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Section 1: Overview of the University’s Quality Management and Enhancement Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This section covers:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• the context for the University’s Quality Management and Enhancement procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the UK Quality Code for Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the structure of academic provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• institutional roles and responsibilities in relation to quality management and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enhancement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Context

Assuring the quality and standards of London South Bank University awards

1.1 Academic standards refer to the level of achievement that a student has to reach to gain an academic award (e.g. a degree). For similar awards, the threshold level of achievement should be the same across the UK.

Academic quality is a way of describing how well the learning opportunities available to students are managed to help them to achieve their award. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, resources, assessment and learning opportunities are provided for them.

Enhancement is defined by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) as deliberate steps taken at institutional level to enhance the quality of learning opportunities for students.

1.2 Quality processes at London South Bank University are designed to enable assurance of quality and standards through:

- rigorous course approval procedures
- external examiner reports
- annual monitoring and periodic review
- approval of course modification

1.3 The foundations upon which processes of course development rest are that they:

- must enable the University to design and deliver courses of the highest quality to its students
- should be ‘light touch’ wherever possible whilst ensuring rigour
- must demonstrate appropriate external involvement in both validation and review

1.4 Wherever appropriate, processes involve scrutiny by individuals who are either external to the course from which the award emanates, or the University.

Enhancement

1.5 At the same time as assuring the quality and standards of awards, the University’s quality processes are designed to encourage the enhancement of courses through:

- engagement with the academic infrastructure (see below)
- engagement from committees and validation and review panels
- reporting mechanisms from course to School to institutional level
- engagement with the student body, through representation and feedback mechanisms
1.6 The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) is used to assure the standards and quality of higher education in the UK. It is developed and maintained by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and is used by higher education providers to ensure students have the high-quality education experience they are entitled to expect. The Quality Code is published on the QAA website.

1.7 The Quality Code sets out the formal expectations that all UK higher education providers are required to meet. It is the nationally agreed, definitive point of reference for all those involved in delivering higher education courses that lead to an award or are validated by, a UK higher education awarding body. The Code comprises three parts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Setting and maintaining academic standards</th>
<th>Describes the various aspects of how academic standards are set and maintained for higher education qualifications awarded by UK degree-awarding bodies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part B</td>
<td>Assuring and enhancing academic quality</td>
<td>Contains chapters which look at distinct aspects of academic quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part C</td>
<td>Information about higher education provision</td>
<td>Addresses how providers produce information that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each Parts A and B of the Code are broken down into Chapters relating to different aspects of setting and maintaining standards and assuring and enhancing academic quality. Appendix A shows the details of each Parts.

1.8 The University ensures oversight of all sections of the UK Quality Code through its organisational structures and through its committees.

1.9 The UK Quality Code for Higher Education also helps inform the University’s regulations and procedures.

1.10 The LSBU Corporate Plan, sets out the direction and focus for the development of the University’s academic provision. The Academic Quality and Enhancement Manual provides structures and processes for ensuring that any development is in line with the requirements for maintaining standards and quality.
Core academic structures – Nomenclatures

1.11 The core structures for LSBU’s academic provision are set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module</td>
<td>The standard ‘building block’ of all course delivery – identified in size by credits. The most common module size across all courses is 20 credits; other credit volumes can, however, be validated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>A full or part-time award-bearing structure of modules, with defined learning outcomes and secure location within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. Not all courses will lead to awards of the University (some may, for example, be Edexcel or professional-body courses). Each course will have a unique Course Specification except where awards are ‘nested’ (in the case of, for example, CertHE and DipHE – but not FdA/FdSc and ‘top up’ BA/BSc).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>A number of cognate courses within a defined discipline area may contribute to a ‘course group’. Programmes are largely a management entity and may share particular modules, or have common leadership, but will generally have a looser structure than a framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework</td>
<td>A structure of modules which lead, through appropriate designation of common and optional modules, to a number of defined award outcomes. Frameworks will contain designated Pathways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway</td>
<td>A structure of modules within a Framework which leads to a specific named award. Pathways will have defined learning outcomes and be securely located within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. Pathways will be validated, en bloc, alongside their related frameworks, and new pathways may be approved at School level, possibly using a low risk validation process. Individual pathways will have a minimum of 60 credits at level 6 (including the dissertation or project, where that exists) which differentiates that pathway from others within a framework.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Institutional roles and responsibilities

1.12 The academic provision of the University is mainly the responsibility of the Schools and their constituent Divisions. Each School has a Dean; Divisions each have a Head of Division.

1.13 However, all members of the University, including teaching staff, researchers, support staff and students themselves – contribute directly or indirectly to the quality of the student experience, since the physical environment and administrative, welfare and academic support services affect students’ capacity to study effectively. The following summary relates principally to the agents most directly concerned with the quality of the learning experience on taught courses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>• Students must keep to our <a href="#">Academic Regulations</a> Provide feedback which may benefit future students through engagement with Course Boards, Module Evaluation Questionnaires and the National Student Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Academic staff (individually) | • Undertake scholarly activities which underpin teaching  
• Be well prepared for teaching  
• Provide students with clear information and academic guidance in accordance with University policies, both through written information and by making themselves accessible to students  
• Where relevant, maintain contact with professional practitioners, professional and subject associations and the wider academic community  
• As far as possible, pursue professional development – whether in the subject area or in pedagogic techniques – which supports teaching |
| Academic staff (subject groups) | Develop systems which ensure:  
• The scope, content, learning outcomes and recommended reading and other sources for modules in the subject remain current  
• Modules are developed and enhanced to serve the needs of the courses to which they contribute  
• Course and module content and learning strategies are appropriately matched to students’ knowledge and skills at entry  
• Modules are monitored  
• Module Guides accord with University guidelines and are fit for purpose  
• Subject area external examiner comments are considered, appropriate action initiated and responses made |
### Academic staff (course teams)

- Liaise with each other to ensure the coherence of the course and the consistency and quality of support for students enrolled on the course
- Attend Course Boards and engage in discussion with academic colleagues and student representatives, with a view to improvement
- Specify, implement and review the appropriateness of course entry requirements
- Use evidence to contribute to an annual report on the monitoring of the course

### Schools/Divisions

Deans and Heads of Division have primary responsibility for ensuring that the course portfolio is developed and enhanced and that subject specialist resources and operational systems appropriately support the quality of the learning experience. School and Division roles include:

- Allocating individual roles and ensuring that staff are prepared for those roles
- Developing the course portfolio to optimise academic and vocational opportunities and student appeal and collaborating with other Schools/Divisions to achieve this where relevant
- Ensuring that the learning environment meets students’ needs as fully as possible within financial constraints
- Promoting contact with employers and with the wider academic community
- Establishing and monitoring policies and procedures for selecting students and for assessing prior learning
- Ensuring that there is effective liaison with partners in offering collaborative courses
- Identifying and disseminating good practice within and from outside the School or Division
- Ensuring that course planning and review teams are adequately supported by senior staff experienced in evaluation and course development and that new and revised courses receive thorough internal scrutiny before progressing to validation or review
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Departments</th>
<th>Heads of Professional Services have a responsibility to maintain profession standards appropriate to the service function, and to plan, manage and review the services they provide to ensure that these align with institutional priorities, support academic developments and add to the quality of the student experience. Support departments which provide services directly to students have an additional responsibility to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gather information on student needs and priorities to inform the planning of the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consider student feedback, through local surveys and the National Student Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop an ethos of customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Management</td>
<td>The University Executive, (comprising the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellors, Chief Financial Officer, University Secretary, Executive Director of People and Organisation, Chief Operating Officer and Deans), has responsibility to define strategies, determine priorities and develop a framework in which those strategies can be communicated and implemented. Individual members may be given specific responsibility for policy initiatives in quality management and enhancement and for chairing committees. The Pro Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) has a major responsibility for policy and systems for quality management and enhancement and for standards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.14 The management structure of the University is set out in this [link](#).

