

**Student Learning & Experience Committee**

|  |
| --- |
| **Chapter C:**  **Course Design, Development and Validation of Teesside University Taught Provision** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Document Owner:** Student Learning & Academic Registry  **Version number:** **4.2**  **Effective date:** September 2023 (Academic Year 2023-24)  **Date of next review:**  July 2024  *This document is part of the University Quality Framework, which governs the University’s academic provision.* |

**C O N T E N T S**

[PREFACE 1](#_Toc151477476)

[1. INTRODUCTION 3](#_Toc151477477)

[2. NEW COURSE APPROVAL 4](#_Toc151477478)

[2.1 The Course Lifecycle 4](#_Toc151477479)

[2.2 Course Approval and Review Schedule 4](#_Toc151477480)

[2.3 Course Approval Planning 5](#_Toc151477481)

[2.4 Course Periodic Review 6](#_Toc151477482)

[2.4.1 Extension to the Course Approval Period 7](#_Toc151477483)

[2.4.2 Periodic Review for Suspended Course Title(s) or Courses that do not recruit 7](#_Toc151477484)

[2.4.3 Request to Re-Open a Closed Award 7](#_Toc151477485)

[Diagram 1: Common Stages for all course proposals and approval processes at a glance: 8](#_Toc151477486)

[3. GUIDANCE ON COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT 9](#_Toc151477487)

[3.1 Future Facing Learning 9](#_Toc151477488)

[3.2 Academic Enhancement Framework (AEF) 10](#_Toc151477489)

[3.3 A Course-First Approach 10](#_Toc151477490)

[3.4 The Curriculum Road Map 10](#_Toc151477491)

[3.5 Supporting a Course-First Approach: Stakeholders - Roles and Responsibilities 11](#_Toc151477492)

[3.6 Role of Students in the Course Design and Development 14](#_Toc151477493)

[3.7 Embedding University Strategies 15](#_Toc151477494)

[3.8 Guidance for Course Teams 15](#_Toc151477495)

[3.9 Use of Variance in Course Design 15](#_Toc151477496)

[3.10 Courses Utilising a Non-Standard Number of Credits 16](#_Toc151477497)

[3.11 Developing an Additional Pathway(s) within an existing Teesside University Award 16](#_Toc151477498)

[3.12 Award Naming Conventions 17](#_Toc151477499)

[3.13 Course Design Briefing (CDB) – Digital Empowerment 17](#_Toc151477500)

[4. CHOICE OF VALIDATION ROUTE 18](#_Toc151477501)

[4.1 Risk Based Approach to Validation 18](#_Toc151477502)

[4.1.1 High Risk Activity 18](#_Toc151477503)

[4.1.2 Medium Risk Activity 19](#_Toc151477504)

[4.1.3 Low Risk Activity 19](#_Toc151477505)

[4.2 Mitigation of Risk 19](#_Toc151477506)

[5. PLANNING THE COURSE APPROVAL/periodic Review EVENT 21](#_Toc151477507)

[5.1 Approval of Panel Members 21](#_Toc151477508)

[5.2 Standard Validation Event Panel Constitution 21](#_Toc151477509)

[5.3 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies 22](#_Toc151477510)

[5.4 Panel Constitution for an Abridged Course Approval Panel, the Quality Assurance Authorisation Panel (Low risk only) 22](#_Toc151477511)

[5.5 Criteria for Internal and External School Chairing of Course Approval 23](#_Toc151477512)

[5.6 Appointment and Training of Validation Event Chairs (including QAAP) and Panel Members 23](#_Toc151477513)

[5.7 Selection Criteria of External Panel Members – Externality 24](#_Toc151477514)

[5.8 UK Home Office Visas & Immigration (UKVI) Requirements for External Panel Members 24](#_Toc151477515)

[5.9. Course Validation Event Documentation 24](#_Toc151477516)

[5.10 Supporting Validation Evidence File 26](#_Toc151477517)

[6. COURSE FIRST CRITICAL READ EVENT OF THE COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS 27](#_Toc151477518)

[6.1 Course First Critical Read Event 27](#_Toc151477519)

[6.1.1 Provisional Approval of the Module Diet 27](#_Toc151477520)

[6.2 Course First Critical Read Event Panel Constitution 28](#_Toc151477521)

[7. GUIDANCE AND PROTOCOL OF THE validation EVENTs 29](#_Toc151477522)

[7.1 Panel Member Guidance 29](#_Toc151477523)

[7.2 Course Team Presentation (in-person or virtual event) 29](#_Toc151477524)

[7.3 Course(s) to be delivered by Online Learning 29](#_Toc151477525)

[7.4 Role of Students in the Course Periodic Review Event 30](#_Toc151477526)

[7.5 Private Meetings during the Panel Event 30](#_Toc151477527)

[7.6 Outcomes from the Course Periodic Review Event (only) 30](#_Toc151477528)

[7.7 Outcomes of the Course Validation Event 31](#_Toc151477529)

[7.8 Conclusion - Date of Periodic Review or Interim Review, Modes of Delivery, Number of Intakes and Location 32](#_Toc151477530)

[7.9 Post Course Approval Event 32](#_Toc151477531)

[7.10 Conclusion Course Validation Event Report 32](#_Toc151477532)

[7.11 Conclusion and Sign-Off Process for Approval of Course(s) Event 33](#_Toc151477533)

**GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **AEF** | Academic Enhancement Framework |
| **AFP** | Assessment and Feedback Policy |
| **AR** | Academic Registrar |
| **AWMF** | Academic Workload Management Framework |
| **CAD** | Course Approval Document |
| **CAMS** | Credit Accumulation & Modular Scheme |
| **CDB** | Course Design Briefing |
| **CEN** | Course Evaluation Narrative |
| **CLDPE** | Contemporary Learning Design Practice Event |
| **CME** | Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement |
| **DAP** | Department for Professional Apprenticeships |
| **EPA** | End Point Assessment |
| **ESFA** | Education and Skills Funding Agency |
| **FCD** | Finance & Commercial Development |
| **FFL** | Future Facing Learning |
| **FHEQ** | Framework for Higher Education Qualifications |
| **PAs** | Professional Apprenticeships |
| **HEI** | Higher Education Institute |
| **HOD** | Head of Department |
| **IfATE** | Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education |
| **KSBs** | Knowledge, Skills & Behaviours |
| **LEO** | Longitudinal Education Outcomes |
| **LTAS** | Learning Teaching Assessment Strategy |
| **LTSP** | Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan |
| **MVF** | Module Verification Form |
| **NSS** | National Student Survey |
| **OfS** | Office for Students |
| **OL** | Online Learning |
| **PD** | Portfolio Development |
| **PL** | Principal Lecturer |
| **PR** | Periodic Review |
| **PSRB** | Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body |
| **QAA** | Quality Assurance Agency |
| **QAAP** | Quality Assurance Authorisation Panel |
| **RLO** | Reading Lists Online |
| **RPL** | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| **SAPs** | Standard Administration Procedures |
| **SL** | Senior Lecturer |
| **SLAR (AD)** | Student Learning & Academic Registry (Academic Development) |
| **SLAR (APR)** | Student Learning & Academic Registry (Academic Policy and Regulation) |
| **SLAR (DX)** | Student Learning & Academic Registry (Digital Transformation) |
| **SLAR (QAV)** | Student Learning & Academic Registry (Quality Assurance and Validation) |
| **SLEC** | Student Learning & Experience Committee |
| **SLS** | Student & Library Services |
| **SRM** | Student Recruitment and Marketing |
| **SSLESC** | School Student Learning & Experience Sub-Committee |
| **STA** | Subject to Approval |
| **TNE** | Transnational Education |
| **TU** | Teesside University |
| **UCs** | University Certificates |
| **UDL** | Universal Design for Learning |
| **UKVI** | UK Home Office Visas & Immigration |

# PREFACE

The guidance in this document provides detailed information about the University’s processes and requirements in relation to Course Design, Development and Approval (validation) of new academic courses on and off-campus, including collaborative provision.

