dual collaborative programme(s) should be **prepared by the partner institution in liaison with the UWS Link Tutor** with responsibility for the collaborative partnership. The report should be **submitted annually by the end of August** and will be considered at the Divisional Programme Board as part of normal annual monitoring activities, usually in late October/early-November.

(ii) Programme Annual Report (PAR): (Applicable to Validated models)

Where validation of another institution's programme of study as a University of the West of Scotland award takes place; this is referred to as a Validated Collaborative Model. These students are students of the partner, but quality elements reside with the degree awarding body.

For such validated provision, UWS still maintains responsibility for monitoring that quality and standards are satisfactory, as well as monitoring elements of the student experience. It is therefore necessary for a Programme Annual Report to be **completed by staff at the partner institution** for consideration as part of our enhancement and annual monitoring processes.

Partners with validated collaborative models should submit a Programme Annual Report (PAR) *normally* by the annual **submission deadline of end August (some flexibility can be requested)**. Depending on the agreed term dates of the partner, there is some flexibility for submission of the PAR (in line with (e) below) but they must be received prior to the Autumn Joint Programme Panel (JPP).

d) Annual Monitoring Process for non-standard Delivery Structure

Where UWS provision is delivered in collaboration with a partner institution and a different structure for delivery and use of the teaching year has been approved by Senate, the School is asked to liaise with QuEST to establish appropriate annual monitoring timelines. The aim is to ensure that there is timely review of module and programme delivery and the opportunity to reflect on student feedback, external examiner comment and insights from the partner. Please contact the Head of QuEST following approval of non-standard delivery at Senate, who will work with

you to develop relevant timelines and processes in line with requirements of UWS approach to Annual Monitoring.

3 SCHOOL-BASED ANNUAL MONITORING

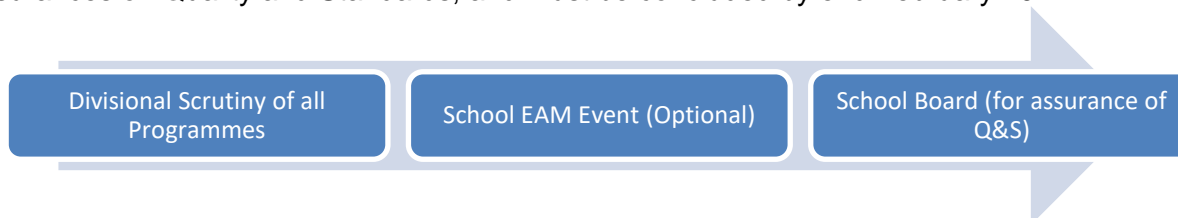
It is expected that all staff engage in the EAM process to inform future developments for the continual improvement of the student experience. The importance of Divisional Programme Boards in the role of EAM must be emphasised to encourage maximum engagement of academic colleagues in this evaluative process. School EAM activities will be managed through School Board and will seek to make assurances to the School that the overall health and quality assurance of academic programmes are being managed appropriately and to determine any key messages for discussion at School or Institutional level.

QuEST School Partners are identified in the table below. It is anticipated that QuEST Partners will be on hand to advise on School EAM arrangements, among other quality-related matters, and will normally attend the School EAM Event for those who opt to hold one this session.

School	QuEST Partner
School of Business & Creative Industries	Edmund Harrison
School of Health & Life Sciences	Donna Taylor
School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences	Sharon Cosh
School of Education and Social Sciences	Leanne Steele

School Based Scrutiny: Stage 1 – Information

For 2023, Schools **will not be required** to hold separate School EAM events. It is optional as to whether Schools hold separate EAM Events, or whether they would prefer to embed this discussion within their February 2023 School Board. Regardless of the method adopted by each School, the interim process will seek to complement academic contingency work already underway within Schools, as well as providing assurances on Quality and Standards, and must be concluded by end February 2024.



The format of School annual monitoring offers flexibility where Schools can determine the best approach.

Key material required for the event /or for consideration at the February School Board will include the following:

- **Divisional Summary Overviews** (confirming that PMRs/Action Plans have been received for each programme / or cognate group of programmes (as appropriate) and highlighting key areas/or actions identified within. There must be assurances that full discussion has taken place at Divisional level, with identification of Divisional-level actions and may embed NSS/Survey actions. There will be an expectation that the following will have been scrutinised at Divisional level
- **PMRs;**
- **External Examiner reports and responses;**
- **CARs (if applicable / may be encompassed in PMR);**
- **Previous year's EAM SMART targets;**
- **NSS / Student Experience Surveys / iGraduate Survey / School level survey outcomes.**

The School should also reflect on UWS Curriculum Framework 2022, Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan, Student Success Policy, School Operational Plan and the UWS Strategy2025.

School-based Annual Monitoring activities (whether event or School Board based), take place with discussion predominantly around Divisional Summary Overviews, PMRs, Survey results and feedback from External Examiners and students. A peer review approach may be desirable to ensure adequate scrutiny.

School Based Scrutiny: Stage 2 – Review and Reflection

Schools will have autonomy to determine the most suitable approach to review and reflect on their provision and either a School Event should take place or this parallel activity can be covered at School Board level. Schools will determine how material should be reviewed and commented on. Advice can be sought from the School's QuEST Business Partner in terms of agenda and activities.

Student involvement is crucial. Student representation is strongly encouraged at the School EAM Event/or School Board to capture the student voice.

- A designated member of the **School Service Delivery Team will prepare a School Report on annual monitoring.** (Regardless of the approach, a separate report on EAM will be requested; this could be an independent report from the EAM School Event, or if via School Board, a separate Appendix could be produced for the School Board minute).
- **SMART Targets** will be agreed (see stage 3).
- A **Summary Outcomes Report** will also be completed based on standard template (APPENDIX 5).
In cases where standards issues are identified, the School is responsible for ensuring that any necessary actions are followed up promptly.

The Event/or School Board will review the previous session's SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related) and will report on progress and any actions undertaken.

School Based Scrutiny: Stage 3 – Identify Actions

SMART targets are identified along with issues for the School to consider along with examples of good practice. Each target/good practice must be linked to a clear source and must have an identified person/group responsible for its completion. Clear timescales and reporting lines should also be indicated. The School Board will

give final approval. The draft SMART Targets will be taken to the Institutional EAM event in January. (Draft SMART Targets will be required in advance of the February School Board)

The infrastructure and relationship between Schools and Professional Support Departments/Units is considered of paramount importance. Schools should therefore consult with relevant Heads/Directors of Professional Services at the SMART Target drafting stage about any issues relating to Professional Service support to enable actions to be addressed directly.

Responsibilities of School-based Annual Monitoring

These activities will be led via the Deputy Dean/School Service Delivery team and will normally:

- Provide a **key forum for discussion surrounding academic provision within relevant subjects**, taking cognisance of PMRs, External Examiner reports, CARs, NSS and other student surveys, and any reports from accrediting or other external bodies. Schools will determine the most appropriate approach.
- Consider statistical data outlined within PMRs where pre-populated data will exist (this will include honours classification, progression statistics and module success rates). If not considered at the School-based meeting itself, then analysis of the data should be presented and reviewed by the Divisional Programme Board. Contact Strategic Planning for guidance and information on availability of data and statistics.
- Provide an opportunity to draw pertinent issues to the attention of the School Board, as well identifying any areas of good practice.
- Provide an opportunity for students to be involved in the annual review of programmes (either at Event or Board).
- Ensure production of **Divisional Summary Overviews** by Head of Divisions.
- Provide a formal **School Report** of the School-based activities documenting annual monitoring discussions. This School EAM report (either event report, or Appendix to School minute) will be supplemented by a **Summary Outcomes Report** which will provide assurances to Senate. This evidence will be a key resource for internal and external reviews.
- Identify actions (SMART targets) and good practice for final approval by the School Board. Where timings permit, these will be considered at the Institutional EAM Event (normally draft SMART targets).

4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

Where a School EAM Event takes place, outcomes will feed into School Board. Where no School EAM Event takes place, parallel activity will take place at the School Board.

In **February** each year, the School Board will convene to provide assurance on behalf of the School that appropriate annual monitoring of academic provision and collaborative provision has taken place within the School. Senate will be informed

accordingly.

To inform this discussion, the School Board will consider the School EAM Report (where appropriate) and School SMART targets comprising an analysis of Divisional Programme Board discussions. If no School EAM event, the School Board will consider the Divisional Summary Outcomes. The SMART targets will be prepared by the Deputy Dean, assisted by the School Service Delivery team, and must be signed off by the relevant School Board prior to notification to Senate. The Institutional EAM monitoring event will receive draft SMART Targets.

The resulting February School Board minute (together with the Summary Outcomes Report) should provide Senate with an overview of the health and quality assurance of the School's programmes and modules (ensuring validity and currency) as well as identifying opportunities for enhancement and dissemination of good practice.

The Divisional Summary Overviews and draft SMART Targets will provide key evidence during Institution-Led Review and QAA Review processes. Draft SMART Targets will normally be used at the Institutional EAM Event annually in January.

Assurances to Senate:

The School Board would wish to provide assurances of the following in its report to Senate, via the appropriate minute and Summary Outcomes Report :

- Programme health: To ensure validity and currency of programmes;
- Monitoring of academic and collaborative provision has taken place within the School and that standards are being maintained;
- Monitoring of research teaching linkages within the School;
- All External Examiner reports received have been responded to appropriately by the School;
- Where appropriate, quality assurance on any short course provision (non-University awards) offered within the School has been undertaken;
- To confirm that appropriate actions are being taken in response to issues raised, and that actions from the previous year's activities have been addressed.
- Any further adaptations required in light of the pandemic are recorded and endorsed by the School (where applicable).

School Boards – Held during February 2024
Senate – 20 March 2023

5 INSTITUTIONAL ANNUAL MONITORING EVENT

The Quality Enhancement & Standards Team (QuEST) will host the Institutional Annual Monitoring event which, during session 2023/24, will take place in January. As intimated earlier, Senate will receive assurance from Schools of the maintenance of standards and monitoring of quality via the relevant School Board minute and a Summary Outcomes Report.

Timelines for 2023/24 (to review 2022/23):

The Institutional Event for session 2023/24 will be held on **Wednesday 24 January 2024**.

Decisions as to whether the event will be held on-campus or facilitated remotely are yet to be determined; this will inform the format of the event.

It is anticipated this year's Institutional Event will:

- a. Provide a sector update;
- b. Consider Divisional Summary Overviews;
- c. Consider School draft SMART Targets 2022/23 (arising from 2022/23);
- d. Enable School reflection on the shift to flexible learning;
- e. Enable School reflection on the bedding in of the Aula VLE platform;
- f. Take an Institutional Focus & Quality of Student Experience;
- g. Ensure Student Union involvement to reinforce student engagement;
- h. Provide an opportunity for discussion/networking;
- i. Receive Institutional Survey Overview Data/Headlines 2022/23 (undertaken by Strategic Planning);
- j. Receive highlights from External Examiner Reports and Institution-Led Reviews 2022/23 (undertaken by QuEST);
- k. Seek to "close the loop" – from previous year's IEAM.

QuEST will require School-based material from **by 16th January 2024**.

It is recognised that School Board approval of SMART targets may still be pending (February).

The Institutional EAM Event will take an institutional overview and focus attention on key issues relating to the quality of the student experience and the integration of professional services in annual monitoring. It will seek to examine how internal monitoring activities within Schools have impacted progression and retention, either positively or negatively, and report findings to the event.

Key outputs from the Institutional EAM Event are expected to be:

- A **final report to Senate via LTC**. This report should identify trends, areas of positive practice and any challenges which require consideration at an institutional level. It should identify the intended approaches being adopted by Schools via internal monitoring processes to improve progression and retention. Where relevant, the report may feature a response to any continuing impact of the pandemic. Reference to follow up progress in relation to previous year's activities should be made.
- An **EAM Newsletter** will be developed on the key highlights arising from the EAM cycle; this will be available for both staff and students.

6 ANNUAL MONITORING OF EXTERNALLY ACCREDITED PROVISION

Please refer to Chapter 8 which outlines details relating to Accreditation of External Provision.

7 INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

An indicative timeline of the Enhancement and Annual Monitoring cycle for session 2023/24 (to review 2022/23) is provided below:

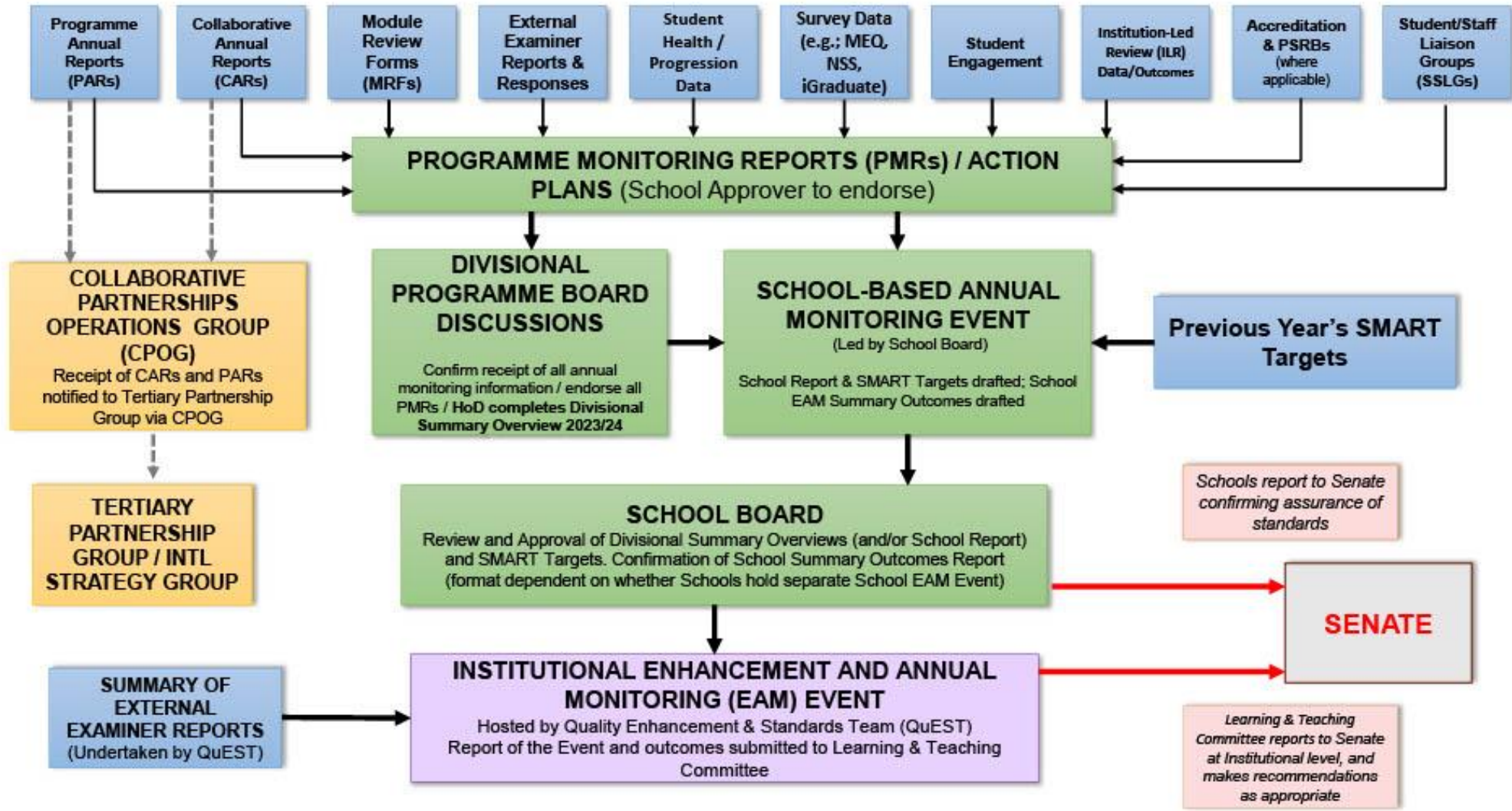
Activity	Date(s)	Purpose
Data sets available	By mid-September 2023 (Module data sets provided to Schools 06/09/23)	Data provided shall be in a different format than in previous years, and may be restricted to data sets accessible to Strategic Planning. Should you have any specific requests for key data, please approach Strategic Planning directly and they will endeavor to retrieve this.
External Examiner Reports submitted	By 15 September 2023	External Assurance of Academic Standards; To inform PMRs & improvements; External Examiners consider samples; Responses will follow thereafter.
Schools confirm Definitive Programme Lists	By 22 September 2023	This will include all provision which ran during session 2022/23. IT will upload to PMR site.
PMR template refined	By 22 September 2023	QuEST to provide IT with any revisions.
MRF completion	By end September 2023	Module evaluation; To inform PMRs & improvements; To reflect on effectiveness and success of the module.
PMR site will 'go live'	On Monday 9 October 2023	To allow Schools to begin completion. Expectation – PLs may wish to begin, regardless of data available.
External Examiner Responses	By 15 October 2023	Programme Teams to provide responses to External Examiner Reports (timing subject to receipt of External Examiner report)
Senior Management NSS meetings And School /NSS Monitoring	17 October 2023 Terms 1 & 2	Deputy Vice Chancellor, Director of Strategic Planning & Development, Interim Head of QuEST and Strategic Planning colleagues hold meetings to discuss NSS 2023 results/data and assign to categories. Schools will track/ongoing monitoring during Terms 1 and 2. As an Institution, we want to triangulate the NSS actions plans and EAM targets. School responses should ensure NSS outcomes correlate with EAM activities. Whilst NSS Action Plans will be required per programme, NSS Divisional Action Plans will only be required where there are actions identified across a set of programmes.
PMR completion (By PLs and teams)	By Monday 30 October 2023	Programme evaluation and review; To inform School planning & improvements.