### Staff Development

1.15 In order to support staff in discharging their roles and responsibilities, the University has an annual staff review procedure together with an extensive course of staff development activities. For details click [here](#).
The Committee Structure

1.16 The University has a Board of Governors and an Academic Board. The Academic Board has responsibilities defined in the University’s Articles of Association. The Board of Governors and the Academic Board devolve some responsibilities to University and School committees.

1.17 University and School committees contribute to the formulation, review and enhancement of policy and practice, and provide a forum for broader consultation involving staff and student representatives. School committees additionally develop and refine policies for local use, within a framework set institutionally.

1.18 School Academic Standards Committees have a significant role in:

- Initial scrutiny of proposed new courses
- Course and module monitoring
- Modifications to modules and minor modifications to courses
- Initial consideration of external examiner nominations

1.19 Responsibility for disseminating committee decisions rests with committee chairs and secretaries. Ex officio committee members, and those nominated by Deans or Heads of Division, have a responsibility to advise the committee of matters within their areas of responsibility and professional understanding, (including relevant developments external to the University). Elected members have a responsibility to bring to the attention of the committee matters raised by their constituencies, and to make colleagues aware of issues under consideration by the committee.
Section 2: Information about academic provision

This section covers:

- The principles for the provision and management of information about academic provision
- UK Quality Code for HE – Part C: Information - expectations and indicators
- University responsibilities for the publication of information
- Management of information in LSBU
- Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA)
Principles

2.1 Accurate and accessible information for students assists them to:

- understand what is required to achieve the standards for the award for which they are enrolled
- understand their responsibilities, both to maintain their enrolment and in respect of their own learning
- understand their responsibilities as members of the University community and, where relevant, their responsibilities in respect of professional conduct
- know how to derive maximum benefit from the learning opportunities available to them
- know how, and in what circumstances, to access support services
- understand the regulatory framework which governs decisions about progression and awards
- know how to use the systems which exist for students to express their views or to make complaints.

2.2 Similarly, accurate and accessible information for staff assists them to:

- understand their roles
- understand University and Departmental or School policies and procedures within which they must work
- give students advice which is consistent with University regulations
- know where to obtain advice on University policies, procedures and services
- understand the University’s strategies and priorities.

Context

2.3 The UK Quality Code expects that higher education providers will produce information for their intended audiences about the learning opportunities that they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy. The Quality Code sets out an Expectation that higher education providers make available valid, reliable useful and accessible information about their provision.

University’s responsibilities for the management of published information

2.4 Appendix A, at the end of this section, sets out the types of information that relate to each of the Quality Code Expectations and identifies which department is responsible for managing that information; which committee monitors it and which member of senior staff signs it off.
2.5 Different types of information and how these can be accessed are described in more detail below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corporate Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Sets out the Board of Governors strategy for how the University will achieve its mission for student success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corporate Plan 2015 - 2020</strong></td>
<td>The Corporate Plan is supported by the executive strategies for each School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Admissions standards; admissions principles; entry requirements; applicant requirements/ obligations; application processes; AP(E)L; UKBA visa requirements</strong></td>
<td>These can be found in the Admissions and Enrolment Procedure and form part of the University's Academic Regulations and Procedures and set out the University's internal processes for selecting and admitting students and the external legal requirements governing eligibility to study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disability and Dyslexia Support</strong></td>
<td>Guidance and documents relating to support available and how to apply for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrolment &amp; Orientation pack</strong></td>
<td>Provides new students with details of how to and of their induction course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prospectus</strong></td>
<td>Undergraduate and Postgraduate. Published in hard copy and on-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Information Sets (KIS)</strong></td>
<td>Comparable sets of data about full- or part-time undergraduate courses designed to meet the needs of prospective students, including student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, and assessment methods. Information can be found on the Unistats website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employability and Careers</strong></td>
<td>Guidance and documents relating to: employability; careers facilities; Job Shop; placements; How To guides; Advisor services; procedures for obtaining references</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course specifications</strong></td>
<td>The definitive publicly available information on the aims intended learning outcomes and expected learner achievement of courses of study available from the School. (See also Section 3 – Academic Quality and Enhancement Manual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Guide</strong></td>
<td>Sets out aims and outcomes of the course and standards students expected to achieve and can be found on Moodle (virtual learning environment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module Guide</strong></td>
<td>Sets out what students are required to do to meet the learning outcomes of each module and can be found on Moodle (virtual learning environment)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Academic Regulations and Procedures** | Set out the regulations relating to:  
  - academic awards and courses of study  
  - assessment: coursework and examinations  
  - examination boards  
  - progression and award  
  - certification and transcripts |
| **Student appeals; academic misconduct; late submission guidelines** | Part of University Regulations and Procedures—  
  - Student Appeals Procedure  
  - Assessment and Examination Procedure |
| **Fitness-to-study procedure; mental health policy** | Fitness-to-study procedure  
The Mental Health Policy supports staff in helping to ensure that the University reflects a coherent institutional approach when responding to students with mental health problems. |
| **Student Disciplinary Procedure** | Sets out the University’s procedures for dealing with allegations of misconduct (other than academic misconduct) by a student |
| **Student Complaints Procedure** | Describes what a student needs to do if they wish to complain about any aspect of the delivery of their course affecting their ability to engage effectively with their studies. |
| **Research Degree Regulations** | Sets out the regulations for the award of the University’s degrees of: MPhil; PhD; taught doctorates; PhD by published work; higher doctorates. |
| **Certificates and Transcripts** | Academic Regulations and Procedures – Assessment and Examination Procedure. |
| **Academic Quality and Enhancement Manual** | Sets out overview of LSBU approach to quality management and enhancements and describes process for: on: management of information; validation, monitoring and review; academic collaborations; assessment and external examining and student engagement. |
| **Collaborations Database** | Provides a central record of all collaborative activity involving the award of academic credit and that is subject to a formal agreement. |
2.6 The Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA)

The Competitions and Markets Authority published recent guidelines to Universities about complying with consumer law obligations. Universities must provide students with accurate course information which they need to make an informed decision before they apply. They must also inform students of any changes made since they applied. The CMA will monitor the sector to assess compliance with consumer law. The University needs to ensure that the information we publish about a course is comprehensive and not subject to change where possible. Click here for more information.
Section 3: Course Validation, Monitoring and Review

This section covers:

- Cycle of Validation, Monitoring and Review
- Validation procedures: course design; course documents; validation events
- Annual monitoring of academic provision: principles and procedures for monitoring modules, courses and collaborative provision
- Reporting of outcomes of monitoring
- Reviewing course specifications
- Periodic review: End-of-Cycle and Mid-Cycle Review
- Course and module modifications procedures
- Course closure
Cycle of validation, monitoring and review

3.1 This section sets out the processes for approving new University awards and changes to existing awards and for ensuring their continued suitability.

3.2 These processes operate on an integrated cycle of validation, monitoring and review based over a 6 year cycle. Thus the cycle of review for a course will be viewed over a 13 year timescale, to indicate the ‘steady state’ of the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Activity at Course Level</th>
<th>Activity at Course &amp; Subject level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Validation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td>Mid-cycle Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td>End of Cycle Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td>Mid-cycle Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring</td>
<td>End of Cycle Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of processes covered in this section

3.3 The University uses specific terms to define the processes of validation, monitoring and review as described in the table above. Each of these processes is set out in detail in this section.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Validation</strong></td>
<td>The process by which a course of study leading to a specified award title is approved for delivery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Annual Monitoring**       | The principal mechanism by which the University confirms that:  
• the standards of awards are maintained  
• their quality is assured  
• opportunities for enhancement are identified and implemented.  
Annual monitoring applies to: modules, courses and collaborative provision. |
| **End of Cycle Review**     | The periodic review of a number of courses, (normally grouped by subject area) to ensure that proper standards are being maintained.  
End of Cycle Review occurs every 6 years and confirms that the courses can continue to be offered. |
| **Mid-Cycle Review**        | A review of progress with action plans arising principally from annual course monitoring reports which takes place 3 years after the last review. Courses are normally grouped by subject area for mid-cycle review. |
| **Course Modifications**    | The processes for approving major or minor changes to individual courses.  
‘Major modifications’ and ‘minor modifications’ are further defined in this section. |
3.4 Cycle of Validation, Monitoring and Review

3.5 In designing the University's arrangements for validation, monitoring and review, the following criteria are of central importance:

- to maintain engagement with the relevant sections of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, particularly Section A and Chapters B1 and B8.
- to integrate individual processes so as to:
  - maintain maximum potential for one process to inform and reflect another
  - maximise opportunities for enhancement through the sharing of good practice
  - ensure that the focusing of information through the various layers of the processes gives the opportunity for information deriving from course-level activity to impact upon, and inform, action at University level
  - reduce the burden on academic staff – ensuring that processes are, as far as possible, meaningful and cohesive.