Excellence in learning and teaching at Teesside University (TU) is defined and empowered through Future Facing Learning (FFL) and driven by the Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan (LTSP). Through the strategic alignment of academic practice and enabling infrastructure, FFL generated an unprecedented step change to our institutional approach to enhancing learning and teaching and forms the foundation of impactful curriculum development and design. The Academic Enhancement Framework (AEF) provides a mechanism through which Course Teams can engage meaningfully with Future Facing Learning and other key strategic themes relating to the student experience.

There are two routes to validation, these are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ROUTE A:**  The standard, **normal** process for a new course (award) which is considered by a convened Validation Panel and Event | **OR** | **ROUTE B:**  Undertaken, by **negotiation**, with Student Learning & Academic Registry following an assessment of risk, an accelerated fast-track route is followed. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Collaborative Arrangements**  Awards to be considered for Collaborative delivery with **existing** partners, both Route A or Route B can be considered as required to manage, mitigate, or monitor the risk associated with the course proposal. |

The document also provides guidance on the University requirements for undertaking a Course Periodic Review, normally at intervals of 6 years but can be scheduled earlier than the agreed PR date set at the previous Validation Event.

The process for Periodic Review is distinct from Course Approval, the review incorporates the philosophy of Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) of undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research, and standalone named short award provision leading to a Teesside University (TU) award (refer to[**Quality Framework Chapter D1**](https://www.tees.ac.uk/docs/DocRepo/Quality%20framework/D1%20-%20Continuous%20Monitoring%20Enhancement.doc)).

CME is the process the University uses to assure academic standards are maintained and to enhance the quality of learning opportunities for students. The process is used to consider the student experience at a course level, referencing key student satisfaction indicators, for example, the National Student Survey (NSS), the Graduate Outcome Survey, the results of module evaluation, and feedback from Course Boards and academic staff. In addition, the process incorporates the views of external stakeholders, such as External Examiners and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

For Partners with validated courses, the equivalent of the University CME process will be included in the Partner’s own course monitoring process.

As part of the review process, the University advocates a **’Course-First Approach’** to the re-development of curricula. This approach and how courses meet its principal considerations to enable a successful student teaching and learning experience are detailed in this guidance.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Course Design, Development and Approval (validation) process is to establish that all new taught courses are academically sustainable and that academic standards are clearly defined to ensure courses deliver a high-quality student experience and offer students the best opportunity to learn, develop and succeed regardless of the delivery location.

The purpose of the Periodic Review process is to ensure that all taught courses remain academically sustainable, that academic standards continue to deliver a high-quality student experience and opportunities for success (i.e. NSS, award classifications and student destinations) have been maintained or exceeded.

In all cases the University adheres to the guiding principles for [**Course Design and Development from the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (November 2018)**](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/advice-and-guidance/course-design-and-development). They provide a concise expression of the fundamental practices of the higher education sector, based on the experience of a wide range of providers.

Teesside University has established flexible quality processes to manage the validation, review and modification of courses and modules. The approach within the Quality Framework can be delivered through an in-person, virtual meeting, or desk-based process.

The University is committed to internal and external peer consultation, the involvement of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), and the national regulatory requirements specified by the OfS for maintaining quality and standards (Conditions B1-B5), and those set out in the [**Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code** **for Higher Education**](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code), in addition to Teesside University key strategies and policies.

**The guidance contained in this document sets out the Course Design, Development and validation procedures for:**

* **Standard Route A and**
* **Route B provision**

The underpinning guidance and procedures supporting the delivery of these routes are provided in Appendices for those directly engaged with this activity. The administrative details supporting the validation processes are available from Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV).

# 2. NEW COURSE APPROVAL

### 2.1 The Course Lifecycle

The University undertakes the following stages to approve, monitor and review courses:

|  |
| --- |
| **Stage 1** The Planning Cycle annually reviews the academic  portfolio of provision and new course proposals. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Stage 2** Portfolio Development (PD)/Business Case and Course Costing:  the title approval of new title(s), in principle. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Stage 3** The Course Approval Event, which is the responsibility of the  Student Learning & Experience Committee (SLEC). |

|  |
| --- |
| **Stage 4** Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) of courses,  including course modifications. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Stage 5** Course Review is normally undertaken on a periodic 6-yearly cycle (PR). |

The key components covered by this guidance for Course Design, Development and Approval relate to **Stage 3** of the course lifecycle above, which are:

* The design of new courses.
* The approval procedures (validation) for new courses.
* Information relating to Course Periodic Review relates to **Stage 5** of the course lifecycle above.

As the procedures for the validation of new Course Design, Development, and Approval are similar for on and off campus, including collaborative provision, these are addressed together. Where differences in aspects of the process occur, this is clearly identified and differentiated.

The processes identified in this document apply to all University-based taught awards that are credit bearing. For Postgraduate Certificates and University Certificate Awards (UCs), please refer to the separate guide on **Short Awards** or **Chapter E** if the short award involves a partner.

### 2.2 Course Approval and Review Schedule

Following the approval (Stage 2 of the course lifecycle above), in principle, of the business case/new title(s) through the portfolio development process, new course proposals will be notified to Student Learning & Academic Registry (Quality Assurance and Validation) (SLAR (QAV)) and included in the Annual Validation Planner and Record of Decisions List on behalf of SLEC.

SLAR (QAV) manage the Annual Validation Planner. Event dates will be agreed upon through negotiation between the School (or lead School in the case of jointly delivered courses), Partner and SLAR (QAV).

Following Approval, all courses will normally be subject to review following a 6-yearly cycle. Courses due for Periodic Review will be automatically included in the Validation Schedule.

|  |
| --- |
| **Note:** It is permissibleforSchools and Course Teams to request early Periodic Reviews of courses for a variety of purposes |

### 2.3 Course Approval Planning

Once title approval has been granted, the Course Approval involves the following phases:

|  |
| --- |
| Planning the Validation Event – including the development of the Preliminary Meeting: Validation Arrangements – (**C-SAPs- Annex 1**). |

|  |
| --- |
| Organising the Course Approval Event and defining the documentation, panel requirements and deadlines for meeting documentation requirements. |

|  |
| --- |
| For Partners, the course approval location will be determined by SLAR (QAV) in conjunction with the School and Partner. A Link Tutor will be assigned to work with Partner colleagues to support the course approval process. |

|  |
| --- |
| Arranging the dates for the Course Design Briefing (CDB) |

|  |
| --- |
| School and/or collaborative process for reviewing documentation [Course First Critical Read Event] including Provisional Approval of the Diet of Modules – see **Section 6 below**. |

|  |
| --- |
| Validation Event (undertaken on behalf of the Student Learning and Experience Committee (SLEC)). |

|  |
| --- |
| School and Student Learning & Academic Registry Officer led quality check of the Validation Event report for accuracy and completeness. |
|  |
| Chair of the Validation Event to review final course documentation and confirm amendments have been made as appropriate. |

|  |
| --- |
| Confirmation of approval of the Validation Event report by the Academic Registrar (AR) or nominee on behalf of the SLEC. List of approvals provided to SLEC for information) – see **Section 7.9 below**. |