		PMR actions and NSS actions can be pulled into one definitive place for monitoring purposes and tracking.
PMR approval (undertaken by Head of Divisions)	By Monday 6 November 2023	Approvers may undertake approval of PMRs as received; Useful to retain a window for any PMR influx around the completion date.
Divisional Programme Board (DPB) – Scrutiny of PMRs	By Friday 24 November 2023	To consider relevant PMRs assigned to Divisional Programme Board. Schools may opt to hold extra-ordinary DPBs, or this may be a desk-based exercise via email (for noting at next DPB). Either way, expectation is that DPBs will undertake this task, the outcomes of which will inform completion of Divisional Summary Overviews by HoDs.
Divisional Summary Overview completion (completed by Head of Divisions)	By end November 2023	Following Divisional scrutiny of EAM materials, this overview should highlight pertinent points from their Division's PMRs and identify Divisional SMART targets. This continuing activity may be used to incorporate the NSS discussions. Expectation is that DPBs will endorse the summary, normally via email should this not align with a DPB.
School EAM Events (School Board-Led; often an extraordinary meeting) (Optional) – if no Event held, the School Board will undertake this activity	By mid-December 2023 School Boards: BCI: 29/11/23; CEPS: 22/11/23; ESS: 21/11/23; HLS: 22/11/23	In partnership with students. Considers Divisional Summary Overviews (and PMRs) alongside other material. Produces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School EAM Report • Draft SMART Targets 2023/24 • School Summary Outcomes (for Senate)
School Deadline for Materials for IEAM Event	By 17 January 2024	Timeline necessary to enable materials to be circulated to participants in advance of IEAM. Schools eager to lead on IEAM – reflective.
Institutional EAM Event (IEAM)	Wednesday 24 January 2024	In partnership with students. Produces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEAM Report (to include follow-up to previous year) • Newsletter (for wider circulation to staff & students)
School Board (may embed EAM activity if no School Event)	Mid-February 2023 (to finalise all EAM activities and outcomes) School Boards: BCI: 01/03/24; CEPS: 28/02/24; ESS: 20/02/24; HLS: 28/02/24	Agrees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School EAM Report (if available). If no previous Event, the School Board will provide EAM report. • Draft SMART Targets 2023/24 • School Summary Outcomes Report (for Senate) Summary Outcome Report to provide assurances on academic standards for upward reporting to Senate.
Education Advisory Committee (EAC)	Thursday 15 February 2024	The full report arising from the IEAM Event will be scrutinised by EAC. Relevant actions to be identified to address highlighted areas and report to Senate.
Senate	Wednesday 20 March 2024	Statement of Assurances. Senate receives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board minute (& link to School EAM Report)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Summary Outcome Report (for Senate) • EAC report to Senate (Include link to Report from IEAM Event) <p>Schools will report assurances to Senate on programme health and academic standards - confirming validity and currency of programmes.</p>
Court (Residential)	Tuesday 23 April 2024	Court will receive confirmation in April.

Note: Where Schools are able/and willing to accelerate these activities, there is flexibility to do so. This timeline acts as a guide to the latest dates for completion

APPENDIX 1 – SCHOOL ENHANCEMENT AND ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS 2023/24



Appendix 2 MODULE REVIEW FORM (MRF) – 2023 (Currently under review)

MODULE REVIEW FORM 2022-23

In completing this MRF, it is useful to reflect on:

Q: Where are we now?

Q: Where do we want to be in the future?

Q: How are we going to get there?

Q: How will we know when we get there?

School	
Session being reviewed	
Module title	
Module code	
Module Coordinator	
Other staff involved in the delivery	

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3/ Resit Diet	Overall
Number of students enrolled				
Number of staff teaching on module				
% Pass rate				
Corresponding pass rate in previous session				
Mean mark				

Guidance Notes

Module Coordinators may choose to begin completion of MRFs following each diet to ensure that a qualitative evaluation is undertaken at a timely stage within the process. Thereafter, MRFs should be completed as soon as possible after the module runs for the last time in a session with a final submission deadline by the end of September. Quantitative data provided later in the process may result in slight refinements nearer the submission deadline.

Module Coordinators have responsibility for ensuring that the Module Moderator and the School Assessment Board Chair are in agreement and comfortable with the content of the completed MRF.

Module teams should take cognisance of the School Plans and relevant thematic Plans and reflect upon how the delivery/content/structure of the module aligns with the targets and ambitions of these key plans and the UWS Curriculum Framework.

- Completed MRFs should be lodged on the School Drive/attached to the relevant PMR.
- Module review should feed into the relevant Programme Monitoring Report/Action Plan where applicable.

PART 1 – ASSURANCE

Delivery and attendance

Comment on how the module has operated.

Assessment (Comments from the Module Coordinator)

Assessment (Comments from the Moderator)

PART 2 – EVALUATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Where appropriate, Module Coordinators should evaluate modules by taking full cognisance of External Examiner comments, pass rates, making use of statistical data available to inform developmental changes and enhancement. Reflection on changes from previous years may also be useful.

Overall reflection on continuing impact of Covid-19 on module delivery (where applicable)

Include details of any adjustments made in response to Covid-19, this could include examples of innovative or effective online practice in response to pandemic. Evaluate the use of online delivery (where applicable).

Teaching and learning approaches

Briefly evaluate the teaching & learning approaches used in the module (in light of the pass rate) indicating the effectiveness of any changes in the method of module delivery. Please highlight the use made of any new or innovative teaching and learning approaches.

Assessment

Evaluate the assessment strategy used in the module and comment on the performance of students in the module compared with previous years and also the performance in constituent parts of the assessment.

Student feedback

Comment on the student feedback which was received on the module and indicate the action taken. (It would be useful to identify how many students undertook the module, and how many respondents). Feedback should reflect comment from a diverse range of module participants from all campuses and modes of delivery.

Multi-campus delivery/multi-mode delivery (CRNs) and Collaborative Delivery (where applicable)

Comment on the comparison of the equity of delivery and student experience at all campuses and sites of delivery. Comments should also encompass WBL elements, blended learning, online learning, etc.

Personal Development Planning

Comment on the extent and method by which the PDP elements identified in the module descriptor are disseminated to the students and how any shortcomings will be addressed.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) / Learner Management System (LMS)

Comment on the use of the VLE/LMS and any further plans for enhancement.

Action

Confirm changes which are proposed in the delivery or assessment of the module in the coming session. These changes should be designed to rectify any identified weaknesses and also to enhance the student learning experience. In addition, indicate if referred for action/information elsewhere (e.g., Divisional Programme Board, School Board, University Committees or other).

Additional Comments including any module amendments

PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT 2023 – ONLINE COMPLETION

SESSION 2023/24

(to review session 2022/2023)

PMRs/Action Plans will require programme teams to provide reflective comment with respect to several directed questions. **The PMR should seek to ensure validity and currency of programmes.**

PMRs/Action Plans – for completion no later than Monday 30 October 2023. The PMR should be **brief** (suggested length of no more than three pages). Use bullet points where possible

PMRs should be completed by the Programme Leader directly on the PMR site located at -:
[Connect Home Page Programme Monitoring Report](#)

Once approved by the School Approver, a designated colleague within the School Service Delivery Team shall be notified automatically for use at the School/Divisional level (provided they are on the member list).

Programme Monitoring Report (PMR) / Action Plan

UWS Enhancement & Annual Monitoring 2023 (reviewing 2022/23 session)

Please note that as a result of the Cyber Incident the usual range of data may not be available but Strategic Planning will endeavour to provide requested datasets where possible; datasets will not feature on the PMR site but will be provided separately. Module Data has been provided to Schools and teams can also reflect on last year's operation taking account of other directives such as MRFs, NSS data, External Examiner reports, ILR outcomes, PSRB aspects, SSLGs and MEQs, among other documents.

Module Performance Data – was provided to Schools in early September 2023.

Programme Performance Data – Programme performance data will be limited for this cycle

QUESTION 1:

Overview & Reflection: This is an open question giving the opportunity to reflect on the previous session in general, taking student engagement into account and the student learning experience. As part of this overview, at minimum, you may wish to comment on -:

- Programme Health;
- Any recent Reviews (e.g., if your programme was subject to Institution-Led Review (ILR) or PSRB review);
- Collaborative aspects - if your programme is part of a franchise delivery;
- Any proposed curricular changes;
- Follow-up from last year's cycle – status of actions, anything ongoing;
- Successes, examples of positive practice;
- Challenges faced from a programme perspective

FREE TEXT BOX

QUESTION 2:

Quality Assurance and Monitoring:

Q2 (a) Please comment on any quality assurance matters and provide a high-level overview of the arrangements that have operated during delivery and including any changes/deviations as a result of the Cyber Incident in Term 3. What is the impact of these changes?

- *Please confirm whether any further academic contingency activity was necessary during 2022/23.*

FREE TEXT BOX

Q2 (b) Progression and outcome comments: Please comment on the patterns of progression and success at each level of your programme (or at modular level if required), identifying factors influencing positive and less positive performance. It is recognised that programme data availability may be restricted but teams are encouraged to reflect where possible with the data sets provided. You may wish to review programme performance over a longer period where the data is available rather than a straightforward comparison with the outcomes from the previous year 2022.

FREE TEXT BOX

Q2 (c) NSS/Survey comments (undergraduate programmes only): Institutional discussion surrounding the National Student Survey (NSS) results takes place routinely at senior level and is cascaded down to Programme teams. What is the outcome following consideration of NSS and related survey data and how does the team intend to make improvements where required?

Please attach your NSS Programme Action Plan to the PMR.

FREE TEXT BOX

QUESTION 3:

Quality Assurance and Monitoring - External Examiners: Please provide details of specific comments from the external examiner(s) and the actions taken.

Any concerns raised by the external examiner with regards to academic standards should be recorded here. (Maximum 4 allowed).

FREE TEXT BOX

QUESTION 4:

Revised Learning and Teaching Principles (April 23) and UWS Curriculum Framework alignment: Please outline any changes to the programme delivery that will come into effect in 2023/24 in response to the revised Learning and Teaching Principles and how programme teams continue to engage with the embedding of the Curriculum Framework. You may find it helpful to consider the reflective questions in the document [Engaging with the Framework and aligning your provision \(2021-22\)](#).

Your answers may wish to cover the following:

- How is the programme team continuing to engage with the Curriculum Framework?
- If changes were made, what were they, when were they made and what approval approach was used? (*e.g., student consultation; external examiner input; module amendments; approval event*)
- If the programme is undergraduate, were design changes required to embed the central ASPIRE Level 7 module?
- If postgraduate, please provide details on the ways in which the programme shares modules and/or operates as part of a framework. If this is not currently the case, please outline any ways in which this could be achieved in the future.
- Are there proposed changes to the delivery of the programme in response to the revised Learning and Teaching Principles?

FREE TEXT BOX

QUESTION 5:

Programme Action Plan: Please select how many actions are identified for the year ahead. (*Identified actions may inform Divisional and/or School SMART targets*)

As part of the Action Plan, teams should comment on any anticipated operational challenges to delivery over the 2023/24 academic year, and what plans are in place or being considered locally (at programmatic level) to address these should any further adjustments be required. Programmes leaders and teams need to ensure that they are cognisant of the [Competition and Market's Authority \(CMA\) guidance](#) on the provision of material information to current and potential students. (CMA now applies to both undergraduate and postgraduate provision) (Maximum of 4 actions allowed)

FREE TEXT BOX

Action 1:

Action 2:

Action 3:

Action 4:

Please contact ResilienceandSafety@uws.ac.uk with any questions with respect to the Business Continuity aspects.

Appendix 4

DIVISIONAL SUMMARY OVERVIEW 2023/24 (to review 2022/23)

INTRODUCTION

Head of Divisions to produce a brief Divisional Summary Overview of PMRs/EAM activity in their Division for School Board (covering all relevant provision). The brief report should provide evidence to support reflection at Divisional/School level.

The overview should be completed **by 2023**, with School-level discussions either at School Event or School Board completed by February 2024. The Divisional Summary should be **brief**, only highlighting key points. Use bullet points where possible.

DETAILS	
School	<i>Insert</i>
Division	<i>Insert</i>
Head of Division (Author)	<i>Insert</i>
Date Completed	<i>Insert</i>
Programme List Appended (Extract from School Master Spreadsheet)	<i>See Appendix</i>
Date of Scrutiny – Divisional Board	<i>Insert</i>
Date Signed off by -: Divisional Programme Board (either via DPB meeting or Desk-based & Chairs Action)	<i>Insert</i>
Date Endorsed at School Board	<i>Insert</i>

The Divisional Summary Overview is based on PMR 2023 questions (to review 2022/23).

On reflection of completed PMRs, please provide a high level overview response on each topic: (can refer to supporting spreadsheet to minimise repetition, and provide brief narrative on key points – where appropriate, covering each programme attached to the Division)

Q1	Overview & Reflection on Programmes within the Division:
	FREE TEXT BOX
Q2	Quality Assurance and Monitoring:
Q2a	Comment on any pertinent quality assurance matters identified within PMRs within the Division.
	FREE TEXT BOX
Q2b	Provide comment on post pandemic learning, teaching and assessment approaches which may be retained within the Division.
	FREE TEXT BOX
Q2c	Comment on any progression matters identified with PMRs.

	FREE TEXT BOX
Q2d	Comment on NSS/Survey actions plans relevant to the Division.
	FREE TEXT BOX
Q3	Quality Assurance and Monitoring - External Examiners: Comment on any important matters expressed by External Examiners as identified within PMRs.
	FREE TEXT BOX
Q4	Comment on how the Division is engaging and aligning to the UWS Curriculum Framework and what areas across the Division still require consideration. Have programme teams considered the reflective questions in the document Engaging with the Framework and aligning your provision (2021-22) Indicate any programmes with a deferral.
	FREE TEXT BOX
Q5	Programme Action Plan: Identify any Divisional-wide actions identified on scrutiny/reflection of PMRs. (Recommend Maximum of 4 actions allowed)
	FREE TEXT BOX
Q6	Programme Business Continuity: Comment on any anticipated operational difficulties in delivery over the 2023/24 academic year for the Division, and what plans are in place or being considered locally (at divisional level) to address these should any unanticipated disruption emerge. Please contact ResilienceandSafety@uws.ac.uk with any questions with respect to the Business Continuity aspects.
	FREE TEXT BOX

Append:

Programme List – associated with the Division

**SCHOOL SUMMARY OUTCOMES REPORT
FOR PROVIDING ASSURANCES TO SENATE**

ENHANCEMENT AND ANNUAL MONITORING FOR TAUGHT PROVISION

**SESSION 2023/24
(to review 2022/23)**

School of: *(enter as appropriate)*

Assurances to Senate:

Following the completion of the annual monitoring cycle undertaken during session 2022/23 (to review 2020/21), the School Board should provide the following confirmation to Senate:

Area Under Review	School comment / confirmation
The School provides assurances on programme health with respect to the validity and currency of programmes.	
Monitoring of academic and collaborative provision has taken place within the School and that standards are being maintained.	
Monitoring of research teaching linkages within the School has taken place.	
All External Examiner reports received have been responded to appropriately by the School.	
Where appropriate, quality assurance on any short course provision (Non University awards) offered within the School has been undertaken.	
To confirm that appropriate actions are being taken in response to issues raised, and that actions from the previous year's activities have been addressed.	
Confirmation of any further adaptations required in light of the pandemic are recorded and endorsed by the School.	

Confirmation from the Dean of School:

**SCHOOL: INSERT TITLE OF SCHOOL
INSERT DEAN/NAME:**

Signed:

Date

Forms part of the External Examiner Report

Response to External Examiner Report Reviewing 2022/23	
External Examiner Comments:	Response by Programme Team
Author (on behalf of the Programme Team):	Date:
Approved (on behalf of Divisional Programme Board):	Date:
Date sent to External Examiner by School:	<input type="checkbox"/> School Business Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Education Quality Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Divisional Programme Board Chair <input type="checkbox"/> Donna MacAlister (QuEST) for uploading

Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 8
Credit Rating of External
Provision
Session 2023/24

CHAPTER 8 CREDIT RATING OF EXTERNAL PROVISION

Documents related to this chapter can be found here:

<https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared%20Documents/CHAPTER%208%20CREDIT%20RATING%20OF%20EXTERNAL%20PROVISION?csf=1&web=1&e=RE57gB>

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ANY QUERIES CONCERNING THIS CHAPTER OF THE UWS HANDBOOK SHOULD BE RAISED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WITH QUEST.

THIS CHAPTER CAN BE PROVIDED IN OTHER FORMATS ON REQUEST.

THE PROCEDURES DESCRIBED WITHIN THIS CHAPTER HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR EQUALITY IMPACT AND CONFIRMED AS BEING AT LOW RISK OF HAVING ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

1a Credit Rating of External Provision Process Flow Chart



Credit Rating of External Provision Group

CREPG will consider: Application for Award of General Credit form; Credit Levelling Questionnaire, Internal and External Experts' Reports

Typical CREPG Recommendations: // To credit rate unconditionally // To credit rate conditionally // To decline to credit rate // To defer a decision on credit rating (subject to completed amendments)

1b Credit Rating of External Provision Steps (from Flow Chart)

There are a number of different stages within the UWS Credit Rating application process. The graphic shown on page 3 identifies these, but to ensure accessibility for those using text-reading software, the stages are as noted below:

1	Initial Contact
	The External Provider contacts UWS via the Head of QuEST (quest@uws.ac.uk)
2	Process Overview
	QuEST outlines the process and shares the guidance and appropriate forms for completion
3	School Engagement
	QuEST liaises with the relevant Dean of School (subject area dependent and an internal Subject Expert is identified)
4	Link Person
	Credit Rating of External Provision Group (CREPG) identifies a UWS Link Person (usually Secretary to CREPG) who will support the External Provider through the application process
5	Receipt of Application
	Completed application paperwork is received from the External Provider. At this point 50% of the overall fee is due
6	External Expert Report
	The completed application form must include a report from an External Subject Expert who has participated in overseeing the course and provided Quality Assurance based on comment.
7	UWS Internal Expert Report
	The application and supporting documentation is passed to the UWS Internal Subject Expert for consideration, who produces a report
8	CREPG Meet
	CREPG meet to review application and supporting documentation to determine whether proposed course has been appropriately levelled and assigned correct volume of credit. CREPG will consider: Application for Award of General Credit form; Credit Levelling Questionnaire, Internal and External Experts' Reports
9	CREPG Recommendation
	CREPG makes a recommendation on the application to the Academic Quality Committee via a report Typical CREPG Recommendations: // To credit rate unconditionally // To credit rate conditionally // To decline to credit rate // To defer a decision on credit rating (subject to completed amendments)
10	Confirmation
	QuEST provides a formal letter to the External Provider confirming the outcome of the accreditation application. Approval is for a maximum of 5 years. The External Provider will be required to submit a re-approval application after this 5 year period, or if there are significant changes to the course during the period of approval. There will be a fee for the reapplication of Credit Approval.
11	Marketing & SCQF
	On receipt of the remaining 50% fee, UWS issues its Credit Rating logo to the External Provider. Details of approved credit rating applications are formally entered into the SCQF Database by QuEST.
12	Annual Review
	The External Provider will be required to produce an annual report for scrutiny by UWS. Any significant changes to the course may result in the removal of Credit Rating approval.

CHAPTER 8 CREDIT RATING OF EXTERNAL PROVISION

2 INTRODUCTION

The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) awards general credit for academic learning which can be assessed. Credit rating of external provision is based on the principle that academic credit can be assigned to a wide range of learning assessed in accordance with educational aims which relate to the individual's intellectual and imaginative powers; understanding and judgement; ability to communicate and to generalise and use knowledge to solve problems and to perceive fields of study within a broader perspective.