Sources of advice

3.6 Validation, monitoring and review are not processes which need take place in isolation, and there are sources of advice within the University to provide guidance to individuals who take on the responsibility of steering any one of these processes through to its conclusion. At School level the Directors of Education and Student
Experience (Pro Dean – Academic in the School of Health and Social Care) hold within their managerial portfolios responsibility for matters relating to learning and teaching and quality assurance. DESEs are also the chairs of School Academic Standards Committees (SASC), and have a role in approving the transition of documentation from the School to the University levels of each process. Many of the heads of academic divisions and course leaders have considerable experience of quality processes, both from engaging with them within their own courses and from taking part in validation and review panels in other areas of the University.

Schools also have a Senior Quality & Enhancement Advisor and a Quality & Enhancement Advisor who perform key roles in the implementation of University processes. They are members of the Academic Quality and Enhancement Team, headed by the Director and Deputy Director. Click here for more information about AQE. The AQE structure is as follows:

![Academic Quality Development Office Structure Diagram]

### Validations

#### Context and definitions

3.7 The purpose of validation is to ensure that the proposed course: is securely located within the Framework for Higher Education Qualification; is consistent with and contributes to the University’s strategies and policies; that it will offer a valuable educational experience to students; and offers a standard of student attainment comparable to similar courses offered elsewhere.

New courses are validated in response to strategic initiatives by the University, or as a result of developments within Schools. Ordinarily, a new course should be considered as part of the School’s long term strategy for curriculum development, although in exceptional circumstances, courses may be developed in response to shorter-term initiatives or demands.

3.8 Existing courses are revalidated normally every six years through the periodic review process. Review can utilise sources of information not available at the original validation event, sources which will inform the further evaluation and development of the course, for instance external examiners’ reports, student feedback, and statistics such as progression and completion rates. Conveniently,
much of this is contained within the Annual Monitoring Reports, hence the stipulation that these are included in the documentation.

3.9 Assurance of the University’s validation activity is delegated by Academic Board to the Quality and Standards Committee. The panels are constituted by Academic Quality and Enhancement (AQE).

The phases in the planning, design and validation of a course

3.10 There are four phases in the validation of a new award:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Expected deadline for completion of activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Preliminary Planning</td>
<td>End of March in the academic year preceding validation year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Approval to develop new award</td>
<td>New award titles must be approved by the Academic Planning Panel (APP).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Course Design</td>
<td>End of October of validation year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Validation Process</td>
<td>End of May in the academic year preceding start of the course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All courses must go through these phases in order to ensure their inclusion or continuance in the University’s portfolio. This process is essential for the needs of resource management, recruitment and strategic direction.

Notes:
- Ideally, the phases should be brought forward even further, to enhance the opportunity for a new course to be brought into the prospectus as soon as is feasible.
- However, occasionally, it is necessary to shorten the timescales for the validation of a new course, for instance, in response to an approach from an employer or professional body, where there is evidence of a guaranteed student intake. When necessary, therefore, a case can be made to APP to ‘fast track’ the process.
- Normally, there are three APP meetings are scheduled a year.

3.11 In the case of professional and vocational courses accreditation by a professional body may also be required.

3.12 The exact timetable for the validation event must be negotiated with AQE as early as possible. It is important that deadlines are established and adhered to.
Design criteria

3.13 Designing a course of study involves many elements, some discretionary, some required. Ultimately the aim is to create a cohesive course. That will be one in which the philosophy and pedagogy inform the learning objectives, which are in turn translated into modules of study, the learning outcomes of which are tested through appropriate assessment methods.

3.14 The Course Team needs to reflect upon a range of requirements when designing a course. These include:

- the course should have clearly articulated learning outcomes appropriate to the award and the levels of the award on offer
- pedagogy – consideration should be given to the pedagogic approaches underpinning the course
- assessment – consideration should be given to the type and range of assessments
- levels – consideration should be given to the level or levels to be included within the course and the stated intended learning outcomes for each
- progression – consideration should be given to how progression is achieved
- balance – the balance of elements within the course, for instance between academic and practical, academic and personal
- flexibility – the differing abilities and requirements of learners likely to enter the course should be considered
- coherence – the overall coherence and intellectual integrity of the course
- appropriate internal reference points - the University Corporate Plan and strategies, cultural awareness
- appropriate external reference points – Subject Benchmark Statements; the UK Quality Code (including the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications); expectations of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs); employers; similar courses elsewhere.

Satisfying these will lead to a set of documentation fit for validation, one which combines these elements together coherently and concisely. It is important that Course Teams seek guidance from the Centre of Research Informed Teaching (CRIT) if they are uncertain of any element – from SASC, from their Senior Quality and Enhancement Advisor or other members of staff from Academic Quality and Enhancement team. The validation documents pack can be downloaded from here.

Curriculum developments requiring validation

3.15 The following curriculum developments require a formal validation event:

- new courses in new subject areas – these may involve one or more new awards within a course scheme
- new course awards designed and validated for delivery by a partner or a franchise institution
- new pathway awards within an existing course scheme – even if the new pathway uses existing modules
- new award titles – even if this is a change to the title of an existing award
- new modes of delivery, particularly, blended or distance learning;
- courses leading to a qualification of an external body but not necessarily an academic award or attracting academic credit, which are to be delivered by LSBU.
The Validation Process

[Diagram of the Validation Process]

1. **Stage 1: School Level**
   - Produce New Course Proposal Form
   - Take proposal to SASC for consideration
   - Sub Process 1: Preparing for course development approval
     - Rejected by SASC: not developed
     - Approved by SASC
     - Recommendations for amendments

2. **Stage 2: Academic Planning Panel (APP)**
   - Take proposal to APP for development
   - Sub Process 2: Approval for course development at school level
     - Rejected by APP: not developed
     - Approved for development
     - Recommendations for amendments
     - Identify risk level and event type

3. **Stage 3: Validation Process**
   - Validation Panel
     - Low risk: Paper-based validation
       - 1. Documentation considered by external advisor who provides written comments
       - 2. Comments considered by nominated/Chair and reported to AGDO
     - Medium risk: Meeting based validation
       - 1. Documentation considered by external advisor who provides written comments
       - 3. Meeting of internal panel to consider documentation and comments. Report by AGDO
     - High risk: Full attendance validation
       - 1. Documentation considered by panel of internal and external members at an event
       - 2. Report by AGDO

4. **Stage 4: Sign-off**
   - Consideration of outcomes
     - Rejected
     - Approved with conditions
     - Approved
     - Conditions met/signed off

5. **Stage 5: Sign-off and Setup**
   - School/course team set up course noting Registry, fees, International, Admissions & Marketing

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Academic Quality Development Manual

AQE, October 2016
3.16 Stage 1: Approval to develop a new course

a) The proposal for a new course or a new award title within an existing course scheme is formulated within the School. (If two or more Schools are working collaboratively on the new course, one School will normally be designated to take administrative responsibility for the course). New courses may also be developed by School’s in response to initiatives instigated by the management of the University.