### 2.4 Course Periodic Review

Course Periodic Review involves the following phases:

|  |
| --- |
| Planning the Periodic Review Event – including the development of the Preliminary Meeting: Validation Arrangements - (**C-SAPs- Annex 1**). |

|  |
| --- |
| Organising the Periodic Review Event and defining the documentation, panel and deadline requirements (QAAP should consider Short Awards). |

|  |
| --- |
| **Franchised Courses:** Throughout the Periodic Review process Course Leaders must consult and incorporate views from Partners in all locations approved to deliver the award.  Location approval for all Collaborative Partners will be re-approved in conjunction with the Periodic Review process.  **Validated Courses:** For Partners the course review location will be determined by Student Learning & Academic Registry (Quality Assurance and Validation) (SLAR (QAV)) in conjunction with the School and Partner.  A Link Tutor will be assigned to work with partner colleagues to support the review process. |

|  |
| --- |
| Arranging the dates for the Course Design Event (CDE). |

|  |
| --- |
| School and or collaborative process for reviewing documentation [**Course First** **Critical Read Event**] including the Provisional Approval of the Diet of Modules – see **Section 5 below** (not applicable to short awards). |

|  |
| --- |
| Provisionally Re-approve the Diet of Modules – see **Section 5**. |

|  |
| --- |
| Periodic Review Event (or QAAP for Short Awards) (undertaken on behalf of the Student Learning and Experience Committee (SLEC)). |

|  |
| --- |
| School and Student Learning & Academic Registry Officer led quality check of the Validation Event report for accuracy and completeness. |
|  |
| Chair of the Periodic Review Event to review final course documentation and confirm amendments have been made as appropriate. |

|  |
| --- |
| Confirmation of Periodic Review approval of the Validation Event Report by the Academic Registrar (AR) or nominee on behalf of the SLEC. List of approvals provided to SLEC for information) – see **Section 6.11**. |

### 2.4.1 Extension to the Course Approval Period

Schools wishing to request an extension to the approval period for an existing course (including UC awards) must have approval by SLEC, via submission of the form **C-Annex 3**. Extensions are granted for exceptional reasons and normally limited to one academic year.

### 2.4.2 Periodic Review for Suspended Course Title(s) or Courses that do not recruit

Award title(s) suspended for two years and re-opened to recruitment after this suspension period or courses that do not recruit for **two years**, will be subject to a Periodic Review, or under certain circumstances Approval, to ensure the award(s) remains:

* Allied to the School/Partner academic portfolio and continues to be viable.
* Demonstrates continuing currency and validity, and
* Continue to deliver a high-quality student experience.

### 2.4.3 Request to Re-Open a Closed Award

In instances where Schools/ Partners request an approved award to be re-opened (following formal closure within one year), which may be a result of an administrative error, or a new market becoming available for the award. If there are no changes to the award from the original validation and has been ‘set up’ on SITS, then this can be managed by submission of a request to SLAR (QAV) at **QAV@tees.ac.uk**, requesting a re-opening, providing the following information:

* Awards SITS (MCR) Code
* Award Title
* Date Closed
* Rationale for re-opening the Award
* Date to be Re-opened

There may be occasions where it might be necessary to reconsider the course(s) through a Periodic Review. This decision would be made on a case-by-case basis and in negotiation with the relevant Academic School.

**Diagram 1** provides an outline of the key elements involved in the validation process.

# Diagram 1: Common Stages for all course proposals and approval processes at a glance:

|  |
| --- |
| **Course Proposals**  Course proposals secure Strategic Portfolio Development (PD)/Business Case/Course Costing sign off approval in principle. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Planning Meeting**  SLAR (QAV) arranges a planning meeting with the Course Leader/School and Partner at which the Validation Route is selected.  School/ Partner identifies Course Team CPD training needs.  SLAR (QAV) arranges administrative set-up and validation Panel constitution. |

|  |
| --- |
| **SLAR (QAV) confirms**   * Definitive documentation requirements for Route A or Route B Validation Event via the Preliminary Meeting: Validation Arrangement. * Publication of development calendar (timescale) leading to the Validation Event. * SLAR (QAV) staff and central department support for course development/writing day(s) is confirmed. * School/Course Team nominations for External Panel members. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Consultation with Stakeholders**  Proposing Course Team consults and captures the views of the following for proposed new or modified courses:  ►Employers ►PSRB ►Students and Alumni  ►Internal and external specialists (including those at partner providers). |

|  |
| --- |
| **Course Design Event (CDEB) & Contemporary Learning Design Practice Event (CLDPE)**  Proposing Course Team is supported to develop a high impact curriculum, aligned with Future Facing Learning and supported by the Academic Enhancement Framework, including support with the integration of digital learning into course design and student experience. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Confirmation of MVFs**  Course Leader/PL Programmes/Resources meeting with Central Timetabling to confirm MVFs. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Course First Critical Read Event Stage**  School/Course Team submits draft course documentation to SLAR (QAV) (2 week/s before) for the Course First Critical Read Event stage date.  SLAR (QAV) produces a record of outcomes and follows up on actions and amendments required to documentation. |

|  |
| --- |
| **School confirms Course Documentation updated from Course First Critical Read**  Proposing Course Team proofread and check the documentation to confirm its readiness for submission (2 weeks prior) to the Course Validation Event. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Course and Diet Validation Event**  SLAR (QAV) communicates the agenda and Panel constitution.  SLAR (QAV) Officer produces draft validation conditions and event report with a deadline for meeting conditions and School/ Partner sign-off. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Sign-off**  AR/nominee on behalf of the Student Learning & Experience Committee (SLEC).  SLAR (QAV) submits a list of validation reports to SLEC for information.  SLAR (QAV) confirms course approval to School, Finance & Commercial Development (FCD) and Student Recruitment & Marketing (SRM).  ►Subject to Approval (STA) flag removed. |

# 3. GUIDANCE ON COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Future Facing Learning



Future Facing Learning (FFL) is the distinctive pedagogic approach adopted by Teesside University. Future Facing Learning provides students with the skills, knowledge and tools to thrive in complex and uncertain futures and achieve sustainable success within the global workplace.

Future Facing Learning consists of the following core themes:

* **RESEARCH ACTIVE:** Our students encounter the grand challenges of our time through research and professional practice.
* **FUTURE READY:** High quality, future ready graduates are developed through our commitment to industry relevance and entrepreneurship.
* **GLOBALLY CONNECTED:** Our students are globally connected through an internationalised curriculum and learning experience.
* **SOCIALLY AND ETHICALLY ENGAGED:** Our students engage meaningfully with social and ethical issues from local, national, and international perspectives.
* **DIGITALLY EMPOWERED:** Our students are digitally empowered with the skills and tools to deliver global impact.

### 3.2 Academic Enhancement Framework (AEF)

The [**Academic Enhancement Framework**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/SD2017/SitePages/Academic%20Enhancement%20Framework.aspx) (AEF) provides the structure through which Future Facing Learning, and other key strategic priorities, are embedded within academic practice. The AEF consists of the following themes:

1. Digitally Empowered
2. Future Ready
3. Globally Connected
4. Research Active
5. Socially & Ethically Engaged
6. Student Success
7. Student Voice
8. Transitions
9. Wellbeing

Each theme is the subject of an AEF matrix which provides a set of key principles and outlines the trajectory from expectation through to excellence.