The primary purpose of any credit rating application to UWS is to seek a specific credit value at a specific level of general credit to learning undertaken in the workplace, for CPD, or learning that is work related. UWS is keen to support applications received from businesses and training providers particularly located around the footprint of any of our five campuses. At this time, UWS is not seeking to undertake credit rating provision with any businesses or training providers who are based internationally, and would refer queries of this nature to our information on collaborative approvals and partnerships.

Through the process of external credit rating, UWS awards credit to external courses which are not part of an award bearing programme including courses delivered by or on behalf of professional bodies or employers. The approach used by UWS has been informed by the [SCQF Handbook](#) which outlines a clear methodology for third party credit rating – at UWS this is called Credit Rating of External Provision. This process allows learning which has been assessed to be recognised within the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#). The SCQF Level Descriptors (level 7-11) describe in broad terms what learners should be able to do or demonstrate at a particular level. Within an integrated framework, these level descriptors provide a common vocabulary to assist with the comparison of qualifications and learning programmes. Academic credit rating activities ensure all courses are appropriately aligned to the SCQF and will allow all learners to identify clearly where their learning sits within the nationally recognised framework. The University will only approve applications for external credit rating at level 7 of the SCQF or above. It is important to note that those courses which are approved for credit rating are owned and awarded by the external organisation and that no certification is issued in the name of UWS. The minimum number of credits the University will approve is 5, up to 120 credits. Those external providers who wish to apply for credit rating higher than 120 credits should contact quest@uws.ac.uk to discuss.

It should be noted here that UWS will not credit rate the provision of any external organisation where UWS does not have a member of staff with the relevant knowledge and experience to make the necessary judgments on the nature of the provision.

3 ALLOCATION OF SCQF LEVEL AND VOLUME OF CREDIT LEVEL

Any course submitted for credit rating must be described in terms of a common core set of headings as recommended by the SCQF. External providers are asked to complete the Application for the Award of General Credit form (Appendix 1). Please see section 5 of this chapter (below) for additional guidance on each of the required headings in this form. Any course submitted for credit rating must be expressed in terms of the number and level of credit points sought, together with a detailed justification of the claim. The external organisation must reflect on the level of the course through consideration of the SCQF level Descriptors and how these “fit” with the course learning outcomes. Colleagues in the Quality Enhancement Standards Team (QuEST) quest@uws.ac.uk can offer organisations assistance in this process.

3.1 CREDIT LEVELLING

Credit levelling is aligned to the SCQF Level Descriptors and allows the course provider to consider what is being asked of the learner within the course being put forward for credit rating. In order to determine the appropriate level of the course the provider should scrutinise each statement in the SCQF Level Descriptors and determine the most similar to what is being asked of the learner within the course.

The credit levelling process requires the external organisation to complete the Credit Levelling Questionnaire (Appendix 2) by placing a cross beside each indicator statement that they judge to be the most appropriate or applicable to the course of study. It is not necessary for all statements to be applicable to the particular course of study and it is not anticipated that all sections will show the same category. At the end of each section the course provider will be asked to indicate the most appropriate level and it is worthwhile noting that the level may vary in each section, but an overall level will be established based on an average. This document will be submitted to the Credit Rating of External Provision Group (CREPG) together with the submission for the Application for the Award of General Credit Form (Appendix 1).

The full SCQF level descriptors can be found on the [SCQF website](#)

3.2 VOLUME OF CREDIT

An application must include a detailed breakdown of the learning activities which take place within the course. If the course involves a range of lectures, seminars, practical sessions etc. then this should be explained clearly. In order to assign credit volume the application needs to outline the number of hours a learner can expect to be involved in activities throughout the course. For example if the course runs for 10 weeks and lasts for 3 hours each week then the course provider should make an account of how these 30 hours will be broken down into learning activities.

In order to accurately determine the volume of credit, the course provider must also consider what “additional” activities may be involved – for example is there some homework, assessment, work based activity etc. This must also be accounted for and a notional number of hours identified to each task.

This breakdown of learning activity, together with more independent work comprises what is referred to as **notional participant effort hours**. It is the number of notional effort hours it takes an average participant to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course which will indicate volume of credit. A ratio is applied to assist with the calculation: **10 hours of notional participant effort hours is equivalent to 1 SCQF credit point**.

The following are examples of appropriate learning activities that could be included in notional hours learning (this is not an exhaustive list nor is it anticipated that all these examples should be provided within every application):

- Attending formal teaching sessions, such as lectures, classes, training; sessions, coaching seminars, workshops etc.;
- Practical work in laboratories and other locations;
- Relevant IT activities;
- Expected private study, revision and remedial work;
- Practice through gaining or refining skills in the workplace;
- Being counselled or mentored;
- Work based learning;
- Self-directed study using online or text-based open learning materials;

- Reflection;
- Assessments;
- Examination time.

The mixture of learning activities will vary from course to course.

4 CRITERIA FOR CREDIT RATING

Any course submitted for credit rating must meet the following criteria:

- The course must be based on learning outcomes (see below);
- The learning outcomes must be subject to reliable and robust methods of assessment;
- Appropriate quality assurance methods must be described in detail;
- The learning outcomes must take a minimum of 50 notional participant effort hours to achieve;
- The course will be considered in line with the SCQF criteria for level and volume and credit.

5 SUBMISSION FOR THE AWARD OF GENERAL CREDIT

External providers are asked to complete the Application for the Award of General Credit form (Appendix 1) and the Credit Levelling Questionnaire (Appendix 2). The **Application for the Award of General Credit form** asks for standard information on the organisation along with more detailed content on the course being proposed for credit rating. The following information is designed to support the completion of this form:

5.1 RATIONALE FOR COURSE

A statement on the rationale for the course should be included in an application for credit rating. Included in this statement should be information on who the audience is for the course, whether there is a particular gap in the market for this provision and if this course is intended to offer progression routes from another course. If this is not a new course, then information on the performance of learners in the past would be helpful as well as information on how learners have progressed from this course into other learning or employment.

5.2 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Course providers should consider the pre-requisite information for those undertaking a particular course. This could include whether learners should have specific qualifications prior to undertaking this specific course. If there is a specific requirement then this information should be clearly stated in the application. In addition, in some cases a course provider may state a particular qualification “or equivalent”. Course providers should indicate what these equivalencies might be to ensure entry criteria is transparent.

Course providers may also want to consider professional body requirements if relevant and outline what these requirements might be in the application for credit rating.

5.3 CONTENT, DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

A detailed breakdown of the course is required within this heading. It is helpful if the course is described week by week in terms of content, learning activities and details of learning to be undertaken independent of the course (i.e. homework, assessments, work based activity etc.). Course providers are invited to submit any additional documentation which is made available to learners on the course – Course Handbooks, Workbooks etc. as an appendix to an application. This will allow UWS the opportunity to look at the teaching materials

available to learners which will inform decisions on appropriateness of level and volume of credit, as well as decisions on the appropriateness of the assessment methodology.

5.4 LEARNING OUTCOMES

Any course submitted for credit rating must identify key learning outcomes. The focus of a learning outcome is to identify clearly what a participant can expect to do as a result of the learning which takes place within the course. It is important that each learning outcome is measurable and can be assessed, and care should be taken that assessment methods are appropriate to demonstrate learning which has taken place. Learning outcomes should be as concise as possible and learners should be able to demonstrate clearly how these outcomes have been achieved.

5.5 ASSESSMENT

The principles, procedures and processes by which learning outcomes are assessed should be clearly described. These methods should be valid and reliable and should involve internal and external quality assurance mechanisms.

The description of the assessment procedures should include:

- Evidence that the assessment criteria and methodology is appropriate to the defined learning outcome;
- Evidence that the assessment arrangements are as secure as they can possibly be against plagiarism, cheating and other forms of fraud;
- Effective procedures for approving, supervising and reviewing assessment strategies and assessment decisions, including taking into account views and recommendations from external advisors consulted in the quality assurance procedures;
- Clear criteria for marking assessments;
- Clear guidelines on re-examination / assessment;
- Clear guidelines on how learners receive assessment feedback.

5.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR RE-ASSESSMENT

An external organisation must seek to ensure that all learners are granted the opportunity to be re-assessed. Learners must be given clear guidelines on re-assessment opportunities. This includes the timing of the next assessment diet and how many attempts they may be permitted to re-sit assessments.

Arrangements must also be in place for learners who wish to submit applications for extenuating circumstances (where exceptional circumstances have disadvantaged the participant) and furthermore there must be a clearly defined Appeals Policy.

5.7 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

A course provider must be able to demonstrate a robust and transparent quality assurance mechanism with a suitable degree of externality. It is essential that course providers can ensure:

- Effective procedures for approving, supervising and reviewing assessment strategies and assessment decisions – meetings should be convened at least once per year with an external adviser in attendance where possible;

- Methods of proper and secure recording of learner achievement including the issuing of formal records, transcripts or certificates;
- Method for ensuring evaluation and enhancement of the subject area;
- Evidence of an explicit statement / policy on and arrangement for the appointment of external assessors / verifiers;
- External assessors should be able to view samples of work of the learners and provide comment on the application of consistent and accurate marking;
- External assessors should be able to provide assurance on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment and that the aims and outcomes of the course are comparable to other courses in the field.

As part of the annual monitoring of the course the course provider will be required to submit a **Credit Rating Annual Monitoring Report (Appendix 5)** outlining the following:

- Number of participants undertaking the course per year;
- Statement on the performance of participant;
- Arrangements for reassessment for those participants who have either failed or withdrawn from the course;
- Feedback from the participant on the course;
- Feedback from the teaching staff on the course;
- Any specific information which may have affected overall performance of the cohort of participants;
- Proposed amendments/ enhancements;
- General evaluative statement on the course.

Further support is available from the QuEST in completing these forms - please email quest@uws.ac.uk

6 PROCESS FOR CREDIT RATING

Following an initial enquiry, the secretary to CREPG will outline the process of credit rating with the organisation, the benefits of credit rating for learners, the application process, and expectations of the University and the external organisation. The Secretary to CREPG will be the key contact for the external organisation until the application has been formally submitted to CREPG.

The Secretary to CREPG will discuss the enquiry with the Dean (or nominee) of the relevant School and appoint an Internal Subject Expert to review all information in support of the application. The Internal Subject Expert will be asked to review the application paperwork and prepare a report outlining the appropriateness of the content, learning outcomes, assessment approach, credit rating and level in line with the SCQF.

The external organisation will submit an application for credit rating to the Head of QuEST at UWS (via quest@uws.ac.uk or via the Secretary to CREPG), formally commencing the process for credit rating of external provision. Applications for credit rating will be heard by the Credit Rating of External Provision Group (CREPG) which meets at specific times across academic year.

The external organisation **must provide a report from an external subject expert** (possibly the External Examiner) who has been involved in overseeing the course and providing external comment within a quality assurance context. This report will have been written in support of an application for external credit rating. (See Appendix 3).

A fee is due upon submission of a credit rating application. Further information on fees is available within section 10 of this chapter.

The Application Form and supporting documentation is then forwarded to the appointed internal subject expert for consideration. The internal subject expert will then produce a report.

A meeting of CREPG will be convened on several dates across the academic year to consider applications for credit rating of external provision upon receipt from the applicant of:

- the Application for the Award of General Credit form (Appendix 1);
- the Credit Levelling Questionnaire (Appendix 2);
- the External Subject Expert Report (Appendix 3);
- fees (50% of the overall fee), payable on application.

It is the role of CREPG to look over the application and supporting materials and determine whether the external organisation has levelled the course appropriately on the SCQF and whether the volume of credit is accurate.

Membership of CREPG will be determined by the subject specific nature of the submission and will include:

- The Chair (to be the Chair of the University's Academic Quality Committee);
- The Head of QuEST or nominee;
- Internal Subject Expert (nominated by the Dean of School)
- A representative from UWS Academy;
- Secretary to the University's Academic Quality Committee
- Administrative Support (QuEST).

Members of CREPG will have among them:

- Knowledge and understanding of the SCQF and level descriptors;
- Understanding of the agreed processes for allocating level and volume of credit;
- Experience of credit rating;
- Experience of the quality assurance mechanisms of the University.

7 OUTCOMES OF CREDIT RATING DECISIONS

There are four possible outcomes of the credit rating process:

- To credit-rate unconditionally;
- To credit rate conditionally. Any conditions will be clearly identified with a timeline for response;
- To defer a decision on credit rating, subject to amendments being made to the proposal within a set period of time;
- To decline to credit rate. If credit rating is not granted, submitting bodies may be given the opportunity to submit revised proposals.

If the credit rating is conditional on changes being made, the requirements of this should be clearly defined by the University along with the timescale which has to be met.

If the credit rating is approved the remaining 50% of the outstanding fee is payable at this point. This fee covers accreditation for a maximum of 5 years and does not include fees for subsequent annual reviews. See section 10 for more information in relation to fees.

Credit rating will be for a maximum of 5 years after which time the applicant will be required to submit updated documentation which will be reviewed by CREPG who will 'score' the documentation and confirm the level and volume of credit. There will be a fee for this service.

The external organisation must submit an annual report (see also section 9) to the satisfaction of CREPG as outlined above and should notify the Head of QuEST of any proposed major or minor changes to the course. External organisations who fail to do so will find their credit rating approval is withdrawn (by UWS, following SCQF guidelines) and will be required to resubmit to maintain their credit rating. There will be a fee for this service.

8 ACTIONS REQUIRED FOLLOWING AN APPLICATION

8.1 CREPG REPORT TO UWS ACADEMIC QUALITY COMMITTEE

Once the CREPG has reviewed the application and received the reports of the internal subject expert, it will make a recommendation to the Academic Quality Committee (AQC). This will take the form of a report confirming that the University's Credit Rating of External Provision guidance has been followed and will include:

- A statement on the decision reached;
- The number and level of credit points;
- The duration of credit rating (normally 5 years);
- Any conditions or special requirements attached to the credit rating;
- The requirements for monitoring and review of the credit rating.

Decisions on credit ratings will be entered onto the University's Credit Rating External Provision Database (held by QuEST). If the credit rating has been approved details of the course will also be entered formally into the SCQF Database.

8.2 SCQF DATABASE CONTENT

Following a successful application, the external provider will forward the completed SCQF Database Information Form to the Secretary to CREPG enabling the SCQF database to be updated (Appendix 4). This is a key part of the process, providing a potential learner with the opportunity to discover the approved course. UWS is not responsible for drafting text to be included within the SCQF database.

9 ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS

Once credit rating approval has been awarded, the external organisation will provide the following information on an annual basis for the duration of the credit rating approval (Appendix 5):

- An annual overview of the course;
- Data regarding the number of participants who have enrolled on the course and how many completed;
- A breakdown of the spread of marks on the course;
- Data regarding progression of participants;
- Information on participant feedback;
- Statements regarding course amendments / enhancements;
- External Assessor's Report.

The external organisation will be asked to submit this report to QuEST for discussion by AQC. Failure of an external organisation to submit an annual report negates the credit rating decision and will result in action being taken to remove UWS credit rating from this course.

10 FEES

The fees for a successful credit rating application will be £2,000 for an individual up to 20 SCQF credit points. This increases to £2,500 for individual courses between 21 and 40 SCQF credit points, with fees rising incrementally to a maximum 120 credits. Courses that exceed 120 credits will be subject to individualised costings. This one-off cost covers approval processes and covers the full period of the approval (normally 5 years). Annual reviews are not included in this application fee, and an additional fee of £50 per approved course is payable each year to UWS at the point of the annual review being due.

If an external organisation makes significant changes to a course (i.e. changes to assessment approaches, learning outcomes or significant content revision) during the approval period then this may adversely impact any UWS credit rating approved status, with the application process repeated to consider the changes implemented, which would be subject to additional fees. The above costs would be applied, and a revised approval period would be granted (up to 5 years).

11 UWS CREDIT RATING STATUS

Certificates awarded to learners for the achievement of learning that has been credit rated should clearly identify the credit rating body either by title or by use of the logo or by both but must **not** be issued in the name of the University of the West of Scotland. Participants who undertake courses which have UWS credit rating approval are **not** UWS participants. If the UWS logo is to be used on any course materials then the University reserves the right to approve the use of the logo. Please submit any proposed materials to quest@uws.ac.uk who will facilitate approval via the UWS Marketing and Communications team. In addition to the UWS logo, external organisations who have been approved for UWS credit rating status must also include the SCQF logo on their certificates, which will be provided by UWS on approval of application and receipt of all fees.

APPENDIX 1

APPLICATION FOR THE AWARD OF GENERAL CREDIT

External Organisation Contact Details (name, address, website)	
Course Leader	
Course Title	
Proposed Tutors (qualifications as appropriate)	
Location at which course will be delivered	
Details of teaching facilities	
Level and Number of Credit points proposed	

Course Information

Rationale for the course: (Please give details of why this course is required and the target audience for this course. Where possible please give details of minimum and maximum numbers for each delivery).

Aims of the course: (Please give details of the aims and objectives of the course or programme including, where appropriate possible articulation and progression routes).

Entry Requirements: (prior knowledge, experience or qualifications): Please enter the minimum qualifications required by the average participant to be able to achieve the outcomes of the course).

Summary of the content of the course: (Please include a breakdown of the course structure - 10 lines maximum. Further supporting information can be attached - including course outline showing teaching content and participant activity):

Course Structure

Learning Methods	Hours in Course
Lectures	
Practicals	
Seminars	
Tutorials	
Workshops	

Project	
Independent Learning	
Placement	
Other	
Assessment	
Notional Effort Hours	

Syllabus (a breakdown of content on a topic-by- topic basis)

Learning Outcomes: (Please include a clearly defined set of outcomes for the course including a clear statement of the outcomes in relation to the overall aims of the course. Generally, this statement should begin with the phrase 'By the end of this course the learner should be able to.....')

Learning Resources: (Please indicate essential and recommended reading, and/or other resources such as learning packs, web site, etc. as appropriate.)

Assessment Criteria: (Please give details of how learning outcomes of the course are assessed, including examples of assessments or information on length of essays/projects/examinations. In addition please state conditions and arrangements for reassessment - supplementary information can be added.)