b) The Division responsible for leading the development of the course completes the New Course Proposal form. The form includes information about:
   - who will be responsible for developing and managing the course;
   - information required for central course and student records;
   - descriptions of the course, including brief text for marketing the new award;
   - technical details about the new award – start date; mode of study; student numbers; funding etc.
   - the course code for the new course. The SQEA will obtain a provisional course code from the Registry.
   - rationale for proposed course;
   - resource implications – costs of developing and running the course; teaching room requirements; learning resources; specialist equipment etc.

c) The completed form, signed by the Head of Division, is then put through the School approval processes. These involve:
   - sign off by the Dean to confirm that the School has the resources to develop and deliver the course;
   - approval by the School Academic Standards Committee;
   - sign off by the SASC Chair.

d) Following sign off by SASC, the proposal is submitted to the University’s Academic Planning Panel. The role of the Panel is to receive proposals from Schools for new course development and to consider these for recommendation to proceed to validation. The Panel will also decide on the type of approval process that will be used. The University has three processes based on risk level. The same course documentation will need to be prepared for any type of event.

e) The University has a risk based approach to validation and review, which will dictate the type of validation event to be used. The Higher Risk Process is explained below and would typically be used where a new course proposal;
   - involves a new subject area,
   - includes collaborative provision with an external partner
   - requires PSRB accreditation,
   - contains non-standard methods of delivery mode (e.g. distance learning or e-learning),
   - will be developed outside of the course approval process timescale,
   - involves an inexperienced/new course team
f) The **Medium Risk Process** would be considered where the new proposed course will, for example;
- consist of no more than two new modules,
- include work-based or placement learning, field visit
- potential title change

g) The **Low Risk Process** would be considered where the new proposed course will;
- consist of entirely existing modules or no more than one new module,
- involve only the introduction of a sandwich year,
- minor amendment to course title.

Course Teams who are given permission to use the medium/low risk process should contact Academic Quality and Enhancement for further advice on the process. Essentially, the low risk process will be paper based using, if possible, existing external examiners. The medium risk process will involve documentation being sent to external subject specialists for comment and an internal meeting with a LSBU panel and the course team.

3.17 **Stage 2: Arranging the validation event**

3.17.1 Academic Quality & Enhancement will contact the Course Leader to set a date for the validation meeting.

Please note that:
- Contact should be made with AQE at the earliest opportunity, regardless of what stage the design process for the new course has reached.
- For courses starting the following September, the validation event should ideally be held before the end of the preceding spring term and certainly no later than the end of May.

3.17.2 The AQE will then identify a Chair and internal panel member(s) for the event.

3.17.3 When the validation date has been agreed the Course Leader must supply the AQE with completed **nomination forms for external advisers**, using the pro-forma provided and following the guidelines provided. The purpose of the nomination form is to assist in the selection of a panel including an appropriate balance of academic and professional expertise. External Advisors are approved by AQE under the authority of the Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee.

3.17.4 When the Chair of the validation or review meeting has been identified, a **pre-meeting** will be held for purposes of clarifying or defining the purpose of the meeting. Pre-meetings are arranged by the AQE and will be attended by: the Chair, the Course Leader (who may be supported by a colleague who will be closely involved in the course planning), and the Senior Quality and Enhancement Advisor from the School developing the course.

The purpose of the pre-meeting will be to:
- clarify the scope of the validation event
- brief the Chair on the background to the proposed validation or review
- set the agenda and timeframe for the validation or review meeting
- establish whether it will be necessary to visit other sites
3.17.5 Agenda for the validation: A validation or review meeting will normally be scheduled for a half-day. The validation or review of a complex course scheme will be likely to require a full day’s meeting or longer. The order of the proceedings for the meeting is normally as follows:

- private meeting of the panel to confirm the agenda and identify issues arising from the documentation
- meeting with students (major course modifications)
- tour of resources (for courses using specialist resources, such as laboratories, or if required by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body)
- meeting with the Course Team
- private meeting of the panel to agree on its decision
- feedback to the Course Team

The panel’s discussion with the team is always based on an indicative agenda which will include the issues set out below. This agenda is designed to ensure that the panel can fulfil its remit as set out below. The amount of attention that needs to be given to each item will be determined largely by the nature of the course under discussion and the clarity of the documentation provided.
3.17.6 Remit of a validation panel: In making its decision, the panel is asked to confirm its confidence in the standards of the award and the learning and teaching opportunities for the students and that the award is securely located within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

3.17.7 The documents that are required for all validations are as follows:

a) A brief Rationale and Overview (new courses) or Rationale and Overview (re-validation) setting out the rationale for the course, the potential market (i.e. numbers expected) and, if appropriate, any future intentions with regard to the development of the course. This document helps the panel to understand the context of the validation event. It need only be a few pages in length. The document should make reference to the factors that have been used in planning the course (such as: market research, external examiner reports, student feedback, changing professional body requirements), but, for the sake of brevity, should not include the actual evidence.

b) The course specification is the definitive course document. In multi-pathway courses, there will normally need to be a course specification for each award. A template for course specifications and guidance notes are available. It should also include: a course structure diagram; an assessment grid; a Personal Development Plan grid and a curriculum map.

The course specification is the document that will be signed off once any approval conditions have been met. It is also published and must, therefore, be kept up to date throughout the life of the course. This document forms the learning contract with the student.
c) **Module descriptors** must be produced for each of the modules contributing to the course, whether these are new or existing modules, using standard University template. The module syllabuses may be collated into one document or may be attached to the course specification document. The module syllabuses must be prefaced by a table listing all the modules and indicating those that are new, those that have been modified and any previously validated modules that remain unchanged. Throughout the documentation modules should be named consistently and should always include the module reference code.

d) The **resources document** provides an outline of the resources that will be available to support students on the new or revised course. This should be a standard School document which will normally only be sent to panel members as an electronic link. The course team should also supply a brief contextualised resources statement including:
   - CVs for the staff who will be teaching on the course
   - any specialist resources that are specific to the course.

e) The panel Chair may ask for **supplementary information** that is specifically relevant to the course. Examples of this would be placement guides, (where placement or work experience is a key part of the course) or a document mapping the course to professional standards (where this is required by a professional body).

3.17.8 **Preparation and submission of documents:** The Course Leader, on behalf of the Course Team, is responsible for ensuring that the required documents are produced and submitted electronically to the AQE **at least 20 working days before the validation event.** Documents should be signed off by the Dean, (to confirm that the course will be resourced) and by the SASC Chair (to confirm the quality and completeness of the proposed course). Electronic signatures will be accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In preparing for validation the Course Leader will need to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Work with all staff involved in the development of the course in agreeing learning outcomes and assessment strategies for the new modules contributing to the course and ensuring that these accurately reflect the learning outcomes and assessment strategies for the course as a whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where existing modules are to be used, ensure that these fit with the learning outcomes and assessment strategies for the course as a whole. If any existing module needs to be modified in order to ensure its suitability within the new course, then any proposed changes must be agreed with the Course Directors for any other course(s) on which the module is taught.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.17.9 AQE will circulate the documentation electronically and print copies of it for the panel. AQE will then send the documents, together with the agenda and other relevant information, to the panel members.
3.17.10 University **validation panels** will be convened by AQE. The constitution of a University validation panel is normally as follows:

a) **Chair**: The Chair will be identified by AQE from a group of academic staff members who have been identified as having experience of validation and review events, normally acquired through serving on Validation and Review Panels and/or responsibility for relevant aspects of quality assurance. Chairs will be supported to fulfil their role. AQE maintains a list of suitably qualified Chairs from which it will select someone from a School other than that to which the course to be reviewed or validated belongs.

b) **External panel members**: AQE approves external panel members, (normally two), from those proposed by the Course Team. Nomination forms will need to be completed and submitted to AQE. At least one of the externals should have direct experience of delivering higher education in a UK setting. The University also encourages participation in validation and review events by external members with experience of the relevant industry or profession. Where the course being approved covers a number of specialisms, the number of external panel members may be increased. Members of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies may also attend as panel members, as representatives of the relevant body, as subject experts or as observers. External panel members will have to provide evidence of their **Right to Work in the UK**, in order to comply with UKBA requirements.

c) **Internal panel members**: internal panel members (normally two) are selected from among the academic staff of the University. Internal members are not expected to have subject expertise relating to the course proposed for validation but are required to have experience of delivering courses within the context of the University’s policies and regulations. Academic staff from partner institutions may also be invited to serve as internal panel members. Where possible, AQE will select one panel member from a different subject area within the School putting the course forward for validation and one from another School.

d) **AQE representative**: a member of AQE will serve on the panel to advise on issues relating to University regulations and processes. The AQE representative will also take notes of the meeting and write the report following the event.