### 3.3 A Course-First Approach

The University advocates a Course-First Approach to the design and development of curricula. The approach places emphasis on the overall coherence and connectedness of learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment practices at the scale of the course. Such a course-focused view helps to frame curriculum and assessment design to fully consider the learning journey and experience of the student. There are three core considerations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | **Approach(es):** Learning, teaching and assessment approaches and methods selected for best fit with course learning outcomes, including knowledge/skills development and learner autonomy. |
| **B** | **Balance:** Course diet includes a variety of modes and methods of learning, teaching and assessment, providing an appropriate mix of formative and summative activities, paying particular attention to the quantity and timing of assessment to promote student learning development. |
| **C** | **Coherence:** Alignment of assessment, learning outcomes and teaching and learning activities is established and clearly communicated. Learning and teaching practices are consistent across levels of study and assessment and feedback processes are designed to create connectivity between modules and tasks across and along the entire course (vertically and horizontally). |

### 3.4 The Curriculum Road Map

The curriculum roadmap is designed to facilitate and support a course-focused approach to curriculum design and development, refer to

**C-Appendix 2 - Guidance for Course Teams for the Validation of Courses**.

As stated above, the course-focused approach emphasises the overall coherence and connectedness of learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment practices at the scale of the course. It requires a strategic, collaborative and planned approach by Course Teams to ‘design in’ how the elements that make up the student learning and assessment experience support each other and are structured to help guide students’ progression towards the attainment of course learning outcomes.

### 3.5 Supporting a Course-First Approach: Stakeholders - Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of key members of staff involved in the process of developing new awards/courses are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stakeholders** | **Role and responsibility** |
| School Strategic Management Team | with responsibility for shaping and defining the School curriculum portfolio offer; communicating the offer and timeframe for new curriculum development and review. |
| Head of Department (HOD) | has responsibility for leading, resourcing and supporting the subject Course Team to deliver the development of new curricula. |
| PL Learning and Teaching/PL Programmes | with the responsibility to support the Course Team in embedding good learning and teaching practices, meeting documentation requirements and timetabling, e.g., Module Verification Forms (MVF)/UTREG. |
| Subject Course Team | has responsibility for ensuring the curricular development and design of awards are carried out in a timely manner and in line with University guidance for the approval of courses, engaging with appropriate internal academic regulations, good practice guides and external reference sources. |
| Partners | working with the assigned Link Tutor, responsible for supporting the collaborative Course Team to ensure new courses are designed and approved in accordance with University practices and processes. |

**Supplementary members supporting the development and design of new courses are:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stakeholders** | **Role and responsibility** |
| Student Learning & Academic Registry (Quality Assurance and Validation) | will work closely with the School and Course Team where appropriate, providing administrative support, for instance, from access and uploading module templates and the allocation of external panel members to preparation and support for the Course First Critical Read Event Stage of the validation process in a timely manner. |
| Student Learning & Academic Registry (Academic Development) | provide the Course Team with a Course Design session which provides advice and support around a course-first approach to curriculum design. The session is designed to encourage an integrated, ‘course-first’ approach embedding TU’s Future Facing Learning themes and those other themes encompassed in the Academic Enhancement Framework within the curriculum design process. Colleagues will work with the Curriculum Roadmap resource to ensure course design discussions are appropriately framed and aligned to core policies and guidance. There are a number of Curriculum Design Cards which will be discussed and used to explore and define features, approaches and strategies for courses. All resources relating to the above can be found on the SLAR unity site [**here**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fdepartments%2F058%2FShared%20Documents%2FCourse%20Design%20Events%2FCourse%20Design%20Event&FolderCTID=0x012000975260B5117AB54BA3B9D3BFF4B43F62&View=%7B96AD563F%2D9376%2D4C21%2D94B6%2D546D2D5FD68F%7D). |
| Student Learning & Academic Registry (Digital Transformation) | after the Course Design Briefing, facilitated by the Digital Transformation Team (SLAR), the Contemporary Learning Design Practices Event is a space for Course Teams to reimagine their course, utilising the Digital Learning Design Framework & Toolkit to underpin the integration of digital technologies in meaningful ways into their curriculum and student experience.  As part of this session (typically 1.5 hours in duration), we will help address the points above, as well as working together to:  Help develop a methodology for seamless and coherent integration of digital solutions; identifying factors to consider when making decisions about what activities are best served online and what are best on campus; how you make that decision.  Support in working through suggestions and key questions within each section of the Framework, informing the course design process, structured around student centeredness, providing a deep, analytical and robust design tool for the design of learning from a student journey perspective, thereby developing and maintaining an academic quality offer that is rigorous and high-quality.  Create space within the session for the Course Team to consider their own individual developmental needs. |
| Student Learning & Academic Registry (Academic Policy and Regulations) | will work with School and Course Team, where appropriate, to provide advice and guidance on the application of assessment regulations (u/g, p/g, variance). |
| Central Timetabling (only applicable to TU awards delivered on main campus and Darlington Campus) | will support and advise Course Teams/Module Leaders on the preparation/completion of the course(s) timetable/MVF for the Course First Critical Read Event Stage. |
| Student and Library Services (SLS) | the **Student Futures** **Service** (TU provision only) can support the Course Team with market intelligence on careers, labour market analysis and meeting Future Ready graduate expectations. |
| Finance and Commercial Development (FCD) | can support the School/Course Team with producing the Course Costing template required for the development of all new courses. |
| Student and Library Services (SLS) | **Disability Services** can support the Course Team and, as a minimum, should be consulted on providing expert advice on developing inclusive and alternative assessment strategy, i.e., teaching methods and assessments for students with disabilities via the School Disability Co-ordinator.  The **Academic Librarian** can help to integrate process and personal skills development into curricular content, preparing indicative resource Reading Lists Online (RLO) and embedding academic skills at various levels of the course. |
| Student Recruitment and Marketing (SRM) | will provide the market intelligence to support the business case of course approval and the publication of marketing material. |
| Students Union | can support Course Teams to facilitate the student voice and in the co-creation of curricula. |

### 3.6 Role of Students in the Course Design and Development

A key principle of course approval activity is the engagement of students. Under the QAA revised Quality Code, student engagement is listed within core and common practices.

|  |
| --- |
| Under **core** practices, it states:  ‘*The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their education experience*.’ |

|  |
| --- |
| While the following is a **common** practice in the Code:  ‘*The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of their educational experience*.’ |

The Student Voice forms a core theme of the Academic Enhancement Framework.

Therefore, the Course Approval Document (CAD) is expected to incorporate feedback and evidence from students on the design/co-design and development of the course(s). Existing and former students (alumni) should also be consulted, where available, via focus groups or on-line mechanisms etc. Consultation with current students can be facilitated via the Student Representative Scheme.

The Course Journal/Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement reports and Course Evaluation Narrative (CEN) is expected to incorporate feedback and evidence from students on the design/co-design and review of the course(s). Existing and former students (alumni) should also be consulted, where available via focus groups or on-line mechanisms etc. Consultation with current students can be facilitated via the Student Representative Scheme.

### 3.7 Embedding University Strategies

Internally, every course must reflect the key features of the University Strategies, which are as follows:

* **[Teesside 2027](https://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/about/public_information/mission.cfm)**

* [**Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan**](https://www.tees.ac.uk/docs/DocRepo/Quality%20framework/Learning%20and%20Teaching%20Strategy.doc)

* **[Enterprise and Business Engagement Strategic Plan](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/dae/Pages/Welcome.aspx)**
* **[Research Strategy and Policy](https://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/research/research_strategy.cfm)**
* **International Strategic Plan**

* **[Placement and Internship Policy and Procedure](https://www.tees.ac.uk/docs/index.cfm?folder=Student%20regulations&name=New%20or%20Revised%20Regs%20(since%20September%202019)&folder_id=52)**
* **Principles of Academic Delivery (Undergraduate & TU London Courses only)**
* **Online Learning Design Framework and Toolkit,** (co-developed with Jisc) to support the high impact course design and student experience through digital solutions, available via the Contemporary Learning Design Practice Events.