Components of Assessment (%)

Coursework	
Class Examinations	
Labs / Practical	
Oral Presentations	
Oral Examination	
Final Examination	
Other	
	Total (100%)

Appeals Procedure (Please give details on the process in place for learners to appeal decisions on their course, whether coursework, examination, progression decisions etc.):

Assessment Moderation Process (Please give details of how the assessments will be

quality assured, including independent verification):

Quality Assurance Processes (attach details of how this course will be quality assured): It is important that all courses are reviewed annually; a statement of where and when this course is reviewed is required in this section):

Arrangements for Record Keeping:

Proposed SCQF Credit Points:

Proposed SCQF Level:

Application Completed by:

Date of Completion:

APPENDIX 2

EXTERNAL ORGANISATION CREDIT LEVELLING DOCUMENT

Name of Course: _____

Name of Respondent: _____

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework comprises the following 5 characteristics:

- 1) Knowledge and Understanding;
- 2) Practice: Applied Knowledge, Skills and Understanding;
- 3) Generic Cognitive Skills;
- 4) Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills;
- 5) Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others.

Each of these characteristics then has a number of descriptors which are aligned to the relevant SCQF level.

Please complete the following questionnaire by placing a cross beside the statements that you judge to be the most appropriate or applicable to your course or module of study – please select one box (A-F) for each of the 5 characteristics. Please note it is not necessary for all statements to be applicable to your particular course or module of study and it is not anticipated that all sections will show the same category.

The second part of the form requires the course leader to identify the number of hours assigned to the course in terms of the different participant activities (classes/workshops/assessment/research etc.)

This document will be submitted to the Credit Rating of External Credit Group together with the submission of the Award of General Credit Application Form.

Part 1 SCQF Ratings – Credit Levelling Questionnaire

Characteristic 1 - Knowledge and Understanding		Tick relevant box
The Successful Candidate will be able to demonstrate and/or work with:		
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An overall appreciation of the body of knowledge that constitutes a subject/discipline/sector -Knowledge that is embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles of the subject/discipline/sector -An awareness of the dynamic nature of knowledge and understanding -An understanding of the difference between explanations based in evidence and/or research and other sources, and of the importance of this difference 	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A knowledge of the scope, defining features, and main areas of a subject/discipline/sector -Specialist knowledge in some areas -A discerning understanding of a defined range of core theories, concepts, principles and terminology -Awareness and understanding of some major current issues and specialisms -Awareness and understanding of research and equivalent scholarly/academic processes 	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An understanding of the scope and defining features of a subject/discipline/sector, and an integrated knowledge of its main areas and boundaries -A critical understanding of a range of the principles, principal theories, concepts and terminology of the subject/discipline/sector -Knowledge of one or more specialisms that is informed by forefront developments 	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Knowledge that covers and integrates most of the principal areas, features, boundaries, terminology and conventions of a subject/discipline/sector -A critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles -Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, some of which is informed by or at the forefront of a subject/discipline/sector -Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which the subject/discipline/sector is developed, including a range of established techniques of enquiry or research methodologies 	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Knowledge that covers and integrates most, if not all, of the main areas of a subject/discipline/sector - including their features, boundaries, terminology and conventions -A critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles -A critical understanding of a range of specialised theories, concepts and principles -Extensive, detailed and critical knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, much of which is at, or informed by, developments at the forefront -A critical awareness of current issues in a subject/discipline/sector and one or more specialisms 	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A critical overview of a subject/discipline/sector, including critical understanding of the principal theories, concepts and principles -A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms -Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work that makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline/sector 	

Characteristic 2 – Practice: Applied Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Tick relevant box

The Successful Candidate will be able to apply knowledge, skills and understanding:

7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In practical contexts -In using some of the basic and routine professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with a subject/discipline/sector. -To practise these in both routine and non-routine contexts. 	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In using a range of professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with a subject/discipline/sector, a few of which are advanced and/or complex. -In carrying out routine lines of enquiry, development or investigation into professional level problems and issues. -To adapt routine practices within accepted standards. 	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In using a range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with a subject/discipline/sector. -In using a few skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are specialised and/or advanced. -In practising routine methods of enquiry and/or research. -To practise in a range of professional level contexts that include a degree of unpredictability 	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In using a wide range of the principal professional skills, practices and/or materials associated with a subject/discipline/sector. -In using a few skills, techniques, practices and/or materials which are specialised, advanced and/ or at the forefront of a subject/discipline/sector. -In executing a defined project of research, development or investigation and in identifying and implementing relevant outcomes. -To practise in a range of professional level contexts that include a degree of unpredictability and/or specialism. 	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In using a significant range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are associated with a subject/discipline/sector. -In using a range of specialised skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are at the forefront of, or informed by forefront developments. -In applying a range of standard and specialised research and/or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry. -In planning and executing a significant project of research, investigation or development. -In demonstrating originality or creativity in the application of knowledge, understanding and/or practices. -To practise in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional level contexts 	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In using a significant range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with the subject/discipline/sector -In using and enhancing a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are at the forefront of one or more specialisms -In applying a range of standard and specialised research and/or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry -In designing and executing research, investigative or development projects to deal with new problems and issues -In demonstrating originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices -To practise in the context of new problems and circumstances 	

Characteristic 3 – Generic Cognitive Skills

Tick relevant box

The Successful Candidate will be able to:

7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas that are routine to the subject/discipline/sector. -Use a range of approaches to address defined and/or routine problems and issues within familiar contexts. 	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues that are within the common understandings of the subject/discipline/sector. -Use a range of approaches to formulate and critically evaluate evidence-based solutions/responses to defined and/or routine problems and issues. 	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues in a subject/discipline/sector. -Identify and analyse routine professional problems and issues. -Draw on a range of sources in making judgments. 	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Critically identify, define, conceptualise, and analyse complex/professional problems and issues. -Offer professional insights, interpretations and solutions to problems and issues. -Demonstrate some originality and creativity in dealing with professional issues. -Critically review and consolidate knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in a subject/discipline/sector. -Make judgments where data/information is limited or comes from a range of sources. 	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to forefront issues or issues that are informed by forefront developments in the subject/discipline/sector. -Identify, conceptualise and define new and abstract problems and issues. -Develop original and creative responses to problems and issues. -Critically review, consolidate and extend knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in a subject/discipline/sector. -Deal with complex issues and make informed judgments in situations in the absence of complete or consistent data/information. 	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues. -Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues. -Develop original and creative responses to problems and issues. -Deal with complex and/or new issues and make informed judgments in the absence of complete or consistent data/information. 	

Characteristic 4 – Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills

Tick
relevant
box

The Successful Candidate will be able to:

7	<p>Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced skills associated with the subject/discipline/sector – for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Convey complex ideas in well-structured and coherent form -Use a range of forms of communication effectively in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts -Select and use standard ICT applications to process and obtain a variety of information and data -Use a range of numerical and graphical skills in combination -Use numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/ targets 	
8	<p>Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills associated with a subject/discipline/sector - for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Convey complex information to a range of audiences and for a range of purposes -Use a range of standard ICT applications to process and obtain data -Use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to measure progress and achieve goals/targets 	
9	<p>Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in support of established practices in a subject/discipline/sector for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Present or convey, formally and informally, information on standard/mainstream topics in the subject/discipline/sector to a range of audiences -Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work -Interpret, use and evaluate numerical and graphical data to achieve goals/targets 	
10	<p>Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in support of established practices in a subject/discipline/sector - for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Present or convey, formally or informally, information about specialised topics to informed audiences -Communicate with peers, senior colleagues and specialists on a professional level -Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and adjust features to suit purpose -Interpret, use and evaluate a wide range of numerical and graphical data to set and achieve goals/targets 	
11	<p>Use a wide range of routine skills and a range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to a subject/discipline/sector - for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communicate, using appropriate methods, to a range of audiences with different levels of knowledge/expertise -Communicate with peers, more senior colleagues and specialists -Use a wide range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and adjust features to suit purpose -Undertake critical evaluations of a wide range of numerical and graphical data 	
12	<p>Use a wide range of routine skills and a significant range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to a subject/discipline/sector - for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose -Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms/sectors -Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work -Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data 	

Characteristic 5 – Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others

Tick relevant box

The Successful Candidate will be able to:

7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector -Accept supervision in less familiar areas of work -Exercise some managerial or supervisory responsibility for the work of others with a defined and supervised structure -Manage limited resources within defined areas of work -Take the lead in implementing agreed plans in familiar or defined contexts -Take account of own and others' roles and responsibilities when carrying out & evaluating tasks -Work, under guidance, with others to acquire an understanding of current professional practice 	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector. -Exercise managerial responsibility for the work of others with a defined structure - Manage resources within defined areas of work -Take the lead in planning in familiar or defined contexts. -Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles, responsibilities and contributions when carrying out and evaluating tasks -Work, under guidance, with others to acquire an understanding of current professional practice -Manage, under guidance, ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and /or ethical codes or practices 	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level in practice or in a subject/discipline/sector. - Exercise managerial responsibility for the work of others and for a range of resources -Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles and responsibilities - Work, under guidance, with specialist practitioners -Seeking guidance where appropriate, manage ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices 	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exercise autonomy and initiative in professional/equivalent activities -Exercise significant managerial responsibility for the work of others and for a range of resources -Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles and responsibilities - Work, under guidance, in a peer relationship with specialist practitioners -Work with others to bring about change, development and/or new thinking -Manage complex ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices -Recognise the limits of these codes and seek guidance where appropriate 	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities -Take responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others -Take significant responsibility for a range of resources -Work in a peer relationship with specialist practitioners -Demonstrate leadership and/or initiative and make an identifiable contribution to change and development and/or new thinking. -Practise in ways which draw on critical reflection on own and others' roles and responsibilities -Manage complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices 	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Demonstrate substantial authority and exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities -Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others 	

- Take significant responsibility for a range of resources
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and resolving problems and issues
- Practise in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on new and emerging issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or Practices

Final Summary – please transfer each letter rating for each of the 5 characteristics

Characteristic	Level rating
1. Knowledge and Understanding	
2. Practice: Applied Knowledge, Skills and Understanding	
3. Generic Cognitive Skills	
4. Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
5. Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
Overall Level	

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Part 2 - Credit Volume and Participant Effort Hours

This form is to be completed by the Course Leader.

Name of course:

Person completing:

Date:

Task/Event/Activity required as part of the participant learning experience	Total Hours required to be spent by a successful 'average' learner
Attendance at formal class lectures with tutor	
Other formal attendance required - tutorials/workshops etc. (please specify)	
Assessments (time taken for formal exam, writing essays or reports)	
Preparing for assessments (time taken for exam preparation, researching essays, reports, include formal/informal exam revision in class or own time)	
Research Activities (please specify)	
Informal Learning in learners own time (estimate the notional time required)	
Any other learning, formal or informal likely to be undertaken (please specify)	

Total number of learning hours:	
Credit points: 10 hours = 1 SCQF credit point (a minimum of 50 hours / 5 credits is needed for UWS to provide credit rating)	

Name: (print name)

Name: (signature)

APPENDIX 3

GUIDANCE ON EXTERNAL SUBJECT SPECIALIST REPORT

The University of the West of Scotland ensures that it complies with the guidance produced by the SCQF in terms of the Credit Rating of External Provision. In the SCQF Handbook it clearly states the importance of considering the standing and credibility of the Third Party as well as the nature and type of learning programme being submitted for credit rating.

Any external provider seeking credit rating for course from UWS should identify an External Subject Expert who will be able to provide a report which addresses the following:

1. An evaluation of the course in terms of:
 - Its currency and relevance;
 - Its role in enhancing the employability/skills/knowledge of potential learners;
 - The reputation/stability of the provider;
 - Appropriateness of the staff to deliver the content and assess learners;
 - The facilities and support for learners.
2. An evaluation of the general objectives/learning outcomes of the course including:
 - How clearly these are communicated;
 - Appropriateness of the level of study required (see [SCQF level descriptors](#));
3. An evaluation of the course assessment activities including:
 - Evidence that the assessment criteria and processes are explicit, reliable and valid, and appropriate to the defined learning outcomes;
 - Evidence of the involvement of appropriate elements of external quality assurance procedures beyond the submitting body's delivery staff;
 - Evidence that the assessment arrangements are as secure as they can practically be against plagiarism, cheating and other forms of fraud;
 - Effective procedures for approving and reviewing assessment decisions,
 - Clear criteria for marking assessments, particularly for distinguishing between a pass/fail;
 - The capacity for independence in appeals and marking decisions;
 - The arrangements for re-examination/assessment;
4. An evaluation of the administrative processes in place to support the learner journey, including:
 - Documented Quality Assurances Processes;
 - Evidence of Annual Monitoring and Review – i.e. quality reports or audits by appropriate Quality Assurance Bodies;
 - Methods of proper and secure recording of learner achievement including the issuing of formal records;
 - Approaches to staff development.
5. The appropriateness of the number of credits proposed. (The concept of the notional participant effort encompasses all activities associated with assessed learning, and it is generally accepted that this should be considered equivalent to 10 hours of participant effort would be anticipated for the award of 1 credit at the appropriate level).

Support is available from quest@uws.ac.uk

APPENDIX 4

SCQF Database Information Form

Congratulations on your UWS Credit Rating application approval! Thank you for choosing UWS to be your Credit Rating Centre. We will upload details of the approved course onto the SCQF database. If more than one course has been approved please use an individual form for each course. The information provided below will populate the programme entry on the SCQF Database – please ensure all details are accurate as it will help with search results.

Please note the limitations on the number of characters for some sections. This is advised by the SCQF. UWS is unable to include text beyond the characters limits indicated.

Key contact at Organisation (full name and contact details):	Key contact at UWS Credit Rating Body
<p>If there is a webpage specific to the approved course with all the relevant programme information included within it, and it is kept updated, please provide this link here. This link will be displayed on the SCQF database.</p> <p>Link URL:</p>	
<p>Programme Title:</p> <p><i>Note: this should be the official credit rated title of your programme.</i></p>	
<p>Programme Aims: This section helps those searching the SCQF database for a relevant course to match their preferences to your course aims.</p> <p><i>Example 1:</i> <i>The main aim of this programme is to allow candidates to build confidence, self-esteem, and develop self-awareness through self-evaluation of their own qualities, feelings, achievements, and areas of development, while undertaking a personal project, with support.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2</i> <i>The aim of this programme is to provide the learner with the knowledge to carry out safe working practices in construction, in relation to sourcing relevant safety information and using the relevant safety procedures at work.</i></p> <p>Programme Aims (max 400 characters please):</p>	
<p>Target Audience (where possible please include suggested entry/exit points for anyone selecting this course).</p> <p><i>Example 1</i> <i>Candidates should possess prior knowledge and experience of word processing software and be familiar with the main functions of contemporary document production software.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2</i> <i>Progression is on to a relevant HND course at SCQF Level 8 or onto a university course or employment</i></p> <p><i>Example 3</i> <i>This programme offers routes into the architecture profession and graduates typically continue their studies to qualify as architects working in private practice, local and national government or large commercial</i></p>	

organisations both in the UK and overseas.

Your Target Audience Details (max 400 characters please):

Skills Gained (what will the learner be able to do by the end of the programme):

For example:

Use a computer system to perform complex tasks related to presentations.

Construct a presentation for a specific purpose and audience.

Deliver a presentation to a specific audience

Your Skills Gained (max 400 characters please)

Tags/Keywords (these can be added to make it easier for people to find this programme. If your programme is known in your sector by an abbreviation you could add this in here)

APPENDIX 5

CREDIT RATING ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

This form is to be completed by the Course Leader on an annual basis and returned to quest@uws.ac.uk. This report will be considered by the Academic Quality Committee on behalf of the University of the West of Scotland.

Name of Course:

Name of Course Leader:

Date of Completion:

ANNUAL REPORTING INFORMATION	COMMENT FROM EXTERNAL PROVIDER
Name of Organisation:	
Date of review:	
No. of participants taking course in last 12 months:	
No. of participants passing course in last 12 months (include breakdown of marks):	
Data/information on progression of participants:	
Tutor comments:	
Information on Participant Feedback	
Course Amendments Proposed For The Next 12 Months and Rationale for Change	
External Assessors comments (If there is an External Assessors report this can be submitted on a separate sheet)	
Any other comments	

For Internal UWS Processing:	Date/Comment
Date Received in QuEST:	
Date Reviewed by CREPG:	
Feedback from CREPG	
Annual Review Fee Paid by External Organisation	
Forwarded to AQC for Noting	
Date form returned to External Provider (with feedback from CREPG, if applicable)	



Quality Enhancement &
Standards Team
(QuEST)
Chapter 9
Collaborative Provision
Session 2023/24

www.uws.ac.uk

University of the West of Scotland is a registered Scottish charity. Charity number SC002520.

CHAPTER 9 COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

The Operations Manuals and the Collaborative Document Catalogue referred to within this chapter are available here:

<https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared%20Documents/CHAPTER%209%20COLLABORATIVE%20PROVISION>

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1 COLLABORATIVE PROVISION AT UWS

The key principle for collaboration at the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) is that collaborative arrangements should offer a comparable learning experience to students studying at a partner institution and should widen learning opportunities without prejudice to the standard of the award that is offered to students. This can be achieved via openness between both parties, compliance with regulations and procedures, and clearly defined roles and obligations of both parties to safeguard the standards of the award and protect the student experience.

There are a range of potential collaborative partnerships opportunities that can be explored. These include:

- 1) **Franchise Model**, which can include:
 - a) **Local delivery** of a UWS award/part of an award at another site with learning and assessment by staff of that organisation that are approved as Recognised Teachers of the University (RTU);
 - b) **Joint delivery** of a UWS award at another site with learning and assessment undertaken by staff of both institutions;
- 2) **Validated Model** - Validation of another institution's programme of study as a University of the West of Scotland award;
- 3) **Dual or Joint award** granted by one or more other awarding bodies;
- 4) **Collaborative Research Supervision** between UWS and another HE institution for MRes and PhD Research students registered at the University of the West of Scotland;
- 5) **Professional Development** – development of specialist programmes or short courses to provide various training and skills development opportunities.

Collaboration is constantly evolving and some partnerships do not neatly fit into the above defined categories; sometimes hybrid models exist. Where this occurs the closest model will be applied with bespoke arrangements put in place.

Transnational Education (TNE) is the provision of education for students based in a country other than the one in which the awarding institution is located. All the opportunities identified above can be offered through TNE, which supports the UWS Corporate Strategy to deliver an academic portfolio that provides students with globally relevant skills which contribute to global reach.

For the purposes of this guidance, overseas partnerships which lead to streams of students coming to UWS to take its awards in Scotland are not considered collaborative and may be termed as articulation routes/Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), albeit within the framework of common ambitions and agreement to work together.

QAA UK Quality Code – Partnerships

The University has reviewed and embedded the expectations and practices as outlined in the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, in particular the ['Partnerships' Chapter](#).

From the Quality Code, *“Providers work in partnership with a wide range of organisations, including awarding bodies, other education providers, non-academic providers (or those whose purpose is not primarily education) and employers. When*

doing so, awarding bodies retain responsibility for the academic standards of their awards and for the quality of the student experience.”