### 3.18 Stage 3: The validation event

3.18.1 The standard agenda for a validation event is set out above. In its initial private meeting the panel will agree on the issues for discussion with the course team, (and, if appropriate, with the students), and will, with the aid of the Chair, map these against the standard agenda. This gives the panel scope to focus on those agenda items which it does not believe have been adequately or explicitly covered in the validation documents.
3.18.2 Where the validation event is being run jointly with an accrediting Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body, the PSRB representatives may have specific topics that must be included in the validation agenda.

3.18.3 The panel is empowered to make one of the following decisions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approve the course unconditionally</td>
<td>No further work is required to the documents</td>
<td>Chair signs off the course specification and modules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approve the course with conditions</td>
<td>These must be responded to and completed before the course can be signed off and students recruited and enrolled</td>
<td>Course team submits a response to the conditions with revised documents. The course is signed off when the Chair/whole Panel is satisfied all conditions have been met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved the course with recommendations</td>
<td>Course teams are not bound to complete these but should provide the panel with a response to each</td>
<td>Response considered by Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approve the course(s) with conditions and recommendations</td>
<td>See above</td>
<td>See above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject the proposed course(s)</td>
<td>The panel should indicate whether the course(s) may be resubmitted for validation at a future date and, if so, when this would be permitted.</td>
<td>The course(s) cannot run</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.19 Stage 4: After the validation event

3.19.1 Following the validation event a report is produced by the AQE member on the panel. The purpose of the report is to:

- record the panel's decision, stating all award titles approved and including any conditions to be met or recommendations made, with a commentary if necessary
- record the context of the meeting and the key issues raised (which may include major issues not leading to any condition or recommendation) in a form which can aid a future panel or consideration of modifications subsequently proposed

AQE will circulate the report to the Chair, all members of the panel, the Course Leader and the DESE. A copy of the confirmed report will be stored electronically by AQE.

3.19.2 The validation report will set out the deadline for submitting to AQE the response to any conditions and the revised documents (normally the course specification and module pro-formas). These should be resubmitted electronically and unless otherwise specified, the deadline will be 20 working days from the date of the event.
3.19.3 The validation panel will have agreed whether all panel members need to see the response and documents or whether this will be done by the Chair alone. If the Chair is satisfied that the conditions have been met, s/he will formally sign off the course specification. The Chair may, however, require further work to be done before the course can be signed off and be, therefore, validated.

3.19.4 Copies of the signed off course specification and module descriptors will be stored electronically by AQE.

**Note:** A course is not validated until the Chair has signed off the course specification. Until the course is validated:
- NO students may be enrolled on the course
- NO confirmed offers of places on the course can be made to prospective subject to validation students
- all publicity information for the course must state that it is subject to approval

3.19.5 The Course Specification is the definitive document for the course and forms part of the legal contract with the student. **Any changes made to the Course Document must be done through due process.**

3.20 **Stage 5: Activating the course on the Student Record System (QLS)**
SQÉAs are responsible for ensuring that Registry is notified that the new course and all new modules can now be activated on the Student Record System. The curriculum will be set up according to the validated course specifications and module descriptors.

**Appeals against the decision of a validation panel**

3.21 A Course Leader can appeal against a panel’s decision to reject a proposed course or against the conditions imposed by a panel. In this case, the Course Leader must:
   a) Seek the support of their Dean in making the appeal;
   b) Make a written request to the Pro Vice Chancellor – Education and Student Experience to review the panel’s decision, stating the reasons for the appeal.

3.22 The PVC - Education and Student Experience will make a judgment as to whether the appeal should be upheld, taking account of the following:
- whether the panel included appropriate external representation
- whether the panel had acted within its remit.

3.23 If the PVC - Education and Student Experience judges that the appeal should be upheld, a new validation event will be arranged.
Validating/modifying a course for delivery off-site

Principles

3.24  

a) The University should ensure that in all its policies, procedures and activities, including strategic planning and resource allocation, consideration is given to the means of enabling students’ participation in all aspects of the academic and social life of the institution, regardless of which campus they study at. Implications for students of study at more than one campus need to be considered, as do articulation of arrangements for this study.

b) The University, whatever the nature of any partnership entered into, will retain direct responsibility for the academic standards and quality of any course delivered off-site, as it does with all courses delivered on-site. Courses are subject to the same approval, monitoring and re-approval mechanisms, albeit additional measures may be required by Academic Board. Schools must include specific reference to the health of off-site courses in annual monitoring.

c) Courses will be owned by Schools and subject to the management controls of Schools. The Dean of the School has the same responsibility for off-site courses as for on-site courses. A named individual should be appointed to oversee off-site delivery, either the course leader or the Academic Link Tutor.

Procedures

3.25  

The detailed procedures for approving collaborative provision are set out in Section 4: Academic Collaborations.
Annual Monitoring of the academic provision

Principles

3.26 The principles of monitoring are:

a) Monitoring is the principal mechanism by which the Quality and Standards Committee, and hence Academic Board, can confirm that the standards of the University’s courses are maintained, that their quality is assured, and that opportunities for enhancement are identified and implemented.

b) An essential source of evidence for monitoring of the standards and quality of courses is the reports of the external examiners assigned to the modules which comprise the course. Thus a thorough consideration of these reports will be a key requirement of monitoring, and the responses produced will indicate the actions to be taken as a consequence. These documents will make an important contribution to providing the necessary assurance that standards are appropriate and that the quality of learning opportunities is being enhanced.

c) The process of monitoring involves checking and reflecting upon the way in which the provision or service is operating in relation to its aims, using qualitative and quantitative evidence. It is an ongoing activity which should be carried out by all academic and support staff in relation to academic standards and the quality of the student experience.

d) Effective monitoring should enable staff responsible for the academic provision and support services to ensure that they meet their aims to an acceptable extent, and to identify and plan potential improvements. It concerns identification of good practice as much as addressing issues of concern. It is not about attaching blame but about seeking areas where improvements would be beneficial. Monitoring should lead to quality enhancement and to dissemination of good practice.

e) Monitoring is not a process which can be seen as distinct or independent from other procedures within the University, nor can monitoring alone be expected to ensure that standards are being met and that quality is being assured. It is certainly a contribution to that process. However, it has to be seen within a broader context of quality assurance and enhancement which is brought about through other aspects of the University’s work e.g. review, management procedures, external examiners, staff appraisal and development, moderation processes.

f) Monitoring should not be thought of as an activity which takes place only at a particular time in the academic year. It is not a snap-shot activity. Rather it is a continuous process of reflection and action, which happens to be reported at a particular time in the academic year. Monitoring of activities on an ongoing basis might highlight issues which arise during the operation of the module, course or service and might require an immediate response or swift action. In setting out these guidelines it is not intended that such matters should necessarily wait until the annual reporting time to be addressed and acted upon. Instead those issues will continue to be acted upon in a prompt way, and will be noted in the annual monitoring report.
Module monitoring

3.27 Monitoring of a module should be carried out each time the module is delivered, regardless of whether it is delivered on a LSBU site or the site of a partner institution.