The following internal academic frameworks should be consulted:

* [**Credit Accumulation & Module Scheme**](https://www.tees.ac.uk/docs/DocRepo/Quality%20framework/CAMS.doc) (CAMS)
* [**Assessment and Feedback Policy**](https://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/about/public_information/quality_framework.cfm) (AFP)
* [**Assessment Regulations**](https://www.tees.ac.uk/docs/index.cfm?folder=student%20regulations&name=Assessment%20Regulations) (undergraduate/post-graduate)
* [**Credit Level Descriptors**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/Shared%20Documents/Course%20Design%20Events/Course%20Design%20Event/University%20Credit-Level-Descriptors.pdf), utilising the Generic Marking Criteria (see [**Assessment and Feedback Policy**](https://extra.tees.ac.uk/sites/publicdocuments/Legal%20and%20Governance%20Services/Assessment%20and%20Feedback%20Policy.pdf)) and

* **[Teesside University Dual Awards Framework](https://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/about/public_information/quality_framework.cfm)** (where applicable).

### 3.8 Guidance for Course Teams

Course Teams will need to refer to the **Guidance for Course Teams for the Validation of Courses** (see **C-Appendix 2**), when developing courses/or when employing existing awards to offer courses to specific markets, e.g., Accelerated Degrees, Professional Apprenticeships L4-L7. Exemplar documentation to assist Course Teams are available from SLAR (QAV).

**Module Guidance** is available to support the initial design, approval, and ongoing review. This includes specific guidance in relation to the Assessment Regulations (2014/2022), implications for learning and teaching, and assessment design. This guidance is contained within the **Good Practice Guide for Module Leaders on Module Design and Development** (see **C-Appendix 3**).

### 3.9 Use of Variance in Course Design

The University operates Institution-wide Assessment Regulations to ensure professional academic judgement about standards and performance are exercised so that all students are treated fairly, comparatively, and with consistency, regardless of School, Institution, subject or course.

However, it is recognised that occasionally, and under specific conditions, some variance to the Regulations may be necessary. Any such variance will be exceptional and must be fully justified to, and approved by, SLEC. Variance to the Regulations will normally only be approved to meet the specified requirements or expectations of PSRBs or other such external bodies that accredit awards of the University.

Approved variances are time limited and normally linked to the approval period of the course. Where a course is due for review and the team wishes to retain an existing variance(s) and/or add variances, new applications will need to be made using the appropriate proforma.

Further guidance can be found on the [**Variance Procedure for Assessment Regulations**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/AS2017/SitePages/Variance%20Procedure%20for%20Assessment%20Regulations.aspx) website or consult directly with colleagues in Student Learning & Academic Registry (Academic Policy and Regulation) (SLAR (APR)).

### 3.10 Courses Utilising a Non-Standard Number of Credits

The standard number of credits and levels are defined in CAMS, e.g. 120 L4, 120 L5 and 120 L6 for a typical undergraduate course. However, these describe the minimum requirements.

Where a course is proposed that exceeds these standards and there are possible implications in relation to the assessment and progression regulations, further guidance should be sought from the SLAR (APR) Team.

In addition, all modules should have a mark or grade attached to enable classification/grading to be calculated. Where this is not the case, again guidance should be sought from the SLAR (APR) Team.

### 3.11 Developing an Additional Pathway(s) within an existing Teesside University Award

The term ‘pathway’ and or ‘route’ are used interchangeably to describe a designated pathway/route through the available modules on a course which implies a specialism, which may or may not be reflected in the award title. Academic courses may, therefore, include within them a number of "**pathways**" which provide students with the opportunity to focus their studies more directly towards one particular aspect/area of the academic discipline being studied.

If appropriate, the name of a particular pathway can be reflected in the award title as either the full title of the award or as a "bracketed extension" to the overall award title. In either case, the use of the pathway title in the title of the award must be approved as part of the title approval process for the award (**CAMS 4.6.2**).

### 3.12 Award Naming Conventions

Under the University convention of Naming Awards in the Quality Framework **Chapter** **B: Portfolio Development** (**B-Annex 10** **Guidance on Naming Awards, Naming Conventions for Award Titles, and on Using Alternative Award Titles for Similar Courses of Study**), the following guidance should be observed by the School and Course Team when seeking the validation of an additional pathway:

* It should always be possible to articulate clearly, why one award title is different from another when the content of the awards is very similar or even identical. One of the legitimate reasons might be to improve the marketability of the award in recruitment.
* The above criteria are based on academic judgement and should outweigh any mechanistic considerations. However, as a guide, 60 credits would normally be a reasonable amount of differentiation on a 360-credit undergraduate course, with pro rata differentiation in other awards of 60 credits or more. Approval Panels will need to exercise discretion in the case of awards of less than 60 credits.
* All additional pathway award titles (including named intermediate (fall-back awards) should have their own course specification. There should be an additional course specification for an alternative award title, even when the modular course is the same.

### 3.13 Course Design Briefing (CDB) – Digital Empowerment

The second part of the CDB process, integral to Course Design, focuses on the Digital Empowerment of learners incorporating digital tools and platforms to deliver a seamless ecosystem for learning. Further information and guidance are available to the course and module leaders within **C-Appendix 3** - **Good Practice Guide for Module Leaders on Module Design and Development**.

### 

# 4. CHOICE OF VALIDATION ROUTE

**There are 2 possible routes for validation:**

|  |
| --- |
| **ROUTE A:**  The **standard**, normal route is an iterative process of course development over a standard time period and normally applies to the following course developments   * New course approval (including those with partners, major/minor awards, top-up L6) * Dual/Joint Awards * New Course in a non-congruent subject area. |

|  |
| --- |
| **ROUTE B:**  Accelerated (fast-track) path is undertaken by **negotiation** and will be decided on an assessment of risk.  This route is normally applied to award developments which:   * Involve utilising existing approved modules**,** e.g., Professional Apprenticeships, Accelerated Degrees. * Adding a pathway to existing provision |

### 4.1 Risk Based Approach to Validation

The University applies a **risk-based approach** to validation activity which supplements decision-making but is distinct from the process undertaken by Route A and B described above.

Risk is determined/defined by the factors which can seriously impact the student experience and quality and standards of the awards granted by the University. Consequently, to mitigate against the risks listed below, which are indicative, the University has articulated the process to be followed to ensure the level of scrutiny given to each Course Approval remains proportionate, fair, and transparent.

### 4.1.1 High Risk Activity

High risk activity is based on, for example, the possible associated risks listed (indicative):

|  |
| --- |
| * A course is in a non-congruent subject area where the School has limited expertise. * Limited experience of one or both partners in Dual/Joint award delivery. * Resources (both physical, technical and human) may be a prohibiting factor. * Courses in approval have given cause for concern and require review before Periodic Review, i.e., the underperformance of course KPIs identified through Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME). |

### 4.1.2 Medium Risk Activity

Medium risk activity is based, for example, on the associated risks linked to:

|  |
| --- |
| * Market demand and financial stability (tested at PD/Business Case stage). * Delivery of award(s) by a Partner at their location (Location Approval). * Co-delivery of an award with an existing partner, i.e., Transnational Education (TNE), Employer (please refer to **Chapter E**). * Modes of delivery, i.e., Professional Apprenticeships. * Resource requirements, i.e., staffing, physical resources, licencing etc., for international delivery. * Courses in approval require substantial revision in order to respond to sector/accrediting body changes, e.g., meeting Apprenticeships EPA standards. |

### 4.1.3 Low Risk Activity

The University recognises that, for example, short awards of less than 120-credits (excludes Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PgCE/PGCE), which lead to a recognised teaching qualification) require a different approach from the introduction to a new subject or the approval of a course to be delivered at/with a Partner Institution by academic staff not employed by the University.