The UWS processes and approach to managing collaboration activity have been informed by the Quality Code and a primary core practice states:

“Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.”

The Partnership Chapter applies to the management of all learning opportunities leading or contributing to the award of academic credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations other than the degree-awarding body. Teams will also find it helpful to review other relevant chapters of the Quality Code, such as the '[Learning and Teaching Chapter](#)' and '[Student Engagement Chapter](#)' to ensure the provider actively engages students, individually and collectively in their educational experience.

General

If you have any questions or are about to embark on a collaborative development, please contact QuEST who can provide expert guidance and advice. All documents required for completion, which relate to Collaboration, are lodged within the **Collaborative Document Catalogue, which is available here:**

<https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared%20Documents/CHAPTER%209%20COLLABORATIVE%20PROVISION> .

The **Collaborative Document Catalogue** is intended as an active document which will be updated throughout the year as required. QuEST should be contacted for copies of the individual pro-forma listed in the catalogue.

Scottish Institutions are subject to an external review. Every four to five years external review takes place involving scrutiny of supporting evidence by an external panel who also meet with staff and students. The former Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) methodology has shifted to an intermediate Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) and Institution Liaison Meeting (ILM) approach; with a newly anticipated Tertiary Quality Framework currently under development which will inform changes to external review; details not yet available. UWS underwent QESR in session 2022/23. UWS received a positive judgement, noting “the review team is **confident** that UWS is making **effective** progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision to enable effective arrangements to be in place for managing academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience”. An analysis of collaborative provision formed part of the University’s submission for QESR.

During QESR, the University was praised for its quality assurance and enhancement procedures ([QAA QESR report – UWS March 2023](#)) noting that “Collaborative programmes are subject to equivalent quality processes to standard on-campus provision and follow the same regulations.” The report recognised the effective processes involving Collaborative Annual Reports for franchise and Programme Annual Reports (PARs) for validated arrangements, and that the University was working towards consolidating its range of collaborative partnerships.

This positive endorsement provided affirmation that we have robust and flexible processes with respect to collaboration noting that UWS is responsive to the needs of this continually evolving field within the sector in providing assurances that it remains in line with requirements and is effective in its approach.

2 DUE DILIGENCE PROCESSES

The University carries full responsibility for the assurance and control of the quality of any certificate, diploma or degree delivered (either in the UK or overseas) in its name. It is therefore imperative that adequate and appropriate due diligence is undertaken and that the financial, legal, academic and reputational risks of all proposals are adequately assessed in advance of commitments being made to proceed to partnership or the approval to offer awards collaboratively. It is the University's intention that the due diligence process will facilitate a positive engagement between both partners.

In line with the Partnerships Quality Code, guiding principles state that “*Due Diligence enquiries are completed and legally binding written agreements are signed prior to the commencement of student registration – due diligence enquiries are refreshed periodically and before agreements are renewed.*”

The due diligence process is outlined in the UWS due diligence procedure which can be accessed on the Legal Services UWS site. The Due Diligence Group (DDG) is responsible for signing off Due Diligence reports and meets on a quarterly basis. The Due Diligence Group determines whether collaborative proposals should proceed onto the next stage. Due Diligence is required for all new partners for all collaborative proposals, irrespective of the model (e.g. Franchise, Validated, Dual, Joint or Research). Other circumstances may also require Due Diligence consideration.

The Vice-Principal (Governance) and University Secretary is the Chair of the Due Diligence Group. The Secretary to the Due Diligence Group is currently Janice Logan (Legal Services).

2.1. Two-Stage Due Diligence Process

Due Diligence takes place in the following two stages:

- (i) Due Diligence Stage 1 (DDS1) - will consider **CreditSafe Report** and **3-Years Audited** accounts prior to any further exploratory work by a Partner. If accounts are not considered satisfactory, then this will cease any further work and effort with respect to the partner under discussion.
It will be the role of the School FBP to trigger DDS1 by requesting the Audited Accounts and CreditSafe report from partners. Finance Business Partners (FBPs) will be kept informed.
DDS1 will require to be signed off by the FBP, providing recommendations where appropriate (PCC Part 1 form, section 6); and
- (ii) Due Diligence Stage 2 (DDS2) - to consider the **full due diligence elements** necessary once the decision had been made to explore further.
In addition, for franchise, DDS2 considers the **location of an approval event**; i.e. whether this should be held at the Partner institution (for TNE In-Country) or at UWS In-House – DDS2 to consider this in consultation with Dean – risk dependent.
Proposals which reach DDS2 will be considered by the Due Diligence Group (DDG).

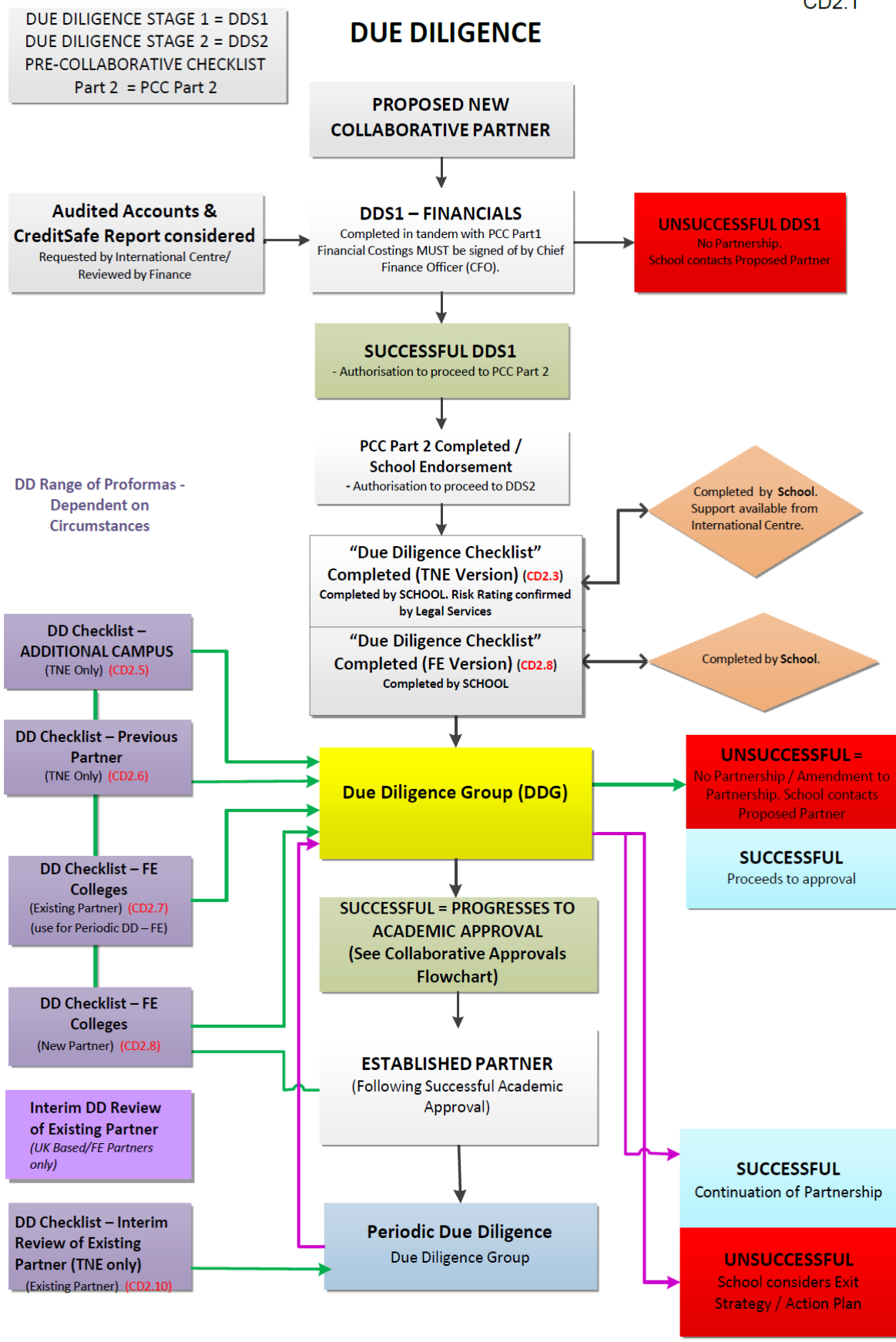
This approach enables prospective partners to provide essential information at the initial stages and then, only once approval in principle/and satisfaction of DDS1 has been met, further details could be explored via the Site visit/PCC Stage 2.

A streamlined Due Diligence process can be applied for new UK based FE College partners; as these organisations reside in the UK, it is perceived there is less risk associated with such partnerships. Where streamlined DD identifies any areas requiring more scrutiny, these shall be explored by Legal Services as deemed appropriate.

An **Interim Due Diligence procedure** has been introduced for existing partners which is normally required to be undertaken prior to Collaborative Review. Schools will be invited to complete a pro-forma either relating to a UK based/FE Partner (CD 2.12) or a TNE Partner (CD 2.10) form and seek the necessary evidence from the Partner to support due diligence.

A **Health and Safety Declaration form** (CD 2.11) was introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic to seek assurances from Partners that Partner are committed to adhering with local public health guidance and government legislation relevant to their region. For our UK-based Partners, there is an expectation that UK legislation shall be followed.

An overview of Due Diligence procedures is illustrated in the following **Due Diligence Flowchart (CD2.1): (next page)**



The following Due diligence guidance and pro-formas exist as detailed in the Collaborative Document Catalogue:

	<u>Pro-forma:</u>	<u>Completed by:</u>
CD 2.1	<u>Due Diligence Flowchart</u> Outlines the DD process, different stages and pro-formas.	N/A
CD 2.2	<u>Due Diligence procedure</u> This process outlines the responsibilities of UWS and the partner with regard to DD.	N/A
CD 2.3	<u>Due Diligence Checklist</u> This must be filled in prior to DD and before proposal can progress to DDG.	School
CD 2.4	<u>Due Diligence Checklist - Risk Rating Guidance</u> To assist with completion of DD checklist.	N/A
CD 2.5	<u>DD Checklist – Additional Campuses (TNE only)</u> To be used when an existing TNE Partner wishes to add a campus for delivery of pre-approved programme(s).	School
CD 2.6	<u>DD Checklist – Existing Partner (TNE only)</u> This pro-forma should be used when a School wishes to collaborate with an existing partner on a new project or programme.	School
CD 2.7	<u>Due Diligence Checklist Further Education Colleges (Previous Partner)</u> Bespoke for FE Colleges where a Partnership has previously existed; will not often be required.	School
CD 2.8	<u>Due Diligence Checklist Further Education Colleges (New Partner)</u> For FE Colleges where a Partnership has not previously existed.	School
CD 2.9	<u>Health and Safety Checklist</u> For inclusion in Annual Site visits to ensure continued H&S requirements of delivery sites. This features as an Appendix to CD 1.2, CD 1.5, CD 10.3 & CD10.4.	School
CD 2.10	<u>Due Diligence Checklist – Interim Review of Existing Partner (TNE Only)</u> This is used for TNE to facilitate periodic Due Diligence. Normally undertaken in tandem with Collaborative Review.	School
CD 2.11	<u>Health and Safety Declaration</u> Introduced during Covid-19 to seek assurances from Partners that Partner is committed to adhering with local public health guidance and government legislation relevant to their region. For our UK-based Partners, there is an expectation that UK legislation shall be followed.	N/A for DD
CD 2.12	<u>Due Diligence Checklist – Interim Review of Existing Partner (UK-based / FE Partners Only)</u> This is used for UK-based/FE to facilitate periodic Due Diligence. Normally undertaken in tandem with Collaborative Review.	School
CD 2.12	<u>Due Diligence Checklist – Interim Review of Existing Partner (Change of Legal Entity)</u>	School
N/A	<u>Streamlined DD – NO SEPARATE CHECKLIST</u> The above DD templates will be used as appropriate.	N/A

Due Diligence documentation is owned by Legal Services. This process involves providing supporting material regarding the partner – such as financial reports/audited accounts, references, risk assessment, other evidence as appropriate.

Schools are responsible for the completion of the Due Diligence Checklist, and for providing the necessary supplementary material required for consideration by the DDG. This is irrespective of where the proposed partner originates from, in terms of FE, TNE or other.

Due Diligence must be satisfactorily completed before any proposal with a new partner can proceed any further.

3 COLLABORATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS

3.1 Introduction

The approach to collaborative approval at UWS is outlined in the following sections which are intended to provide guidance in the development, approval and ongoing monitoring of collaborative provision arrangements.

Collaborative provision may be initiated in a number of ways: it may be part of an existing relationship with a partner, the University may be approached with a potential opportunity, or the University may seek to build a relationship with a new partner.

All collaborative proposals are subject to approval, and this guidance has been developed to highlight the approval processes for **Franchised programmes** (Local and Joint delivery), **Validated programmes**, **Joint and Dual awards**, and **Collaborative Research Supervision**. There is recognition however that proposals develop differently and one size does not fit all. The principles outlined in Chapter 9 should be followed so far as possible where bespoke arrangements can be arranged where necessary.

3.2 Lead-in Time for New Collaborative Proposals:

All proposals should ensure that there is **appropriate lead-in time** to ensure the necessary steps are completed in order to maximise the efficiency of the process and enable a supportive and developmental dialogue between UWS and the proposed partner. Colleagues should be aware that Due Diligence process can often be quite lengthy.

Schools should allow **at least 8-12 months** from bringing forward the proposal to when the partnership is proposed to commence. The approval process must NORMALLY be COMPLETED 3 months before delivery. A shorter deadline may be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Vice Principal (Internationalisation) after consultation with the Vice Chancellors Executive (VCE).

3.3 Academic Approval / Re-Approval Procedures

The approval mechanisms are summarised in the following flowcharts and guidance within this chapter:

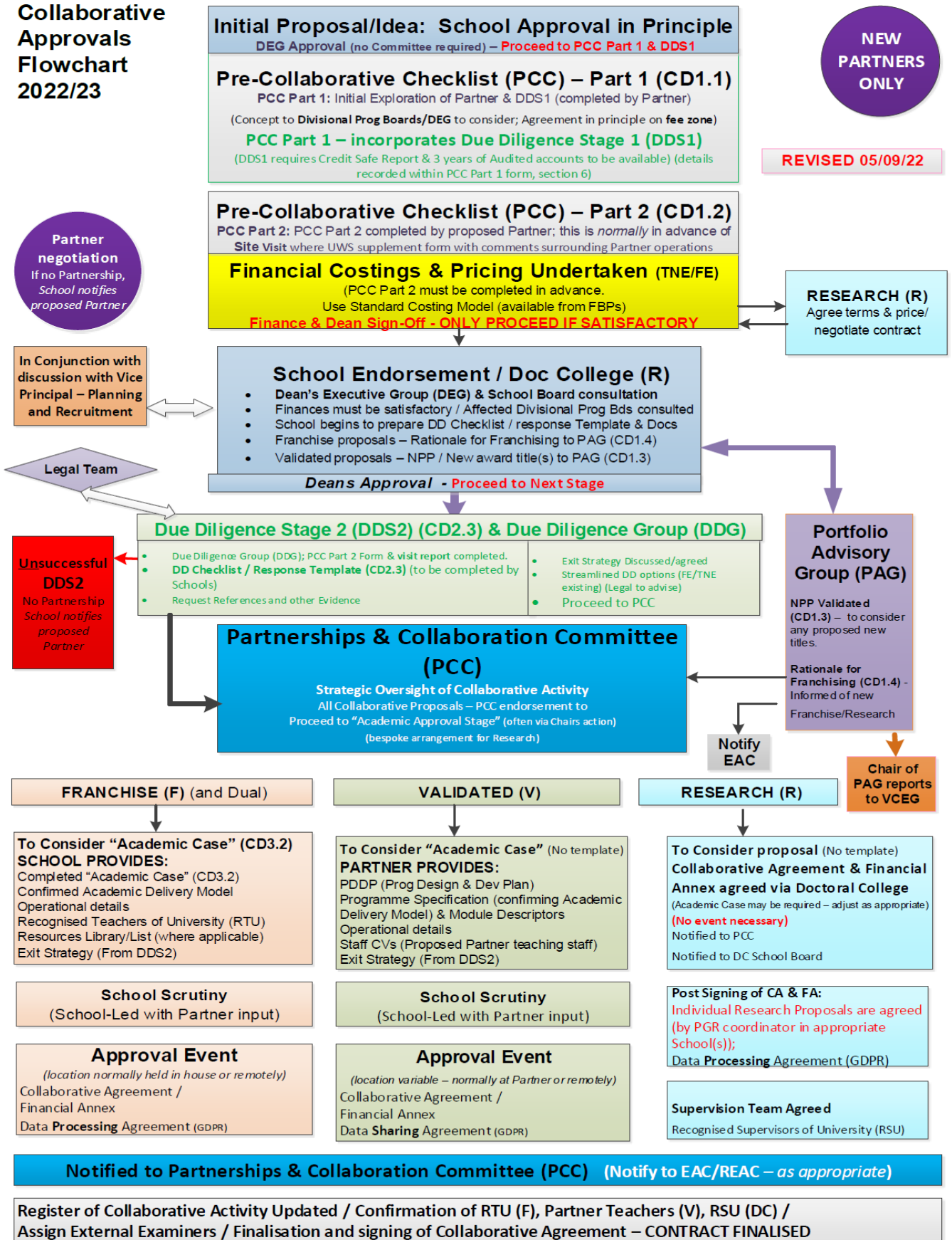
- **Collaborative Approvals Flowchart (New Partners) (CD 3.1)**
- **Due Diligence Flowchart (CD 2.1)**
- **Process Flowchart during Active Partnership (CD 13.1)**
- **Checklist for New Collaborative Proposals (Stages) (CD 3.4) (Appendix 2)**
- **Academic Approval Guidance for different Collaborative Models (below)**
- **Collaborative Review Process Flowchart (CD 11.1)**

Approval procedures will *normally* be consistent for new Partners in the UK and overseas.

For all new Partners, the processes outlined in the following **Collaborative Approvals Flowchart (New Partners)** should be adopted. This flowchart should be used in conjunction with the Checklist for New Collaborative Proposals (Stages) (CD 3.4) **(Appendix 2)**.

CD3.1 COLLABORATIVE APPROVALS FLOWCHART:

Collaborative Approvals Flowchart 2022/23



3.3a Franchise Model – Collaborative Approval Process (Under Review) (Also applicable to Joint/Dual)

Please follow the detailed stages outlined in the **Checklist for New Collaborative Proposals (Stages)** (CD 3.4) (**Appendix 2**). Thereafter refer to the guidance below in relation to the Academic Approval stage specific for Franchise partnerships.