The purpose of module monitoring is as follows:-

- to provide Divisions with qualitative and quantitative information as a tool for the good management of the units for which they are responsible
- to identify any indicators of good practice in the delivery and assessment of the modules
- to identify individual modules in which the proportions of students who pass or fail are seen as atypical either in the context of related modules or in the subject area to which it belongs; to initiate enquiry as to the reasons for atypical performance and to take prompt action as deemed necessary
- where modules are taught at more than one location, to identify significant variations in performance between sites of delivery; to initiate enquiry as to the reasons for atypical performance and to take prompt action as deemed necessary
- to identify modules in which adjustments to marks have been made at Subject Area Examination Boards, to reflect on the reasons for this and to take prompt action as deemed necessary
- to monitor trends in the take-up of modules, to inform the management and development of the portfolio of modules offered by the Division
- to identify modules in which there is a trend over a period of time showing a marked difference in the performance of students enrolled on different courses, or in different modes, and to initiate enquiry as to the reasons for such differences, and to take prompt action as necessary
- to monitor student satisfaction with the modules they take (using the University guidance on module evaluation)
- to address module specific issues which are raised by subject area external examiners with responsibility for the modules
- to judge whether the assessment of the modules is appropriate to enable students to demonstrate attainment of the learning outcomes
- to identify actions to undertake before the next delivery of the modules in view of the experience of delivering the modules over a period of time and specifically the last delivery.

Procedure

3.28 A thorough review of a module entails consideration of all the aspects which contribute to the organisation, delivery and outcomes of the operation of the module. Schools will produce their own Module Review template together with details of the School processes for considering these. The Module Reviews will be used to inform the course monitoring reports of all the courses which incorporate the module.
The key source of evidence with regard to the organisation and delivery of the module is student feedback. An analysis of the performance of students by those involved in the assessment process provides the evidence relating to the outcomes i.e. the learning achieved. The review of the evidence should then lead to identification of areas of concern and of the measures needed to address them.

**Student feedback**

3.29 Student feedback is obtained primarily from the Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ).

a) The key points of the Module Evaluation Questionnaire are:
   - the standard Module Evaluation Questionnaire is available for this purpose
   - the MEQ should be administered shortly before or at the end of the teaching sessions for each delivery of the module
   - the Module Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that all students on the module have the opportunity to complete a MEQ, preferably during a timetabled teaching session.

b) Evidence from the MEQ is an essential component of the Module Review as it reflects students’ views of how the module has operated. The results of the MEQ consist of quantifiable responses to targeted questions and qualitative responses to open questions. The scanners and associated software used to analyse the former will provide a standard report.

c) Qualitative comments from students will be concerned with their perceptions of the best aspects of the module and the aspects most in need of improvement; there may also be comments on other aspects. In completing the Module Review the Module Co-ordinator should:
   - identify any recurring themes (either positive or negative)
   - attempt to explain the underlying reasons why the comments have arisen
   - emphasise any aspects of good practice for dissemination.

**Module data**

3.30 The relevant data are concerned with the performance of the students on the module. The Module Review should present a table which includes:
   - details of the assessment components and their weightings
   - the weighted module marks
   - for each component and the overall module mark, the range of marks and the mean mark

In evaluating student performance the Module Co-ordinator should:
   - comment on the marks, their distribution, and any changes as a result of internal moderation, external examiner comment or scaling by the Subject Area Examination Board
   - include any comments of relevance from the internal moderator(s) and/or the external examiner for the module
   - identify any differences in performance between different groups of students (e.g. students in different seminar groups, full-time and part-time students)
• comment on any significant differences in marks for the different components of assessment e.g. essay and examination
• compare the results with those of previous years

Proposals for enhancement

3.31 Consideration of the evidence relating to the delivery of the module and student performance will lead to identification of those aspects in which improvements could be made. In completing the Module Review the Module Co-ordinator should:
• identify the areas for improvement
• prepare an action plan to address these areas

The next review of the module should evaluate the success of the measures included in the action plan.

Other issues

3.32 The Module Review does provide the Module Co-ordinator with the opportunity to refer to other factors which could influence the success of the module e.g. the take-up by students (if an optional module), timetabling arrangements etc.

Distribution of the Module Review

3.33 The Module Review should be distributed to:
• the Head of Division responsible for the module
• the Subject Area Leader
• the Course Director or Course Director of all courses which incorporate the module
• the authors of the course monitoring reports of all courses which incorporate the module
• all staff who contribute to the delivery of the module
• the external examiner for the module (this may be done at the time of the examiner’s visit to attend the Subject Area Examination Board)

3.34 A summary of the previous year’s module evaluation (and a response thereto) should be included in each module guide.

3.35 The Head of Division is responsible for ensuring that all Module Reviews are completed.
The University is moving towards holding all module material electronically. The Module File (previously Module Box) should be permanently maintained and continuously updated and should include the following:

- Module Guide (current)
- The module descriptor (as validated)
- Course work assignment briefs (where not included in Module Guide)
- Tutorial/seminar/practical exercises (where not included in Module Guide)
- Handouts
- Samples of completed assignments from the last operation of the module
- Any feedback to students not attached to courseworks (e.g. overall summaries of strengths and weaknesses of work submitted which are given to all students)
- Mark lists for all coursework assignment
- Exam papers (including referred exams) plus assessment criteria and marking schemes for the last 2 academic years
- Mark lists for exams as above
- Samples of exam scripts from the last operation of the module
- Module Review forms from previous years
Course monitoring

Principles

3.36 An annual Course Monitoring Report provides an evidence-based summary and critical evaluation of the delivery of courses over the preceding academic year. The principles of course monitoring are:

   a) The purpose of monitoring is to evaluate the experience of students enrolled on the course. This may be achieved by the gathering of evidence and reflection on it, leading to the identification of weaknesses in the provision, and thus to proposals for improvement, and also of good practice for wider dissemination.

   b) There are numerous facets to the overall student experience. In a narrow sense it may be restricted to the teaching and direct support for learning provided by academic staff; however, students do also interact with technical and administrative staff and use social and recreational facilities.

   c) The student learning experience is influenced by other factors, particularly the resources which can promote learning and the services which provide advice and assist students to derive the maximum possible benefit from their studies. In addition, the University has a duty to ensure that the award achieved by the student is of value i.e. that the standard of the award is comparable with awards from other institutions and will be recognised as such by employers, professional bodies and other organisations.

   d) Monitoring reports also consider the standards of the course, its delivery and the performance of the students on it, and also the role and success of the resources and services which support students. The report should be reflective and evaluative rather than merely descriptive of the process. In order to make it so authors should draw on a range of evidence and consider it in relation to the course outcomes set out in the course specification.

   e) The guidelines presented here are intended to identify the aspects of the student experience likely to be included within the scope of the report and also the corresponding sources of evidence required for their evaluation. The aspects identified are provided within a common structure for reports which guides authors to the major areas for discussion.

   f) It should be stressed that the aspects referred to below are those which are likely to be relevant to most or all courses. In many cases there will be additional aspects which are of particular importance to the experience of students on the course, and these too should be included in the report.

   g) The annual course monitoring reports should be produced as close as possible to the end of each year of delivery.
Scope of course monitoring reports

3.37 Each School will appoint a member of the academic staff to prepare the course monitoring report (CMR). This may be the Course Director, the Course Director for one or more of the pathways within the course, or another member of staff with close links to the course. The following factors should be taken into account in determining the scope of course monitoring reports:

   a) Any commonality that may be as a result of:
      - shared use of a substantial number of modules
      - substantially common modules in Stage 1, allowing students to defer choice of specialism and named award
      - compatible learning outcomes between awards at different levels, facilitating transfer between them e.g. HND and BSc

   b) Any similarity in the experience of students on the course, regardless of their particular pathway, requires that the evaluation of the experience should embrace the entire course. Each School has the responsibility of determining how its provision is to be grouped for monitoring purposes.

Content of course monitoring reports

3.38 The Quality and Standards Committee requires all Course Monitoring Reports to follow the same structure and CMR authors are, therefore, issued with a standard template for their reports well in advance of the submission deadlines. The Committee routinely reviews the effectiveness of this and the template may, therefore, be subject to some amendment each year. CMR authors are also provided with guidance notes on using the template.