As a result, the University is able to undertake a **low-risk** approach to such activity based on the following factors:

|  |
| --- |
| * Where market and consumer demand strongly support the development. * Funding sources are available to support the development, e.g., NHS contracts. * Changes to modules in approval to be utilised for short awards are considered minor in nature and processed through QAAP |

### 4.2 Mitigation of Risk

To reduce the risk factors associated with validation activity, the University has determined the level of documentation requirements, degree of scrutiny and the panel constitution for each activity. The table below provides an overview of the process to be followed:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk** | **Process** | **Panel Constitution** |
| **High** | Standard Route A | Standard |
| **Medium** | Standard Route A or Route B | Standard |
| **Low** | Quality Assurance Authorisation Panel (QAAP) | Abridged |

# 5. PLANNING THE COURSE APPROVAL/periodic Review EVENT

Through consultation between SLAR (QV) and Schools /Course Teams, agreements are reached on the detailed process to be adopted for each Course Validation Event, including the Panel constitution, format and date.

A **Preliminary Meeting: Validation Arrangements** form (**C-SAPs Annex 1**) is completed for all events, including those with Partner Institutions. The arrangements are developed in consultation with the Course Leader/School. Where appropriate, the agreed document is shared with Partners to confirm documentation and event requirements.

All University Validation Events are organised by SLAR (QAV) on behalf of SLEC, including those courses developed at Partner Institutions.

### 5.1 Approval of Panel Members

As part of the Preliminary Meeting: Validation Arrangements process, SLAR (QAV) will agree on the Panel composition with Schools/Partner, which will be recorded on the Preliminary Meeting: Validation Arrangements.

### 5.2 Standard Validation Event Panel Constitution

The Panel for a standard Course Approval Event (Route A and Route B, High to Medium Risk) will always include:

* **Chair:** normally, an internal Chair from the related School (approved by Dean, e.g., AD, HOD, PL) - (see **Section 5.5** – Criteria for External Chairing)
* Representative from Student Learning & Academic Registry
* **Officer:** Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV)

Additional Panel members will normally comprise of a selection of colleagues with expertise aligned to the awards under consideration:

* External Academic subject expert from a UK Higher Education Institute (HEI) or, where appropriate, written comments normally from the existing Award External Examiner.
* An independent employer/practitioner
* Service user/carers representative, where appropriate
* PSRB Representative (refer to **Section 5.3**)
* At least one member of Academic Staff from within the school, independent of the course(s) under consideration
* At least one member of Academic Staff external to the school
* Academic Librarian with subject expertise
* Student Panel Member
* Panel members external to the school with specific expertise including:
  + Head of Online Learning, or nominee for OL provision
  + Colleague with Professional Apprenticeship knowledge
  + Student and Library Services (Student Futures)

|  |
| --- |
| \*\*Where Panel Members are unable to attend an in-person event at short notice, please contact the Event Officer within SLAR (QAV). |

### 5.3 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

Visits from Professional Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) are, where possible, integrated into the Course Approval process. In these circumstances, outcomes from PSRB scrutiny are incorporated within the Course Approval Event Report.

PSRB activities falling outside this process are overseen by the School Student Learning & Experience Sub-Committee (SSLESC). Schools are responsible for maintaining an accurate record of their interactions with PSRBs and record this information on a central University register, SITS. The PSRB Register is monitored by Student Learning & Academic Registry (APR) and presented to SLEC each academic year for approval. Further information can be sought from Student Learning & Academic Registry (APR).

### 5.4 Panel Constitution for an Abridged Course Approval Panel, the Quality Assurance Authorisation Panel (Low risk only)

The Panel will be convened by Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV), in consultation with the Chair of the event, and will always include:

* **Chair**: School Associate Dean Learning and Teaching or nominee related to the link School (i.e., Head of Department (see **Section 5.6**)
* **Officer**: Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV)

Additional Panel members will normally comprise of a selection of colleagues with expertise aligned to the awards under consideration:

* External Subject Expert identified from a Higher Education Institution (HEI) or written comments normally from the existing Award External Examiner.
* An independent Employer
* A member of Academic staff from each Academic School, independent of the course(s) under consideration
* School Principal Lecturer(s)
* Academic Librarian with subject expertise
* Panel members external to the school with specific expertise including:
  + Representative from Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV)
  + Head of Online Learning, or nominated Learning Designer for OL provision
  + Colleague with Professional Apprenticeship knowledge
  + Student and Library Services (Student Futures)

### 5.5 Criteria for Internal and External School Chairing of Course Approval

The decision to use an internal School Chair or external Chair from an independent School within the University for Course Approval Events**\*** will be made by SLAR (QAV), in consultation with the School(s), using a risk-based approach, although Chairs of Panels would always be independent to the course(s) under consideration.

The following list indicates the types of provision where an external Chair from an independent School is required:

* New taught doctorate course
* Other forms of complex provision or event as determined by SLAR (QAV)
* Events where a suitably experienced internal Chair is not available

Courses involving more than one School in the delivery and/or assessment will normally be Chaired by the lead School for the Course Approval Event.

|  |
| --- |
| **\*NB:** Heads of Department are **not** normally permitted to Chair Course Approval Events allied to their subject area. |

### 5.6 Appointment and Training of Validation Event Chairs (including QAAP) and Panel Members

Event Chairs consist of staff working within Schools and relevant Departments.

The criteria for the appointment to become a Course Approval Panel Chair are to:

* Have sound chairing skills and general experience in chairing meetings.
* Have a clear understanding of the quality and regulatory processes of the University.
* Be willing to offer the time and commitment to be involved in any briefing, pre-Panel, and post-Panel activities (including final ‘sign-off’ of the documentation).
* Have the support of their Dean or Director.

University Panel Members are normally drawn from SSLESC. They are selected based on the knowledge and expertise they can bring to the Panel. These names are maintained on the SLAR (QAV) [**Approval and Review**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/AR2017/SitePages/Home.aspx) website.

SLAR (QAV) is responsible for arranging and delivering briefing sessions to prepare new Chairs and Panel Members.

### 5.7 Selection Criteria of External Panel Members – Externality

Externality (peer consultation and feedback from external academics/practitioners) is a **key feature of the course validation process**. This consultation is normally undertaken virtually through comments provided by external panel members 48 hours prior to the Clarification Meeting. For guidance on securing external academic/practitioner feedback, contact SLAR (QAV).

Due regard should be given to the independence of the External Panel Members. Course Approval panels should normally include individuals who have:

* Obtained the equivalent level of qualification
* Three years’ experience in HE teaching
* Any PSRB and professional membership, where appropriate
* Obtained a Teaching qualification
* They **must not have had paid or unpaid connection** to Teesside University within the last three years, including the [**external examiner**](https://extra.tees.ac.uk/external-examiners/Pages/default.aspx) role and research collaboration/supervision
* They **must not have a personal relationship** with a member of the Course Team/developer
* They have not had any significant involvement as a **panel member** in the last three years

|  |
| --- |
| The External Academic Panel Member and independent employer/  practitioner nominee CVs **must** be submitted by the School/Partner to SLAR (QAV) ***before*** the Validation Event for confirmation of their suitability\*. |

### 5.8 UK Home Office Visas & Immigration (UKVI) Requirements for External Panel Members

In addition to their academic/practice-based suitability, proposed External Panel Members must also be eligible to work in the UK in accordance with UK Home Office Visas & Immigration (UKVI) requirements.