PREAMBLE

Franchise partnerships involve the delivery of a UWS award at another delivery location. These are existing UWS awards, so no scrutiny is necessary via New Programme Proposals (NPP) procedures. The Portfolio Strategy Group (PSG) should however be notified via the **Rationale for Franchising (CD 1.4) pro-forma** to advise of any proposed new delivery location and to seek approval in principle – this keeps an overview of where programmes are delivered out with our own UWS campuses.

Subject to satisfactory School considerations, costings and Due Diligence requirements being met, Franchise partnerships will require a Full Academic Approval Event, led by the Quality Enhancement and Standards Team (QuEST), to take place.

Key Points – Franchise Academic Approval:

- QuEST will lead and coordinate the approval;
- A Full Academic Approval Event will take place (either In-Country or In-House); For new partners, this could be either In-Country or at a UWS Campus, but decisions will be taken on an individual basis to determine the most appropriate approach based on risk.
- Approval Event will *normally* be Chaired by a member of VCE (or nominee);
- **QuEST will coordinate the event**, making all necessary arrangements and will draft the full approval report;
- Event will consider the 'Academic Case' and operational details;
- Recommendation of the Approval Panel shall be overseen/approved by the Tertiary Partnership Group or Internationalisation Strategy Group (as appropriate).
(PROCESS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW)

Documentation for Academic Approval of a Franchise Partnership

The Collaborative Proposal Documentation required for the Approval Event will include the following:

- **Briefing Paper Coversheet** (CD3.5);
- **Academic Case for Collaborative Provision – Franchise** (CD3.2);
- Confirmed Academic Delivery Model;
- Operational details (depending on nature of proposal);
- Recognised Teachers of the University (RTU) information;
- Resources Library/List (where applicable);
- Exit Strategy;
- **Programme Details** - including an updated Programme Specification which accurately reflects collaborative delivery;
- A Financial Summary (For information only, not for scrutinising);
- **Draft Collaborative Agreement** (drafted by QuEST).

The Collaborative Proposal Documentation is prepared by the School together with input from the proposed collaborative partner in consultation with QuEST, Legal Services, International Centre, Finance, Registry, and Admissions/Recruitment, (as appropriate).

Appropriate **School scrutiny** should take place prior to the submission of the final event material. School-led scrutiny with Partner input.

<p>The Academic Case for Collaborative Provision is only applicable for the <u>Franchise</u> model. The main headings are outlined below:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Context; ▪ Details of the Provision; ▪ Quality Assurance and Enhancement (including University policies); ▪ Facilities and Resources; ▪ Communication Arrangements; ▪ Recruitment Selection and Admissions; ▪ Recognition of Prior Learning; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB); ▪ Marketing and Publicity; ▪ Staffing Arrangements / RTU; ▪ Student Induction Arrangements; ▪ Learning, Teaching and Assessment; ▪ Student Support and Guidance; ▪ Graduation Arrangements; ▪ Provisional Exit Strategy.

Approval Event – Format for a Franchise Partnership

For Franchise Partnerships, a Full Academic Approval Event should take place. The event-style approval event will seek to provide increased opportunities for enhanced scrutiny of the proposed collaborative partnership prior to final ‘sign-off’ as well as providing additional assurances on quality and standards in line with the QAA Quality Code and providing opportunities to discuss the overall strategic direction in more detail. Consideration of the financial model will NOT be considered at the event and will be addressed earlier in the approval processes prior to the event (in line with the proposed Collaborative Approvals Flowchart).

An exemplar/proposed **draft Approval Event Agenda** for a Franchise In-Country event is outlined in the Collaborative Document Catalogue (CD3.5).

Location of Approval Event (Franchise): In-Country or UWS In-House

Inevitably, all proposals will vary and for some Partners there may be clear reasons why an In-Country Approval Event would be desirable; mainly due to associated risk. However, UWS In-House Approval Events may also be considered in certain instances should the risk be considered minimal. Due Diligence will make a recommendation as to the location of the Approval Event for individual Partners and proposals. Furthermore, there may be scope to merge In-Country/and In-House events by identifying some UWS staff members to participate in the event at the Partner location with video conferencing to UWS; individual variants can be considered on a case by case basis. The ongoing pandemic will obviously impact the feasibility of overseas events where most approval events will be facilitated remotely with campus use where possible.

If **In-Country**, the panel will meet with Partner Senior staff and Partner teaching staff and have a tour of facilities. There may be an opportunity to meet with Partner students to gauge their general experiences of the institution, but they would be from an existing programme of the Partners.

If **In-House**, video conferencing will normally be used, and there will be an expectation that senior staff from the Partner will physically attend UWS for the event. Sessions with Partner teaching staff would be via video conference. As franchise, UWS students on the programme (at UWS campus) could input with views on how a Franchise delivery may benefit from an additional delivery location.

Feedback from both UWS colleagues and from across the sector indicates there are benefits to holding In-Country Events as these facilitate building the relationship with the

Partner as well as meeting first hand with teaching staff, assessing their facilities and speaking with existing students as to their experiences. The level of English language competency among teaching staff can also be gauged, which is clearly important as UWS programmes should be taught and assessed in English. Feedback suggests, they also appear to nurture the ongoing relationship with the Partner.

Where existing franchise partners are increasing provision, such as adding a new programme, this would not require an In-Country event.

Any costs associated with an In-Country approval event would be borne by the Partner and should be taken into account when the Costing Model is applied.

Constitution of Franchise Approval Panel

QuEST and the affected School will determine the location of the Approval Event on receipt of recommendations from Due Diligence Group. The membership of the Franchise approval panel shall *normally* comprise:

Approval Panel – Franchise	Applicable for TNE and FE
Chair of Panel	Member of VCE (or nominee)
Senior Academic (eg. Dean/Deputy Dean/Associate Dean (L&T) /Head of Division) (**)	To consider academic delivery model (from out with proposing School)
Academic (**see note below)	To consider academic delivery model (from out with proposing School)
Senior Member of QuEST	To advise on Regulatory aspects and take forward the Collaborative Agreement.
Head of TNE & Mobility or International Partnership Development Manager	For TNE proposals
Member of Colleges & Widening Partnerships Team / Professional Services representative (if appropriate)	For FE proposals Optional For FE proposals (where deemed necessary)
Advisor to the Panel (Academic from proposing School)	Normally person who undertook Site Visit to Partner Institution: Programme Leader designate presenting the proposal / Potential Link Tutor.
Member of QuEST (or nominee)	To coordinate and arrange approval as required, and draft approval report.
Senior Registry representative	Optional (Could provide feedback at the scrutiny stage)
External subject expert (Optional)	Optional To provide an independent view of the subject area/Partner facilities etc. (Note: As this is a Franchise programme, the curriculum has already been approved via UWS normal approval mechanisms (where external input will have been taken into account) – this is why this panel member is optional).

** Recommended that internal panel members have expertise in relation to collaborative partnerships and, where possible, are members of either the Tertiary Partnership Group or the Internationalisation Strategy Group.

Outcome of the Franchise Approval Event

A member of QuEST will produce the final approval report and ensure any conditions are made on behalf of the Panel.

If approved at the event, QuEST will finalise the Collaborative Agreement, and the relevant Senate sub-committee will be advised of the outcome. The Financial Annex is also confirmed in consultation with the School, their Finance Business Partner, the Partner and QuEST.

QuEST will also notify **existing External Examiner(s)** of the additional delivery location(s) for the provision for which they have been assigned.

3.3b Validated Model – Collaborative Approval Process

The University may be approached to validate an award at another institution which will be offered collaboratively. For example, where that institution wishes to offer a degree but does not have degree awarding powers. This is referred to as 'validated model' at UWS.

Please follow the detailed stages outlined in the **Checklist for New Collaborative Proposals (Stages) (CD 3.4) (Appendix 2)**. Thereafter refer to the guidance below in relation to the Academic Approval stage specific for Validated partnerships.

PREAMBLE

Validated partnerships involve the validation of another institution's programme of study as a UWS award. As these are new UWS titles/awards, these proposals will require scrutiny and **endorsement via the New Programme Proposal (NPP) procedure**. Completion of an **NPP Form (CD1.3)** is available for completion and consideration by Portfolio Strategy Group (PSG).

Subject to PSG approval (notifying VCE), satisfactory School considerations, costings and Due Diligence requirements being met, Validated partnerships will require a Full Academic Approval Event, *normally* to be held **at the Partner Site** (either within the UK or overseas). The approval event is co-ordinated BY THE SCHOOL in liaison with the partner. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis as to whether on in-Country approval should take place for new partners.

Where existing Validated partners are increasing provision, such as adding a new programme, this would not *normally* require an In-Country event. Decisions may be subject to the nature of the proposal and will be made on a case by case basis.

Any costs associated with an In-Country approval event would be borne by the Partner and should be taken into account when the Costing Model is applied.

As a new programme is being proposed, the University's guidance on Approval and Accreditation (Chapter 4 of the Quality Handbook) should also be followed. This chapter will also highlight the requirements for School scrutiny and timescales for the circulation of paperwork. Further guidance can be provided by QuEST.

Key Points – Validated Academic Approval (NEW PARTNER):

- NPP procedure is required to be undertaken as new award title;
- The proposing School (in liaison with QuEST) will retain oversight of the approval;
- A Full Academic Approval Event will take place *normally at the Partner Site*;
- Approval Event will be Chaired by a Senior UWS Academic (normally Dean, Deputy Dean or Associate Dean (L&T) (or nominee);
- **The School will coordinate the event** (in liaison with the Partner), making all necessary arrangements and will draft the full approval report and ensure any conditions of approval are met;
- Event will consider the Collaborative Proposal Documentation in line with the University's guidance on Approval and Accreditation (Chapter 4 of Quality Handbook);
- Recommendation of the Approval Panel shall be overseen/approved by the Tertiary Partnership Group or Internationalisation Strategy Group (as appropriate).
(PROCESS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW)

Approval Event – Format for a Validated Partnership (NEW PARTNER)

For the academic approval, the Partner, in collaboration with the School, completes the required paperwork for a validated model (**approval paperwork will be in line with Chapter 4 of Quality Handbook**). The School must arrange a scrutiny event and paperwork amended in accordance with the recommendations.

Validated models require a formal approval event to be arranged at the Partner Institution (current pandemic impacting overseas travel). The Partner will normally cover all costs associated with the approval event in country. This should be factored into the costing model from the outset to ensure expectations are clear, as should other initial set-up costs.

Documentation for Academic Approval of Validated Partnership

The paperwork should be drafted by the School and proposed partner, the documentation will be the same as that required for approval of a new award at UWS, i.e.:

- **Programme Design & Development Plan (PDDP);**
- **Programme Specification (UWS template)** (confirming academic delivery model);
- **Module Descriptors (UWS template);**
- Operational details (depending on nature of proposal);
- Resources Library/List (where applicable);
- Exit Strategy;
- CVs of Proposed Staff; and completed Validated New Staff Pro-forma;
- A Financial Summary (For information only, not for scrutinising);
- **Draft Collaborative Agreement** (drafted by QuEST on receipt of material).

The School will review the collaborative proposal documentation. School scrutiny will take place prior to this information being presented at the approval event.

Professional Support Department Input:

As part of the development of the documentation to support the validated model, there should be partnership working with relevant professional support departments (specifically Registry and the International Centre). This is essential to ensure clarity on the student journey, maintenance of academic standards, and effective operation of assessment practices and processing. This will be key to informing the discussions of the panel at the approval event.

Proposed Partner Teaching Staff:

Prior to the approval event, staff CVs will be reviewed by the School to ensure their suitability for teaching the validated programme(s). Completed Validated New Staff Proforma's (CD 7.6) will also be required.

Outcome of the Validated Approval Event

The School will produce the final approval report and ensure any conditions are made on behalf of the Panel. The outcomes of the approval event for validated model will mirror those of normal programme approval at UWS (see Chapter 4 of the Quality Handbook). The School will be expected to address any conditions within the timescale identified by the panel and provide a formal response to the Chair on any recommendations.

If approved at the event, QuEST will finalise the Collaborative Agreement, and the relevant Senate sub-committee will be advised of the outcome. The Financial Annex is also confirmed in consultation with the School, their Finance Business Partner, the Partner and QuEST.

Constitution of Validated Approval Panel

The **School will arrange an event** *normally* at the proposed Partner Institution. The membership of the Validated approval panel shall *normally* comprise:

**Approval Panel – Validated	Applicable for TNE and FE
Chair of Panel	Senior UWS Academic (normally Dean/Deputy Dean/Associate Dean (L&T) (or nominee) (from out with proposing School)
Academic	One internal member of academic staff to consider academic delivery model (from out with proposing School)
External subject specific expert(s) (Compulsory)	Nominated by the School To provide an independent view of the proposed programme and determine whether the academic content is suitable; as well as to review the subject area/Partner facilities etc.
Senior Member of QuEST	To advise on Regulatory aspects and take forward the Collaborative Agreement.
Head of TNE & Mobility or International Partnership Development Manager	For TNE proposals
Member of Colleges & Widening Partnerships Team / Professional Services representative (if appropriate)	For FE proposals Optional For FE proposals (where deemed necessary)
Advisor to the Panel (Academic from proposing School)	The School will also identify an appropriate colleague who will act as Advisor to the panel to represent the School and be able to answer subject/School specific questions and queries from the panel and the partner to ensure timely responses and resolution of queries at the event. (Normally person who undertook Site Visit to Partner Institution: Programme Leader designate presenting the proposal / Potential UWS Collaborative Contact)
School Administrator for Event (Normally School staff member)	To coordinate and arrange approval as required, and draft approval report.
Senior Registry representative	Optional (Could provide feedback at the scrutiny stage)
Other	The School can invite other members in addition to the above if they deem it necessary.

** Recommended that internal panel members have expertise in relation to collaborative partnerships and, where possible, are members of either the Tertiary Partnership Group or the Internationalisation Strategy Group.

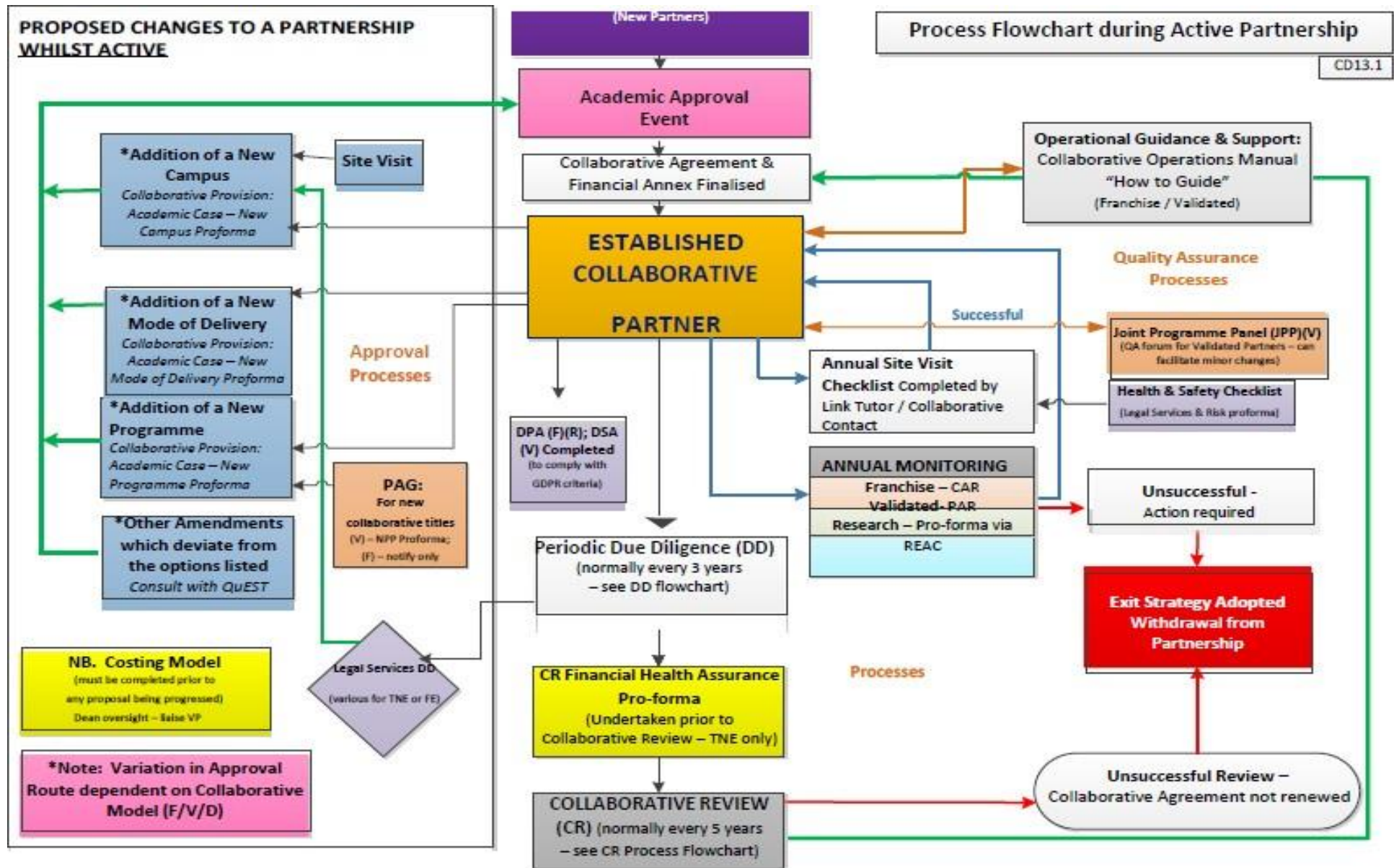
Upon approval, **External Examiner(s)** must be appointed to cover the new validated provision. See section 10 for details.

3.3c Proposed changes to a Partnership Whilst Active – Approval Process

Where a Partner wishes to propose changes whilst a Partnership is active, a summary of activities is detailed in the **Process Flowchart during Active Partnership (CD 13.1)**. (see next page)

3.3d Honarium Fee for External Panel Members

External Panel members on collaborative approval panels (all models) are eligible to receive an honorarium fee for their participation in an event. Details are available from QuEST on request.