3.39 The current version of the CMR template and the accompanying guidance notes are issued to the authors of the reports each year, by the Senior Quality and Enhancement Advisors. A Course Monitoring Report would be expected to include:

   a) Factual information:
      - a list of award titles covered by the Report
      - confirmation that there is an up-to-date course specification for each
      - whether any of the courses are taught at a partner institution
      - whether any of the courses are professionally accredited
      - details of recent validation/review activity in relation to the courses
      - up to date course specification **must** be attached as an appendix

   b) Action plan:
      - summary overview of the operation and management of the course during the past year
      - review of progress against previous year’s action plan
      - action plan for coming year
      - brief evaluation of significant issues relating to modules covered in the CMR
areas of good practice

c) **Reflective commentary on data from:**

- external examiner reports and responses to the reports
- progression and achievement, student profiles (PAT data)
- Course Board minutes
- National Student Survey
- Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey (DLHE)

**The annual monitoring process**

3.40 **Responsibility for managing the annual monitoring process:** The School Academic Standards Committee has delegated responsibility for:

- ensuring that all courses within the School have undergone annual monitoring that the CMRs are complete and allow SASC to make a confidence judgment in the standards of the award(s) and the management of the course(s)
- providing the Quality and Standards Committee with a report summarising the outcomes of course monitoring, (see below)
- producing a School Monitoring Report, which provides the Quality and Standards Committee with details of the actions to be undertaken by the School/University arising from course monitoring.

3.41 **Timetable for Monitoring:** There are different submission deadlines for undergraduate and postgraduate Course Monitoring Reports, with undergraduate CMRs being written in the autumn term and postgraduate CMRs in the spring term. This is to reflect the fact that Masters courses finish later than undergraduate courses.

3.42 **SASC scrutiny of CMRs:** Course Monitoring Reports are read and evaluated by the Committee. Normally, this task is delegated with each CMR being allocated to two or three specified SASC members who read and comment on the Report on behalf of the whole Committee. SASCs have some discretion in establishing a methodology for the allocation and scrutiny of CMRs, but must ensure that written feedback is provided for each using a standard University template. This template will be distributed to the scrutinisers with the CMR by the SQEA. The current scrutiny template can also be found on the AQE website. In addition to providing commentary on the completeness of the CMR, the scrutinisers also make a recommended judgement on the confidence that can be placed in standards and in the management of the course(s). Scrutinisers may set conditions on the approval of the report and may require additional information or clarification of issues raised before it is approved by SASC.

Note: Where serious concerns about standards or the management of a course are identified through annual monitoring, SASC may agree that the course is submitted for University re-approval.
Monitoring of collaborative provision

3.43 The requirements for monitoring collaborative provision are set out below:

a) There are two principal aspects of relevance to the monitoring of collaborative provision, namely the academic provision which is the subject of the collaboration and is concerned with the academic standards and quality of the course, and the way in which the University manages the collaboration between the partners. This section is concerned with the former, and the latter is considered in Section 4.

b) The different types of collaborative arrangements are described in Section 4.

c) Where a franchise is of a course which is also delivered at LSBU, a single course monitoring report should be prepared by the School responsible for the course. The main report should be accompanied by an appendix which includes, for each partner or site operating the course, information regarding the student experience and student achievement. This information would be prepared by the partner institution in consultation with its principal LSBU contact. The main report would be expected to present an overview of the operation of the course across all sites and comment particularly on any major differences in the student experience and student achievement between sites. (N.B. It is important that student work to be reviewed by external examiners includes identified samples from all partners. This is to ensure that examiners have the opportunity to comment on the comparability of standards and student achievement).

d) A franchised course delivered offsite from LSBU would require a separate course monitoring report in accordance with the guidelines above. Each partner operating the course would produce information regarding the student experience and student achievement (see above), and the LSBU School responsible for the course would prepare an overview of the operation of the course across all sites and comment particularly on any major differences in the student experience and student achievement between sites.

e) The key aspect in the monitoring of an articulation agreement is its continuing suitability rather than its delivery or that of the parent course. Where a LSBU course has an associated articulation agreement the course monitoring report should include a section which specifically addresses the continuing suitability of the partner’s provision for students wishing to enter LSBU with advanced standing.

f) As part of their own internal quality assurance procedures it would be expected that partner institutions would require annual reports on the courses concerned. The timing of these reports may be such that the authors of the two reports are able to share their reports and the evidence used in their production.

g) As with any course delivered solely by LSBU, the focus of monitoring of collaboratively delivered courses should be the academic standards and the quality of the student experience. Since the standards of a franchised course are set at an LSBU validation, and assessments are controlled by LSBU staff and the external examiners appointed by LSBU, the mechanisms for the maintenance of the academic standards of collaborative courses are identical to those of all other courses and should not require special attention during
monitoring. However, where it is found that the achievement of students taught in a partner institution is significantly different from that of students studying the same module(s) at LSBU, this should be commented on in the course monitoring report and, where appropriate, proposals for improvement should be included.

h) In the case of an articulation agreement the standards are set by the partner rather than by LSBU, although LSBU could offer advice if required. The monitoring report for the parent course would be expected to include comment on the progress of students who had entered as a result of the agreement. It should also include proposals for any improvements necessary to ensure that successful students are well prepared for subsequent study on their LSBU course.

i) The factors which contribute to the quality of the student experience in a collaborative course are the same as those in a wholly LSBU course. Thus the course monitoring report of a parent course should consider the teaching and learning on the partner’s site, any differences in student progression between students at the different partner sites (including LSBU), and the resources available to support learning.

School reports to QSC

3.44 As stated above, on completion of the School’s scrutiny of course monitoring reports, the Chair of the SASC will prepare an overview report to QSC on behalf of the School. These School reports will enable QSC to draw conclusions on academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities across the University; hence it is important that they include the information required by the committee. There is a standard template for School Monitoring Reports, which, together with guidance notes is issued to SASC Chairs each year. The SMR covers:

- a statement confirming that the School has discharged its responsibilities in respect of quality and standards
- progress with last year’s action plan
- an action plan for the coming year, identifying those to be undertaken at School level and those that need consideration by the University
- reflection on significant or common issues arising from the CMRs
- emerging trends from the data informing the CMRs
- areas of good practice worthy of wider dissemination.

3.45 The Quality and Standards Committee will consider the SMRs, and will identify issues for further action, and may make recommendations with regard to responsibilities for such actions. The Committee may request a progress report from an individual, Division or School with responsibility for action. The QSC Chair will report its findings to Academic Board.

Review of course specification

3.46 The need for reviews:
A course specification should present an accurate reflection of the key details of a course in HE. These details include:

- the title(s) of the course(s) described
- the entry requirements
• the course structure and content
• the outcomes of the course
• the teaching and assessment strategies which ensure that the outcomes are achieved and demonstrated
• the support available to students
• the award(s) available on completion of part or all of the course and what is required to achieve each award

Some of these details may change during the period of operation of the course; indeed, many courses undergo changes each year. (See also Course Modifications below). Any changes should be reflected in the course specification, hence there is a need for these documents to be reviewed annually and for an updated version to be prepared if necessary. Since SASCs have the responsibility for considering and approving changes to courses, an annual review of the course specification provides the opportunity for SASCs to be kept informed of proposed changes.

3.47 Review and approval procedure
Course Directors should check that the course specification is still accurate before each year of delivery of the course(s). Issues to be checked include:

(i) the availability of modules for the following year; this information will have to be supplied by the Head(s) of Division with responsibility for the modules which make up the course;

(ii) the availability and suitability of alternative and/or additional modules to be incorporated into the course;

(iii) the designation of modules as core or optional;

(iv) the impact of any changes in the content of the course on the course outcomes;

(v) the continuing suitability of the learning and teaching and assessment strategies;

(vi) the accreditation status of the course and its quality indicators;

(vii) student support mechanisms;

(viii) entry requirements.

3.48 When the checks reveal that no change is necessary, the Chair of the SASC should be informed to that effect. However, where the review reveals that one or more significant features of the course, such as those listed above, will be altered, it will be necessary to submit the proposed changes for approval and revise the course specification. The revised course specification, incorporating an updated version number, will be sent to the Chair of the SASC with an accompanying note describing the rationale for and details of the changes.