### 5.9. **Course Validation Event Documentation**

All Course Validation Events will have the relevant documentation available to Panel members, normally a **minimum** oftwo weeks before the formal event **(electronic copy)**:

**Route A:**

* Briefing Statement or Note, Agenda and Panel Membership
* Title Approval (PD) Form
* Action Points and Outcomes from the Course First Critical Read Event
* Course Approval Document (CAD) or Course Evaluation Narrative (CEN)
* Course Specification for all recruiting awards
* Module Specification / Catalogue (UTREG)
* Assessment Chart
* Library Statement (for Partnership events only)
* Map of Learning Outcomes to modules
* Level Learning Outcomes
* Course Handbook, incorporating course delivery structure(s)
* Staff CVs (available for the Chair and External Panel Members Only)
* Workplace/Work Related/Placement Learning and/or Mentor Handbook (if appropriate) (refer to Placement and Internship Policy and Procedure)
* Articulation Agreements, where a progression route has been identified with a course delivered by an external Institution or Organisation. A course learning outcomes mapping exercise should be carried out to document the arrangements
* Where an internal progression arrangement has been identified (e.g., Level 6 progression route), a course learning outcomes mapping exercise should be carried out to document the advanced standing arrangements
* Any additional mapping exercise, as required by the relevant PSRB
* Professional Apprenticeship (PAs) mapping to the relevant Apprenticeship standard and Assessment Plan, example mapping template is available on the Quality Framework [**templates**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/AR2017/Supporting%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx) site
* Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (IfATE), Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan
* Evidencing Key HN Guiding Characteristics (HN courses only) (**C-CMM Annex 4**)
* Dual or Joint Awards only:
* Quality Mapping Exercise (**E-Annex 5**)
* Delivery Structure

Where a Periodic Review of a course includes delivery of the award by a Partner, the review must take into consideration:

* Revised Location Visit Statement (**E-Annex 14**)
* Revised Partner School Addendum, and Operational Statement (**OM-Annex 1**)

**Please note:** Schools and Course Leaders must submit the Course Costing Template to FCD for approval before the Course Validation Event.

**Route B:**

* Briefing Statement or Note, Agenda and Panel Membership
* Title Approval (PD) Form
* Route B Proforma
* Course Specification, current or additional, depending on individual circumstances
* Module Specifications / Catalogue (UTREG)
* Assessment Chart
* Library Statement (Partnership events only)
* Map of Learning Outcomes to modules
* Level Learning Outcomes
* Course Handbook, incorporating course delivery structure(s)
* Staff CVs (available for the Chair Only)
* Workplace/Work Related/Placement Learning and/or Mentor Handbook (if appropriate)
* Additional mapping exercise, e.g., excel spreadsheet, as required by the relevant PSRB
* Professional Apprenticeships mapping to the relevant Apprenticeship standard and Assessment Plan, example mapping template is available on the Quality Framework [**templates**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/AR2017/Supporting%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx) site
* Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (IfATE), Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan
* Centre devised Higher National Certificates(s)/Diploma(s)**[[1]](#footnote-2)** containing closely related award titles and/or content under the Pearson Licence Agreement
* Evidencing Key HN Guiding Characteristics (HN courses only) (**C-CMM Annex 4**)

**Please note:** Schools and Course Leaders must submit the Course Costing Template to FCD for approval before the Course Validation Event.

### 5.10 Supporting Validation Evidence File

The File of Evidence supporting Course Approval may include the following examples where applicable:

* Course Journal
* Consultation with Stakeholders
* Sector relevant publications
* Data Sets - Metrics – last 3 years Applications, Enrolment, Progression, Classifications, Graduate Outcomes, Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) (trends)
* Previous External Examiner Reports (normally 3 years)
* Previous Course(s) Periodic Review or Course Approval Event Report with course specification

# 6. COURSE FIRST CRITICAL READ EVENT OF THE COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS

In conjunction with the School/Partner, SLAR (QAV) will agree on the operation and organisation of the Course First Critical Read stage.

### 6.1 Course First Critical Read Event

The purpose of a Course First Critical Read Event is to undertake a ‘dress rehearsal’ in preparation for the formal Validation Event. It will seek to assure the academic quality and standards of the modules and award(s) under consideration, and to ensure documentation produced meets the requirements for the formal Course Approval Event such as clarity, accuracy and comprehensiveness.

The members of the Panel at this stage will act as critical friends, providing supportive and collegiate advice and guidance on strengthening the documentation to ensure:

* + Alignment with University strategic priorities, underpinned by Future Facing Learning (FFL) and the Academic Enhancement Framework (AEF)
  + Proposed assessment activities have been considered against the Assessment and Feedback Policy (AFP)
  + The course(s) delivers an outstanding student learning experience.

The minimum documentation outputs required from a Course First Critical Read Event stage, are detailed within the Preliminary Meeting: Validation Arrangements (**C-SAPs Annex 1**).

### 6.1.1 Provisional Approval of the Module Diet

The Course First Critical Read Event Panel will **provisionally approve the diet of modules** according to institutionally agreed requirements (CAMS, AFP, and Assessment Regulations). The Module specification [UTREG] is generated electronically and is accessed via [**https://apps.tees.ac.uk/UTReg/**](https://apps.tees.ac.uk/UTReg/). A word version of the template is also available in **C-Appendix 3**: **Good Practice Guide for Module Leaders on Module Design and Development**.

Therefore, the Course First Critical Read Event Panel will seek to ensure the following:

* Academic standards (level) and sustainability of modules
* Coherence (vertical and horizontal structure) and subject specificity
* The nature and inclusivity of assessments in the overall design, that assessment tariffs conform to the guidance provided in the Academic Workload Management Framework (AWMF)
* MVF Module Delivery Details are aligned with AWMF, Learning Teaching Assessment Strategy and UTREG
* To confirm module tutors have drawn on all appropriate external references, i.e., FHEQ, QAA Subject Benchmarks etc., internal University strategic agenda, academic regulations and guidance surrounding the design and delivery of modules

|  |
| --- |
| **NB:** **Modules are provisionally approved at this stage, with official ratification of modules taking place at the formal Validation Event, where** **the views of the external panel members are taken into consideration.** |

### 6.2 Course First Critical Read Event Panel Constitution

The Panel will be convened by Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV), in consultation with the school, and will always include:

* **Chair** – Independent Head of Department (or nominee)
* Academic Librarian with subject expertise
* **Officer:** Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV)

Additional Panel members will normally comprise of a selection of colleagues from the school and across the University with expertise aligned to the awards under consideration:

* School Learning and Teaching representative, normally a learning and teaching fellow
* Member(s) of academic staff from different subject areas within the School
* Panel members external to the school with specific expertise including:
  + Student Learning & Academic Registry (QAV)
  + Independent Learning Designer from SLAR (DX) or nominee
  + Colleague with Professional Apprenticeship knowledge
  + Student & Library Services (Student Futures)

**Partners**

For Partner events, the associated Link Tutor will support the Course Team through the Course First Critical Read Event.

# 7. GUIDANCE AND PROTOCOL OF THE validation EVENTs

### 7.1 Panel Member Guidance

**Guidance for Panel Members for the Validation of Courses** is available to support Panel Members; this includes the **‘Themes for Discussion and Conclusions’ pages** for Panel members to utilise to set the agenda (see **C- Appendix 1**).

A **Course Validation Event** will focus discussion on the new course proposal using the ‘Themes for Discussion and Conclusion’ pages, which aims to ensure the academic provision is robust, coherent and offers a high-quality student learning experience.

The Panel will also discuss the documented commentary, evidence provided, areas of strength, and perceived areas for enhancement with members of the Course Team and reach judgements (see **Section 7.5 below)**.