Curricular -: Minor Amendments to an Existing Programme Structure	
Franchise Partners	<p>A Franchise Partner is <u>unable</u> to make changes to the programme structure as these are UWS awards.</p> <p>Where UWS make changes through the relevant Divisional Programme Board, the Partner should be consulted and kept informed of decisions via the Link Tutor.</p>
Validated Partners	<p>A Validated Partner may wish to revise existing programme or module content during the period of agreement (outwith collaborative review timelines). Minor changes can be facilitated annually via the Joint Programme Panel (JPP).</p> <p>Significant changes may require approval via the School/Divisional Programme Board. QuEST should be consulted and if deemed appropriate an approval event may be necessary.</p>

Contractual -: Proposed Amendments which affect Contractual Arrangements				
Proposed Change		Collaborative Model (Existing Partners)		
A School may wish to revise an existing approved Collaborative Partnership to facilitate proposed amendments and/or additions during the period of agreement. Details of some options listed below:		Pro-forma applicable to which model?		
Collaborative Document Catalogue Pro-forma Options		Franchise	Validated	Research
CD6.1	Collaborative Provision: Proposed NEW CAMPUS – Academic Case To be used when a new campus is added to an existing partner (franchise or validated). Existing programmes only. The site visit report (with health & safety checklist) is embedded within this document.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CD6.2	Collaborative Provision: Proposed NEW PROGRAMME – Academic Case To be used when a new franchise programme is added to an existing partner.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A
CD6.3	Collaborative Provision: Proposed NEW MODE OF DELIVERY (CD6.3) (e.g. Full or Part-time route to an existing programme.) To be used when a collaborative programme is proposing a new mode of delivery. Rationale required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
CD6.4	Collaborative Provision: Proposed NEW PROGRAMME & NEW CAMPUS – Validated (No separate pro-forma exists) Where a Validated partner proposes a new programme and delivery site, this would require a full new Academic Approval cycle (as per Approvals Flowchart–New partners) (i.e. start at the PCC Part 2)	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start at PCC Part 2 (as if new approval)	N/A
CD6.5	Collaborative Provision: Proposed NEW RESEARCH COLLABORATION To be used when an existing franchise or validated Partner wishes to explore opportunities to build on the partnership with PhD/Research opportunities. <i>Under Review</i>	Liaise with Doctoral College to progress		N/A

3.3 d Internal Approval Event - Amendments to an Existing Validated Partnership

Where an approval event to process amendments to an existing validated partnership is deemed necessary, there is scope to streamline the event accordingly. The following will *normally* apply:

The School will coordinate any necessary event (in liaison with the Partner), making all necessary arrangements and will draft the full approval report and ensure any conditions of approval are met.

Internal Event for New Campus (EXISTING Validated Partner)

The event will take place on a UWS campus and will include an opportunity to:

- Meet with colleagues from the School to understand the rationale for expansion and anticipated student numbers;
- Meet with the UWS Collaborative Contact and Programme Co-ordinator at Partner Institution to explore QA and QE approaches, staff expertise to deliver the programme (either physical or virtual attendance);
- To explore the outcome materials supporting the amendment/addition (e.g. NEW Campus Pro-forma include site visit) with the relevant School representative(s);
- Confirm arrangements for enrolment, assessment processing and timescales with Registry;
- Consider current operation of the Joint Programme Panel / Degree Assessment Board in terms of Quality Assurance and Annual Monitoring;
- Receive assurances that staff CVs have been considered;
- Agree date of first intake at new delivery location.

Panel Members

The panel will normally consist of:

- Chair (normally an Dean / Deputy Dean);
- Representative from Registry;
- Representative from QuEST;
- If deemed appropriate: Head of TNE & Mobility/International Partnership Development Manager (TNE) or designated Marketing, Recruitment and Engagement colleague (FE)
- Representative from another School not involved in the proposal.

As external involvement formed part of the initial approval event, it is not required at this stage in line with normal UWS process for adding a new campus and / or PT / FT delivery routes.

Documentation for the Event

The School should provide the following paperwork:

- (i) A completed Collaborative Provision: **Proposed NEW CAMPUS – Academic Case Pro-forma.**;
- (ii) Any proposals for additional **Teaching Staff** at new campus, including CVs./completed pro-formas;
- (iii) Evidence of **student feedback**;
- (iv) Evidence of effective operation of JPPs/DABs in terms of **Quality Assurance.**;
- (v) Confirmation **Due Diligence** has been satisfied (for new Countries/Regions, this may be of particular relevance).;
- (vi) Confirmation **Financial Costing model** has been agreed.

Please contact QuEST for support and advice for any other queries.

3.4 Validated Model – Responsibilities of Partner

Key aspects of a Validated award are:

- Whilst UWS is the degree awarding body, students enrolled on validated collaborative models are termed as the 'Partner's students' with respect to certain elements of the partnership.
- In general, students will normally be bound to the policies and procedures of the Partner Institution, with the exception of Assessment Regulations and other quality assurance elements. Any exceptional arrangements are identified within the Collaborative Agreement.
- Students will receive a learning experience comparable to that at a UWS campus, wherever they study.

3.5 Revisions to Teaching Staff (Both Franchise and Validated)

Schools are required to confirm on an annual basis their teaching or supervisory staff with respect to all collaborative models.

Any revisions to the staffing complement should be highlighted in the annual report on collaborative staff through the approved mechanism as detailed in the collaborative agreement: normally via the School Board (Franchise) or JPP (Validated).

Depending on the distinct nature of the partnership, it may be appropriate for staff to be approved as Recognised Teachers of the University (RTU) (RTU for Franchise only). RTU staff require to be reapproved annually by the School.

Staff teaching on validated collaborative programmes must be approved either at the original approval event or via the Joint Programme Panel (JPP). A standard pro-forma is available for use (C.D 7.6) and proposed new staff must be approved by the External Examiner or have independent external approval. Validated teaching staff require to be reapproved annually by the School.

Taught Collaborations:

School Boards are required to maintain accurate records of teaching staff at collaborative Partners (for all Collaborative models – both franchise and validated) and to confirm this annually via School Board.

Research Collaborations:

School Boards are required to maintain accurate records of Recognised Supervisors of the University (RSU) (for research Collaborations) and to confirm this annually via School Board.

4 JOINT & DUAL AWARDS

The Development of Dual and Joint awards will only be considered where:

- The University and the partner organisation(s) already have successful existing provision in the subject area and at the academic level of the proposal;
- Degree awarding powers are held by the partner organisation(s);
- Learning resources and the learning environment are appropriate to the delivery of the award(s).

a) Joint Award

A Joint award involves the granting of a single award with one or more collaborating authorised bodies for the successful completion of one programme of study.

Key aspects of a Joint award are:

- Students will receive a learning experience comparable to that at a UWS campus, wherever they study;
- UWS will be involved in the assessment of all students to whom the Joint award will be made.

b) Dual Award

A Dual award involves the granting of separate awards by both the University and a collaborative partner, for a single programme of study. The two awards will be based on the same assessed student work and can only be granted when the objectives of the programme have been achieved at the same point in time.

Key aspects of a Dual award are:

- Students will receive a learning experience comparable to that at a UWS campus, wherever they study;
- UWS and the partner organisation will have reviewed and agreed to accept each other's assessment marking for components of study undertaken at each institution.

Approval of Joint & Dual Awards

Joint and Dual Awards differ from the validated model as students, on a joint/dual are UWS students. The approach for approving these awards is bespoke, dependent on the nature of the proposal. It is recommended that any plans for the development of a Joint or Dual award are discussed with QuEST at the earliest opportunity.

5 RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

The Academic Approval stage for individual Research partnerships normally comprise of bespoke arrangements involving In-House discussions involving the [relevant forums including the Doctoral College School Board](#) and REAC. **Any enquiries should be directed to the Doctoral College in the first instance.**

PREAMBLE

Research at UWS comprises various models. Staff engage in high quality research which is multi-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary and involves collaborations with a wide range of internal and external contacts. Many individual researchers have formal associations with other institutions (e.g. research pools) and many more have informal associations with a wide network of colleagues. A number of research student programmes will involve an external supervisor based within another institution to add breadth to the supervisory team. These arrangements are supported by the work of the [Research & Enterprise Advisory Committee \(REAC\)](#) and managed under the University Regulations, where applicable.

The Doctoral College Board is a sub-group of REAC and ensures compliance with the Research Degree Regulations.

The Board also ensures that the standards of awards are maintained. The University also seeks out formal partnership arrangements with appropriate institutions to further its strategic objectives. The key stages for the Academic Approval stage of collaborative arrangements leading to a research award from UWS are bespoke depending on the nature of the proposal.

Responsibilities for Approval of Research Collaborations

There should be discussions with the Doctoral College with final approval of the proposed partnership resting with REAC. The Partnerships and Collaboration Committee should be kept apprised of all developments and have involvement in the approval stage prior to the outcome of approval agreed by REAC.

Documentation for Approval of Research Collaborations

A Model of Collaboration including delivery pattern, structure and use of consumables and resource should be developed. The costing model should be completed in liaison with the Doctoral College, affected School and Chief Finance Officer. The Collaborative Agreement should be drafted by The Doctoral College. Depending on the nature of the partnership being proposed, it may also be necessary to prepare a Programme Specification and Module Descriptors to support the approval of the partnership.

Monitoring and Review (Research Collaborations)

Annual review and monitoring of arrangements will be undertaken and reported to REAC. The Doctoral College will lead on the review and annual monitoring activities and there is a recommendation that one annual site visit to the Partner be undertaken (optional). Remote platforms may be utilised where appropriate.

The Doctoral College is invited to complete the following table (or retain equivalent record) on an annual basis for submission to REAC (normally at Oct/Nov meeting annually) or retain an equivalent record for endorsement:

Collaborative Research Partner	Country	Date of Annual Visit (if applicable) (Where no site visit undertaken, please indicate the approach to routine communication)	Outcome of Visit/ or Regular discussions with Partner (To include student numbers, ongoing confirmation of facilities and resources, feedback from students and supervision arrangements)

This new approach will facilitate a mechanism to receive assurances from Partners that the Collaborative Agreements are operating effectively, and will assist when reaching periodic Collaborative Review. In general, confirmation of the continuing support for the research students will be sought in terms of resources, consumables and supervision arrangements. The student experience will form a key aspect of all review activities and feedback will be sought from students and the Partner. The financial annex will be reviewed and agreed on an annual basis by the Doctoral College.

A formal review will be performed at least every five years (by completion of the **Collaborative Review Research Pro-forma** - CD 11.4). Appropriate Schools and the Partnership and Collaborations Committee will be informed of outcomes. The Doctoral College should alert the Head of QuEST to any concerns about the collaborative partnership which are highlighted as part of annual monitoring or formal review.

6 THE COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

A Collaborative Agreement is required for all collaborative partnerships (Franchise, Validated model, Joint/Dual and Collaborative Research Supervision). QuEST is responsible for preparing a draft Collaboration Agreement (for taught provision) detailing operational issues to be drawn up in line with University Regulations and the UK Quality Code in advance of the collaboration and made available to the partner and the panel for comment and development. The Doctoral College is responsible for preparing Collaborative Agreements for Research collaborations.

The Collaborative Agreement is specific to the individual partnership and is not intended to be identical in all cases and covers a range of possible arrangements and will be refined in view of each individual collaboration. Draft templates for Franchise, Validated and Research are available as outlined within the Collaborative Document Catalogue (**CD4.2, 4.3 & 4.4**); these will be tailored to suit individual collaborative arrangements during the approval process.

The Collaborative Agreement will be finalised by both parties and signed following relevant approval activity. The University of the West of Scotland has approved signatories who can sign off these agreements.

The approved signatories for AY 2023-24 are:

All Agreements:	Principal & Vice Chancellor
All Collaborative Agreements:	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Research Collaboration Agreements:	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation & Engagement)
Financial Annex to Collaborative Agreements:	Vice-Principal (Finance & Infrastructure) Head of Finance Dean of School

The signed Collaborative Agreement is the legally binding document which outlines the rights and obligations of both parties and will be subject to periodic monitoring and review.

6.1 Financial Annex

All Collaborative Agreements are required to have a completed Financial Annex appended.

The Financial Annex is owned by the University's Finance Department and advice and support can be provided from Finance in terms of completion. The Financial Annex is often variable between partners but includes some standard sections such as the collection of fees and payment schedules.

7 PARTNER STAFF INVOLVED WITH TEACHING

The requirements associated with partner staff involved with teaching will depend fundamentally on which collaborative model exists with UWS. Regardless of the collaborative model, Partners will identify a Programme Co-ordinator who will be the lead contact for liaison with UWS.

All staff teaching on programmes leading to a UWS award are required to submit CVs to their Link Tutors/Collaborative Contacts on an annual basis. These are reviewed through the appropriate School to ensure that relevant and appropriate expertise remains in place to deliver the programmes.

The following table outlines the key differences in terms of staffing:

Franchise Model Partnerships	Validated Model Partnerships
Recognised Teachers of the University (RTU) (Applicable to RTU on Collaborative Programmes only) (Not London based RTU)	Staff CVs
All partner staff delivering any element (teaching and assessment) of teaching on a franchise programme must complete the University's RTU process. The RTU process is outlined in a flowchart . A person specification and guidance for RTU exists. RT1 forms require completion for new RTUs. (See Franchise Operational Manual (CD 13.2) for details) RTU are <u>not</u> employees of UWS.	As part of the approval for a validated model, consideration of staff CVs and staff expertise will form part of the approval mechanisms. A 'Validated New Staff Pro-forma' will require completion for new validated teaching staff and CVs will be required. Proforma & CVs are considered by the School.
UWS Lead Contact(s): UWS Link Tutor School Service Delivery Manager (SSDM)	UWS Lead Contact(s): UWS Collaborative Contact School Service Delivery Manager (SSDM)
Link Tutor Role: Link Tutors are responsible for overseeing the RTU process on behalf of the School in terms of seeking RTU approval and in the ongoing monitoring of this. In liaison with the Programme Team, they will review the CVs of new academic staff at the collaborating institution to ensure they are suitably qualified, experienced and developed.	Collaborative Contact Role: Collaborative Contacts, on behalf of the School, are responsible for the ongoing monitoring of staff teaching on validated provision. School to determine appropriateness of proposed Teaching Staff nominations during scrutiny PRIOR to the JPP. Where applicable, this may be at the assigned Divisional Programme Board. This is monitored through JPPs annually and sent to School Board for approval. As part of School/JPP endorsement, the

	External Examiner should be consulted on academic expertise prior to JPP.
<p>Monitoring of RTU staff – annual task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Tutor has oversight of RTU staff. • Co-ordinated within Schools • School Board notified annually of RTU for the coming AY via SSDOM. • School Board will note any changes to staffing on an annual basis. • The Partner Staff Annual Record (CD 7.6) is completed by the School and notified to School Board (normally October). • P&OD and QuEST notified accordingly. • P&OD retains a record of RTU staff. 	<p>Monitoring of Validated Partner Teaching Staff – Annual Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Contact has oversight of Partner teaching staff. • Co-ordinated via Joint Programme Panels (JPPs) (normally April JPP). • Proposed changes to staffing (submitted via Validated New Staff proforma and CV). • The Partner Staff Annual Record (CD 7.6) is completed by the School (following confirmation by the JPP) and notified to School Board (normally October). • P&OD and QuEST notified accordingly.
Link Tutors <i>normally</i> attend relevant School Board of Examiners (SBEs).	Collaborative Contacts attend relevant Degree Award Boards (DABs).

*RTU staff (London only) must ensure UKVI criteria is met and all RTU staff are eligible to teach in the UK.

8 UWS STAFF INVOLVED WITH PARTNERSHIPS

The requirements associated with UWS staff involved with collaborative partnerships, either locally or overseas will depend on the nature of the collaborative model being adopted.

Differences in operational quality assurance arrangements between franchise and validated models are continually emerging as the demand for collaborative provision increases across the sector. Application of the UK Quality Code provides a baseline for use across the sector.

A designated 'UWS Link Tutor' is a recognised role for collaborative partnership models (Key Responsibilities and Person Specification exists – **CD 8.1**), but the activities of the Link Tutor is tailored more specifically to franchise models and does not align directly to that of validated models. For the validated model it is now more appropriate to have defined activities for the 'UWS Collaborative Contact'.

In principle the essence of both roles is similar, but operational differences make the details associated with each role distinct. A separate Key Responsibilities and Person Specification for the UWS Collaborative Contact is available (**CD 8.2**).

8.1 UWS LINK TUTORS (For Franchise Partnerships)

The UWS programme team will appoint one of its members as the UWS Link Tutor who will provide the main point of liaison with the partner institution. The partner institution will be asked to name a member of staff as Programme Coordinator for liaison purposes.

The Link Tutor plays a key role in supporting the collaborative partnership maintaining academic standards and protecting the student experience. They will take an active role in the quality assurance and academic development of programmes delivered through collaborative partners which lead to a UWS award. They are an essential part of the academic support offered to collaborating institutions. Activities will include course-

specific development of academic staff, pre and post moderation, providing academic advice to UWS and the collaborating institution, and monitoring teaching and assessment.

In recognition of the key role played by the Link Tutor, key responsibilities and a person specification have been developed to ensure consistency in the approach taken across schools.

In terms of annual monitoring, the Link Tutor will contribute to a designated section of the Collaborative Annual Report (for Franchise) to ensure there is regular reflection on the partnership and to ensure clear reporting and feedback through the collaborative annual report.

Further details on operational elements of Franchise partnership and the role of the Link Tutor can be found in the **Collaborative Operations Manual – Franchise Model “How to Guide”** (CD13.2).

8.2 UWS COLLABORATIVE CONTACTS (For Validated Partnerships)

The School will appoint one of its members as the UWS Collaborative Contact who will provide the main point of liaison with the partner institution. The partner institution will be asked to name a member of staff as Programme Coordinator for liaison purposes.

A validated award (collaborative) involves the granting of an award by UWS to be delivered by non-degree awarding bodies; this may involve UWS offering provision for a discipline out with those currently available at UWS. **The Collaborative Contact may not always be a subject expert.**

In such instances, Schools should take cognisance of the associated risks as outlined in the UK Quality Code, “Partnerships”. Guiding principle 2, states “*The resource needed to deliver a partnership arrangement should be assessed and confirmed at the outset as part of the preparation of the formal agreement. **The awarding organisation ensures that it has sufficient resources (physical and staffing) to fulfil its own obligations including having the knowledge, experience and intellectual capital to underwrite the relevant qualifications.** There should be mechanisms in place to confirm that the partner also has sufficient resources (physical and staffing) to fulfil their obligations. When delivery and assessment are delegated to a partner, the awarding organisation will retain oversight and approval of the academic staff appointed to the teaching team, where appropriate and as agreed in the formal agreement.*” With cognisance of this principle, Degree-awarding bodies that validate modules or programmes are required to ensure that they have in place (or can secure) the relevant disciplinary expertise to approve, monitor and, if necessary, deliver teaching, learning and assessment in the range of subject areas envisaged.

The Collaborative Contact plays a key role in supporting the collaborative partnership maintaining academic standards and protecting the student experience. Collaborative Contacts will take an active role in the quality assurance of programmes delivered through collaborative partners which lead to a UWS award. They are an essential part of the academic support offered to collaborating institutions. Activities will include taking an active role in ensuring quality assurance elements are fulfilled by participation in relevant forums (such as JPPs, DABs), providing academic advice to UWS and the collaborating institution, and monitoring teaching and assessment.

In terms of annual monitoring, the Collaborative Contact will contribute to a designated section of the Programme Annual Report for Validated) to ensure there is regular

reflection on the partnership and to ensure clear reporting and feedback through the Programme Annual Report.

An operational manual for Validated partnerships, which includes further details surrounding the role of the Collaborative Contact can be found in the **Collaborative Operations Manual – Validated Model “How to Guide”** (CD13.3).

9 SUPPORT FOR COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Staff Development opportunities can be organised through Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments (LTIE) and can be made available to all collaborative partners. Specific Staff Development sessions (where applicable) can be offered to raise awareness of the facilities offered by Student Services, University policies and regulations, quality assurance and enhancement, or any other specific sessions as deemed appropriate to facilitate the collaborative partnership. Online introductory training is currently under development. Staff at the collaborative partners may also be interested in taking modules from our Postgraduate Portfolio.

Where the collaborative programme is offered at UWS as well as at the partner institution, the University would **expect at least one member of the programme team to visit the site of delivery during the academic year** and, where appropriate, deliver elements of the programme, share good practice with local academic staff and address any issues partner staff wish to raise.

The partner will normally be visited annually by the Dean of School or nominee. At this visit the Dean of School will review the operation of the programme and discuss any relevant issues, tour the premises to ensure that the standard of facilities, equipment and other resources has not deteriorated from those considered as part of the initial visit and have been updated as appropriate. The visit will include a meeting with the full range of academic and administrative staff involved in delivery and administration of the programme and a meeting with the students in order to obtain face-to-face student feedback and discuss any issues with the students. Feedback from these visits should be reported to the relevant University forum; namely School-based forums, with notification to the Tertiary Partnership Group or the Internationalisation Strategy Group (as appropriate). Guidance on areas to be covered during annual site visits is available within the Collaborative Operations Manual or on request.

10 QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

PREAMBLE

Schools and their partners will wish to put in place mechanisms to review the development of the relationship and their knowledge of each other's operations and expectations. Staff in both institutions should seek to develop an understanding of the QAA/Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requirements and other academic infrastructure as external reference points.

In line with the Quality Code on Partnerships, *“Courses delivered through partnership arrangements should be subject to quality assurance procedures that are at least equivalent to those of courses delivered by the awarding organisation.”*

Quality Evaluation and Enhancement of UK Transnational education (QE-TNE)

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) encourages all Scottish degree awarding bodies engaging in TNE to participate in the Quality Evaluation and Enhancement of UK

Transnational education (QE-TNE) from AY 2023-24. [[SFC Guidance on Quality 2022-23 and 2023-24: Refresh. Paras 65-69](#)] Participation in QE-TNE will be a requirement for Scottish degree awarding bodies engaging in TNE from AY 2024-25. The cost of participation should be met by institutions, so Schools may wish to factor this cost in during their negotiations with their partners.

QAA International Quality Review (IQR)

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) is the UK's independent, not for profit, quality body which is trusted and recognised by governments in all four nations of the UK. The IQR process was developed to provide global opportunities for educational institutions to seek QAA International Membership and demonstrate effective quality assurance measured against international benchmarks. Full QAA membership is available exclusively to those institutions who achieve IQR accreditation from QAA. Accreditation provides recognition and affirmation that their provision complies with [European Standards and Guidelines \(ESG\)](#) and in line with the QAA expectations and guidelines within the sector. Whilst it is not a requirement for partners to have IQR recognition, achievement of such would provide increased confidence in the global positioning of those partners who have successfully achieved QAA IQR accreditation.

10.1 External Examiners and Assessment Boards

External examiners ensure the maintenance of academic standards of the collaborative programme irrespective of location or type of collaboration. All external examiners will be appointed by the University via the Academic Quality Committee (**AQC**) and will be required to submit an annual report (see Chapter 6 of the Quality Handbook).

The University operates a two-tier system of assessment boards: School Assessment Boards (SABs) which confirm the mark, grade and decision for each student on each module and to which School Assessment Board external examiners are appointed; and School Boards of Examiners (SBEs) to which a SBE's external examiner is appointed and considers the eligibility of students on a group of programmes to progress or gain an award.

In addition to SABs and SBEs the University also operates Degree Assessment Boards (DABs) to which a DAB external examiner is appointed. It is normally the responsibility of DABs to provide an overall judgement on student performance and the quality and standard of validated programmes delivered by the University's collaborative partners. In some circumstances, however, such as for newer collaborative partners, the University may decide to implement a SAB and SBE system, as detailed above, until it can be assured that the University's academic standards are being upheld. The system to be implemented for each collaborative partner will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The following types of Assessment Boards exist:

- School Assessment Boards (SAB) – Franchise
- School Board of Examiners (SBE) – Franchise
- Degree Assessment Boards (DAB) – Validated (may require SAB/SBE)

Where the programme is delivered at an institution overseas under the validated model, AQC may consider the institution's nominee for a local external examiner.

10.2 Annual Monitoring of Collaborative Provision

In line with the Quality Code on Partnerships, “*Appropriate monitoring and periodic review arrangements should be put in place in line with the awarding organisation’s quality assurance framework; details of such arrangements should be specified in the formal written agreement.*”

In terms of annual monitoring of collaborative partnerships, UWS adopts a robust internal monitoring system to safeguard its academic awards and ensure standards are appropriate across all areas of local delivery. Details relating to research collaborations are contained in section 9 ‘Research Collaborations’. Details pertaining to Franchise and Validated collaborative models are identified below. Further details are available in Chapter 7 of the Quality Handbook on ‘Enhancement and Annual Monitoring’.

10.3 FRANCHISE MODEL

(i) Collaborative Annual Report (CAR):

The Collaborative Annual Report (CAR) forms an important part of the university’s annual monitoring cycle for its franchise provision and will be used by UWS Programme Leaders to inform the Programme Monitoring Report (PMR).

A CAR on the operation of franchised collaborative programme(s) should be prepared by the partner institution in liaison with the Link Tutor; there is a designated section for completion by Link Tutor. The report should be **submitted annually** by end August and will be considered at the Divisional Programme Board as part of normal annual monitoring activities, usually in mid-November.

The template for the CAR should be circulated by the Link Tutor to the partner annually in June.

(ii) School Board of Examiners (SBE):

SBEs decide the eligibility of each candidate for progression between levels of study, and for awards of the University. This arrangement will apply to franchise provision.

Where a SBE is held at the University and all students considered as a single cohort, the external examiner should be provided with a copy of the appropriate **Collaborative Annual Report (CAR)** from the site of delivery by the School.

10.4 VALIDATED MODEL

(i) Programme Annual Report (PAR):

Where validation of another institution’s programme of study as a University of the West of Scotland award takes place; this is referred to as a Validated Collaborative Model. These students are students of the partner, but quality elements reside with the degree awarding body.

For such validated provision, UWS still maintains responsibility for monitoring that quality and standards are satisfactory, as well as monitoring elements of the student experience. It is therefore necessary for a Programme Annual Report to be completed by staff at the partner institution for consideration as part of our enhancement and annual monitoring processes.

Partners with validated collaborative models should submit a Programme Annual Report (PAR) by end August annually. The PAR should be prepared by the partner

institution in liaison with the UWS Collaborative Contact; there is also a designated section for completion by UWS Collaborative Contact. The PAR will be considered by the Joint Programme Panel (JPP) as noted overleaf.

(ii) Degree Assessment Board (DAB):

Degree Assessment Boards (DABs) combine the functions, responsibilities and authority of SABs and SBEs. The DAB confirms the mark, grade and decision for each student. The DAB also considers the performance of students on a validated programme and determines whether the student is eligible to progress to the next stage of their programme or to gain an award.

For programmes approved via a validated model, a **Degree Assessment Board (DAB)** (Remit - CD 9.3) will be established under the authority of UWS. The DAB will normally meet at least twice each academic session and include representation from the University and the partner. As noted above, in some circumstances, the University may decide to implement a SAB and SBE system, until it can be assured that the University's academic standards are being upheld. The system to be implemented for each collaborative partner will be decided on a case by case basis.

For programmes approved via the validated model, partners will be required to complete the **Programme Annual Report (PAR)** by end of August.

Joint Programme Panels (JPP):

The University retains ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of quality and academic standards for all its awards. A Joint Programme Panel (JPP) monitors the academic standards of a validated model and should be established to monitor the operation of validated collaborative programme(s) once they have been successfully approved. The full remit and membership of the **JPP (CD9.1)**, along with a series of JPP pro-formas are available for use as outlined within section 9 of the Collaborative Document Calendar.

The JPP will meet at least twice per academic year, normally in October and March and include membership from both institutions. As UWS retains ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of quality and academic standards for the validated module programme, the JPP plays a key role in monitoring the maintenance of standards, enhancing the student experience, reviewing the operation of collaborative partnership and facilitating a clear communication channel between the University and the partner.

(iii) Moderation Arrangements (Validated model)

In line with the UWS Assessment Handbook for Staff, Moderation should be undertaken and is required to ensure reliability and validity of assessment procedures, of the instruments of assessment and of the resulting student grades.

For validated collaborative arrangements, the responsibility for the standard of the UWS award remains with the University. Assurances that Moderation has been undertaken as appropriate are achieved as follows:

- External Examiners are still required to undertake external moderation.
- The partner will be required to carry out satisfactory internal moderation.
- The partner is required to provide evidence that internal and external moderation has taken place and should complete **Module Moderation Reports** for submission to the appropriate DAB and/or JPP (as appropriate).

11 COLLABORATIVE REVIEW PROCESS

PREAMBLE

UWS adopts a robust internal monitoring system to safeguard its academic awards and ensure standards are appropriate across all areas of delivery. In addition to normal annual monitoring processes (briefly outlined in section 10), collaborative reviews are undertaken periodically.

Formal review events normally occur every 4-5 years, regardless of the type of collaborative arrangement. The event will look in detail at the Collaborative Agreement, ensuring all matters are being implemented as intended and negotiate any proposed amendments to the agreement for the next period of collaboration.

Periodically, arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others are reviewed to ensure that they are achieving the intended objectives, that the organisations involved remain compatible, and to reassess the academic, financial, legal, ethical and reputational risks.

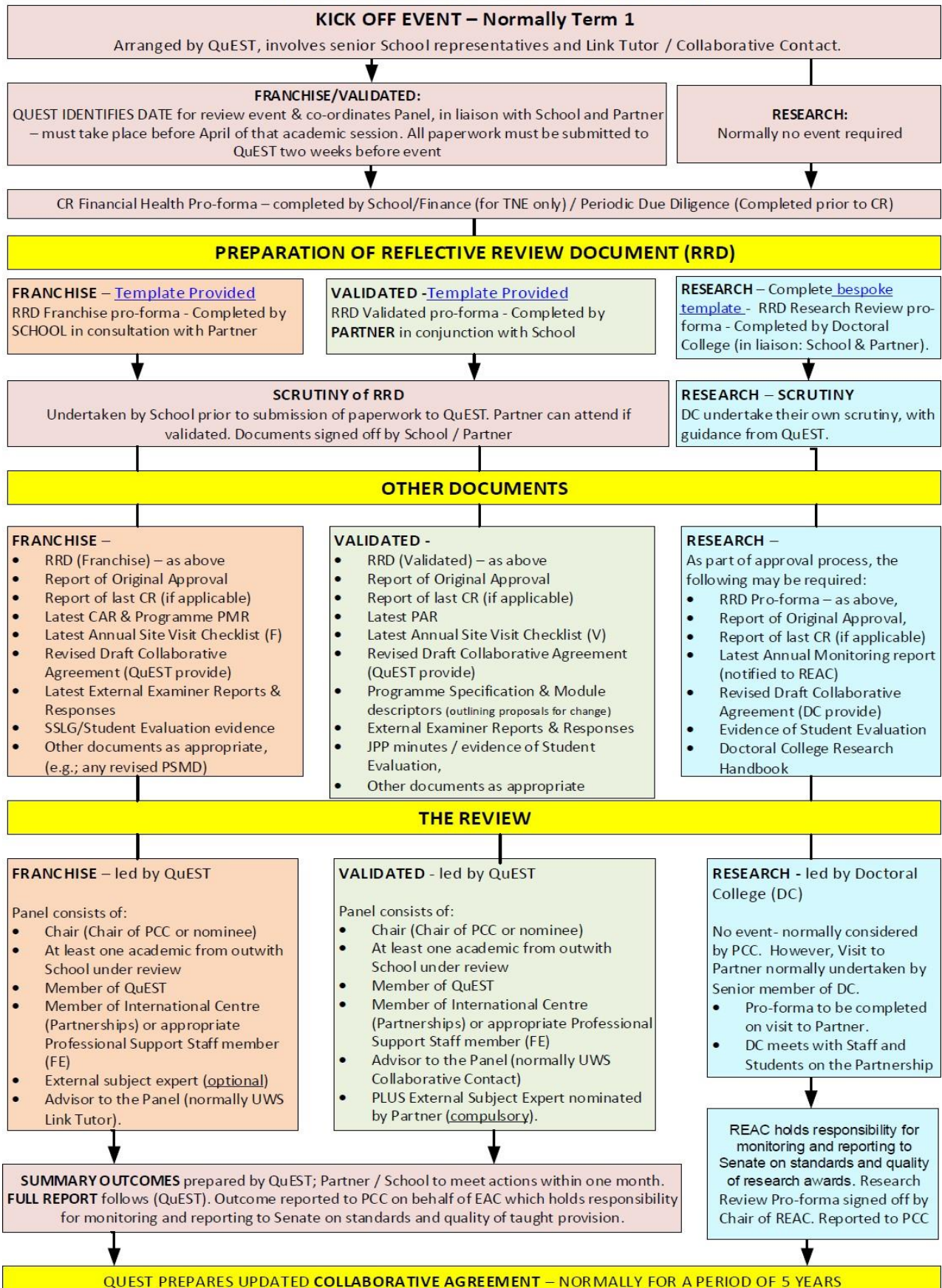
Whilst the criteria surrounding collaborative reviews hold similar principles for different models, there are slight differences. In particular validated models require re-approval of programmes at collaborative reviews, thereby requiring external subject input.

The collaborative review process for the three main collaborative models is outlined in the following CR Process Flowchart:

COLLABORATIVE REVIEW (CR) PROCESS

Applicable to Franchise / Validated / Research (TNE and FE)

CD11.1



Documents required for Collaborative Review are outlined below as detailed in the Collaborative Document Catalogue:

<u>Collaborative Review (CR): Pro-forma / Guidance</u>		Completed by:
CD 11.1	<u>Collaborative Review Process Chart</u> Provides an overview of the review process.	N/A
CD 11.2	<u>Reflective Review Pro-forma – Franchise</u>	School - Franchise
CD 11.3	<u>Reflective Review Pro-forma - Validated</u>	Partner - Validated
CD 11.4	<u>CR Research Pro-forma</u> To be completed by Doctoral College and signed off by REAC.	School – Research
CD 11.5	<u>Collaborative Review Desk-Based Approach Pro-forma</u> For situations where a full review not appropriate (e.g. Dual).	School – various models
CD 11.6	<u>CR Financial Health Assurance Pro-forma (TNE only)</u> A pro-forma to assess financial viability of a partnership in tandem with CR. Applicable for TNE only. For implementation from 2018/19 onwards.	School (TNE only)
CD 11.7	<u>Nomination from for External Subject Expert for re-approval Panel</u> Must be completed by Partner to nominate a Subject Expert. External subject experts are compulsory for Validated model, optional for Franchise model.	School – to nominate a subject expert

12 EXIT PROTOCOL FOR WITHDRAWING FROM A COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

The exit strategy will have been considered and developed as part of the due diligence process. From the Quality Code, *“The awarding organisation should have clear internal academic governance arrangements for partnerships. This includes where the authority resides for making decisions about the establishment and management of partnership arrangements and their closure, as well as the allocation of resources.”*

In the event of the University deciding to withdraw from a Collaborative Agreement a written rationale and recommendation will be required from the appropriate Dean of School to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Student Success).

Schools will be required to complete the relevant Withdrawal Pro-forma (outlined below) to reflect the current position of the agreement and to provide a rationale for withdrawal. This should be completed by the Dean of School and the necessary notification letters issued thereafter by the appropriate Vice-Chancellor. **(Withdrawal Pro-formas are currently under review)**

The following withdrawal pro-formas are available:

Guidance for Withdrawing from a Collaborative Partnership, and accompanying Pro-formas	
CD 12.1	Exit Protocol from withdrawing from a Collaborative Agreement (CA)
CD 12.2	Withdrawal Pro-forma 1 – No Students exist: To be completed when withdrawing a Partnership where there are no student commitments.
CD 12.3	Withdrawal Pro-forma 2 – Outstanding Commitment to Students: To be completed when for withdrawing from a Partnership where there are outstanding commitments to students.
CD 12.4	Letter - Notification to Partner 1: Partner withdrawal letter template – where no students exist /no currently running
CD 12.5	Letter - Notification to Partner 2: Partner withdrawal letter template – where outstanding commitments to students exist
CD 12.6	Letter - Notification to Students: Student withdrawal letter template – affected students (to notify of termination of agreement)

Residual obligations of both parties to students to enable them to complete their studies will be specified in general terms within the Collaborative Agreement and detailed arrangements will be drawn up by the School in consultation with the Deputy Principal/or Vice Principal as part of the due diligence.

Should a collaborative partner decide to terminate the Collaborative Agreement, written notice should be forwarded to the appropriate Dean of School in accordance with the terms of the Collaborative Agreement. The Dean of School will be responsible for informing the Deputy Principal/or Vice Principal.

13 REGISTER OF COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

The University maintains a register of all current Collaborative Provision leading to the awards of the University. This is held by QuEST and is available on request.

14 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A Memorandum of Understanding confirms the intention to establish a co-operative relationship between the University and the Partner Institution. The document reflects the interests of both institutions in developing links, which will widen opportunities and access for students and staff and create enhanced opportunities for both institutions.

A Memorandum of Understanding (CD4.5) is not legally binding and a full written agreement, signed by the University Secretary (or equivalent) of the University and the Partner will be required before any formal collaboration commences.

15 OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

15.1 OPERATIONAL MANUAL – FRANCHISE MODEL

A Collaborative Operations Manual – Franchise Model “How to Guide” (CD 13.2) is available as a source of operational guidance and support.

15.2 OPERATIONAL MANUAL – VALIDATED MODEL

A Collaborative Operations Manual – Validated Model “How to Guide” (CD 13.3) will shortly be available as a source of operational guidance and support.