### 7.2 Course Team Presentation (in-person or virtual event)

On occasions, normally for approvals involving Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) the Course Team may be asked to provide a brief presentation at the beginning of the course validation proceedings. This enables the Course Team to outline the context of the course development and communicate, for instance, information omitted from the approval documentation or highlight new emerging developments to the Panel. It may be possible to prepare a pre-recorded presentation which could be circulated to Panel members prior to the validation event.

The Panel may question the Course Team following the presentation for points of clarification before proceeding to the Private Meeting (see **Section 7.4 below**).

### 7.3 Course(s) to be delivered by Online Learning

Consideration will include the relationship of the proposed module or course to the AEF Strategy and the OL BCIP.

The Panel will seek to:

* Assure the viability around a proposed structure for the course; structure in modules is in line with active and collaborative pedagogic and design thinking
* Assure the skills and the expertise of the staff delivering the course via these methods
* Assure the alignment of the proposed provision with the University’s strategic approach to design and development and systems and processes of online learning

Advice and guidance for Course Teams on preparing for OL course delivery and approval can be found in **C-Appendix 4 Guidance for Course Teams on the Design and Development of Teesside University Online Provision.**

### 7.4 Role of Students in the Course Periodic Review Event

Where a PSRB is involved in the event, discussion between the Panel and existing students will normally be facilitated as part of the Periodic Review process. In these circumstances, the Course Periodic Review Event will normally include a private meeting between the Panel and students, which will focus on their views of the course, and how they have been incorporated into the ongoing monitoring and enhancement of the course (see **C-SAPs-Annex 12c**). Therefore, when scheduling Periodic Review activity, it is advised that the event is undertaken when students are timetabled to be on campus.

For desk-based events, written feedback will be made available to Panel Members. For guidance on securing student and or alumni feedback contact SLAR (QAV).

### 7.5 Private Meetings during the Panel Event

On occasions, usually, when a PSRB is involved in the Course Validation Event, it may be necessary to include private meetings with workplace assessors and supervisors, employers, and service users/carers within the agenda for the event. These meetings will focus on how their views have been incorporated into the development and ongoing monitoring and enhancement of the course by the Course Team.

An additional private meeting with the School Senior Management Team may also be requested. This meeting is normally managed by the visitor(s) from the PSRB and usually centres on discussions relating to the resources and meeting the PSRB professional standards. A formal record of these meetings should form part of the Event Report.

### 7.6 Outcomes from the Course Periodic Review Event (only)

The Panel will be asked to consider whether or not the Course Team has undertaken a sufficiently robust and rigorous evaluation of the course and have ensured it remains current and valid in the light of developing knowledge in the discipline, practice in its application, and developments in teaching and learning.

|  |
| --- |
| **The judgement on the review evaluation process will be either:**  No further action required to enhance the review process  **Or**  Further action required to enhance the review process. |

Further action would be appropriate if, following a review of the CEN and discussion with the Course Team, there was insufficient detail provided or insufficient evidence of rigour in the course review process. If further action is required to enhance the review process, then the course could still continue in approval but would require a further full review in the short to medium term and a shorter period of approval is granted.

### 7.7 Outcomes of the Course Validation Event

A Panel will make recommendations for approval under the following headings:

**Conclusion – Quality and Standards**

This relates to the Course Team’s approach to setting, maintaining, and enhancing academic standards and the likelihood that the students will be able to achieve those standards through the learning opportunities and support provided to them by the proposed course.

|  |
| --- |
| **The judgement will be either:**  **Approved** - the course(s) can be recommended for approval. The normal approval period would be six years (indicating the mode of attendance, delivery location and method of delivery).  **Or**  **Not Approved** – the course(s) cannot be recommended for approval. |

**The period of re-validation may be shorter than six years to align with a subject framework or parent course, or in accordance with PSRB requirements.**

The Panel may, under certain circumstances, request an **Interim**

**Review**, in less than six years. Where this is the case, the rationale and focus of the interim review should be made explicit in the Course Approval Event Report, and the Panel Chair must complete an ‘**Interim Review Event: Summary of Requirements**’ form.

The form is available on the Student Learning and Academic Registry [**Approval and Review SharePoint site**](https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/departments/058/AR2017/Supporting%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx). Alternatively, as part of the Recommendations, the Panel may request that enhanced continuous monitoring (CME) takes place. The rationale and focus should be made explicit and recorded as a Recommendation (for further enhancement).

**Conclusions – Commendations**

The Panel may wish to make a commendation(s); this is considered formal praise and support for the Course Team for undertaking practice that is considered above the norm, e.g., substantial employer engagement, collegiate approach to planning, design and or delivery. Commendations are not the same as Transferable Good Practice.

**Conclusions – Transferable Good Practice**

The Panel will identify the aspects of the course that represent Transferable Good Practice based on demonstrable evidence that can be applied or undertaken in other Schools or adopted by subject disciplines, for example, inclusive teaching and learning interventions which increase student participation with protected characteristics. These mechanisms increase attainment of higher award classifications, demonstrable positive impacts on employability (Graduate Outcomes), Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO)), and quality and standards of teaching and learning, i.e. increased National Student Survey (NSS) scores etc. These aspects are noted by SLAR (QAV) and disseminated by Student Learning & Academic Registry (Academic Development (SLAR (AD) to support enhancement.

**Conclusions – Conditions and Recommendations**

The Panel may set Conditions (these **must** be addressed before the commencement of the course or, exceptionally, by a specified date after the start of the course), recommendations for further enhancement, issues for the School to consider/address, and issues for the University to consider/address.

Regarding the **CAD**, if the discussion at the Course Approval Event provided sufficient clarity regarding an issue, the Panel will not normally require the supporting CAD to be updated unless such a record is considered essential.

With regards to the **CEN**, if the discussion at the PR event provided sufficient clarity regarding an issue, the Panel will not normally require the supporting CEN to be updated unless such a record is viewed as essential.

### 7.8 Conclusion - Date of Periodic Review or Interim Review, Modes of Delivery, Number of Intakes and Location

The Panel will confirm the next scheduled Periodic Review date or interim review, the modes of delivery, the number of student intakes per academic year and the delivery location(s).

### 7.9 Post Course Approval Event

**Conclusion – Record of Conditions and Recommendations**

For their information, the Panel will receive a copy of the conditions and recommendations discussed during the Validation Event and confirmed by the Chair.

### 7.10 Conclusion Course Validation Event Report

The Officer will complete a report of the Course Validation Event, in consultation with the Chair, according to the headings outlined in the **Course Validation Event Report** template. The Panel will receive a copy of the Report for information, to complete the validation process.

### 7.11 Conclusion and Sign-Off Process for Approval of Course(s) Event

Following the Validation Event, the Course Team will amend documentation for resubmission and provide comprehensive responses within the event report template outlining where and how the conditions and recommendations have been addressed, quoting documentation titles and page numbers.

The documents and report will be forwarded for approval to:

* The Chair of the Event who will approve the amended documentation by signing the Validation Event Report as 1st signatory confirming conditions have been met by the Course Team and that the course specification is accurate, complete, and fit for publication.
* **For Partner new course approvals**, the Course Validation Event Report will be approved and signed off by the Partner signatory simultaneously with the Chair, confirming the report has been checked for accuracy, and the conditions have been met to the satisfaction of the institution.

Schools will submit the report electronically, with appropriate signatures, to SLAR (QAV). SLAR Officers will facilitate final sign-off by the University Academic Registrar (AR) or nominee, refer to **Diagram 1**.

SLAR (QAV) will notify the School and central departments that the ‘**subject to approval**’ flag can be removed from marketing material following this final stage of the process.

The University SLEC will receive a list of course approval(s) for information.

1. Licenced HEI’s Guide to Mapping Pearson Core Content [↑](#footnote-ref-2)