3.49 The procedure by which the SASCs approve revisions to course specifications will be left to their discretion. The use of one or more small groups to consider modifications will probably be seen as preferable to discussion at a full SASC meeting. Whatever the procedure selected, it will be necessary to maintain a full documentary record of the reviews and the decisions made.
SASCs are required to check annually, that there is an up-to-date course specification for each award. This is done in conjunction with course monitoring by attaching the relevant course specifications to the CMR. The CMR scrutiny report requires the scrutinisers to confirm that they have seen up-to-date course specifications.
Periodic review process

Context

3.50 In addition to the annual monitoring of courses and modules, there is a need to ensure that the operation of a course of study is subject to regular and continuous systematic scrutiny in order to ensure that proper standards are being maintained and that engagement with external reference points and with relevant University strategies is ongoing. All of the University’s award-bearing courses and their constituent subjects are subject to these processes. Courses are reapproved every 6 years with a mid-cycle review half way through the 6 year cycle.

End of cycle

Principles

3.51 All courses must be submitted for review every 6 years but to streamline this process and ensure completeness, courses are grouped together, normally by subject. These subject groups broadly correspond to the JACS groupings, but do take account of LSBU structures.

3.52 Review is required to:
- provide additional evidence regarding academic standards and the quality of the student experience across a group of courses within a subject area
- promote the sharing of good practice within the subject area and beyond
- comply with external expectations.

3.53 In order to satisfy these requirements the process of review has been developed for application to agreed course groupings. The key features of review are as follows:
- the subject team to submit a Self-Evaluation Document (SED), covering all the courses within the defined subject group as the basis of the review event
- a leader for the event to be nominated by the School and the subject team to be supported by the SQEA
- reviews to extend over 2 days
- panels to be chaired by an appropriately experienced member of staff
- panels to include at least 2 external members
- panels to gather evidence from meetings with staff and students, and from scrutiny of relevant documents
- conclusions to be based on the extent to which the panel has confidence in the management of the quality of the courses and the academic standards of the awards.

3.54 The procedures for the periodic review of courses taught at partner institutions are set out in Section 4: Academic Collaborations.
End of Cycle Review

The Self-Evaluation Document (SED)

3.55 At least 20 working days prior to the review event a Self-Evaluation Document must be produced for the subject. This should be approximately 5000 words in length and cover the areas detailed below.

1. **Introduction and context**
   To include details of the organisation of the provision, a list of the awards within the scope of the review and an indication of student numbers and their distribution.

2. **The educational aims of the provision**
   A statement of the overall aims of the group of courses covered by the review.

3. **Academic standards and learning outcomes**
   Evidence of the appropriateness of the standards set and achieved (from validation reports, external examiner comments, PSRB accreditation etc.).
   An evaluation of the appropriateness of the learning outcomes, supported by evidence. Should include reference to relevant Subject Benchmark Statements, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, PSRB requirements, external examiner comments etc.

4. **Curricula and assessment**
   An evaluation of the ways in which course content and methods of assessment support achievement of the learning outcomes.

5. **Quality of learning opportunities**
   (i) **Teaching and learning**
   An evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies in providing students with the learning opportunities to support achievement of the learning outcomes and academic standards.

   (ii) **Student progression and support**
   An evaluation of the ways in which students' progression is supported and monitored.

   (iii) **Learning resources**
   An evaluation of the effectiveness of the deployment of resources, both human and material, in support of student learning.

   (iv) **Student experience**
   Evidence of how students' views on their learning experience have been gathered and responded to.

6. **Maintenance and enhancement of standards and quality**
   An evaluation of the effectiveness of procedures for maintaining and enhancing the quality of the provision and the security of academic standards.

   Additionally, the current course specifications for each course within the scope of the review should be appended to the SED.
Additional documentation

3.56 The following documents and materials should be available for scrutiny by the reviewers during the course of the review.

- Course Guides
- Module information (can be virtual):
  - Module Guide (current)
  - The module specification (as validated)
  - Course work assignment briefs (where not included in Module Guide)
  - Tutorial/seminar/practical exercises (where not included in Module Guide)
  - Handouts
  - Samples of completed assignments from the last operation of the module
  - Any feedback to students not attached to c/w (e.g. overall summaries of strengths and weaknesses of work submitted which are given to all students)
  - Mark lists for all c/w assignments
  - Exam papers (including referred exams) plus assessment criteria and marking schemes for the last 2 academic years
  - Mark lists for exams as above
  - Samples of exam scripts from the last operation of the module
  - Module review forms

**Note:** The scope of reviews is such that the number of modules is likely to be large, hence the collection of module boxes for all modules will be impractical. It is suggested that an agreed sample should be provided, with others being available should they be requested.

- External examiner reports for last 3 years
- Data on the student profile at entry
- Progression and awards data for last 3 years
- Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey (last 3 years available)
- NSS data (last 3 years available)
- Report and Action Plan from Mid Cycle Review
- School Plan
- SASC minutes (last 2 years)
- Exam Board minutes and spreadsheets (last 2 years)
- Course Board minutes (last 2 years)
- Course documents from validations
- Details of PSRB accreditation visits and other interactions with PSRBs
- Strategies for employer engagement and the development of employability skills, (including PDP)
- Course Monitoring Reports for last 3 years
- Staff development records
- Staff CVs (including HPLs)

Composition of panel

3.57 The Panel will consist of:

- A Chair from another School.
- Two Internal panel members (one of whom should be from another area within the School and one from another School)
- External panel members who will have expertise in at least one of the subject areas under review and are also likely to have experience either as academics in HE or in a closely related activity e.g. in a PSRB which accredits HE provision. Where appropriate representatives from statutory bodies may be invited to join the panel.
- A student representative (subject to availability)
- The Senior Quality and Enhancement Advisor, who will act as secretary to the review and prepare the report.

Conduct of the End of Cycle Review event

Prior to the event

3.58 a) A schedule of End of Cycle Reviews (i.e. subject groups to be reviewed and revalidated and the term in which the review will take place) for the academic year will be agreed by the Quality and Standards Committee in the Spring Term of the preceding year. The dates for a particular event will be agreed by AQE and the School, and a Panel Chair will be appointed. The School will be consulted regarding the external members to be appointed to the panel.

b) Not less than 3 months before the review the Chair and the Deputy Director, AQE will meet senior representatives of the provision to discuss arrangements for the review i.e. documentation required, meetings to be held etc. The composition of the panel should be fixed by this time. This preliminary meeting should provide the opportunity for clarification of procedures and also permit the School to bring to the attention of the Chair any particular strengths or issues of relevance it wishes to discuss during the review.

c) The SED will be submitted to AQE not less than 4 weeks before the review meeting. AQE will distribute the document to panel members to ensure that they receive it about 3 weeks before the event.

d) At this stage the subject experts on the panel will be asked to give particular attention to areas related to academic standards (i.e. aims and learning outcomes, curricula and assessment) and internal members will be asked to focus primarily on the quality of learning opportunities (i.e. teaching and learning, student progression, student support, learning resources) and also maintenance and enhancement of quality. It is intended that this broad division of responsibilities should be maintained throughout the review, although all panel members should have the opportunity to participate in discussions of, and contribute to judgements on all aspects of the review.

The End of Cycle Review event

3.59 The End of Cycle Review event will take place over two consecutive days and involve a combination of meetings with subject staff and students and also scrutiny of relevant documents, including student work. A typical course could be as follows:-

Day 1
Meeting with key staff to set context (½ hour)
Private meeting of panel (1 hour)
Scrutiny of documents (e.g. external examiner reports, student work)
Meeting with students (1 hour)  
Meeting with staff to discuss academic standards (1½ - 2 hours)  
Tour of resources (if required)  
Private meeting

Day 2
Private meeting of panel  
Scrutiny of documents  
Meeting with staff to discuss quality of learning opportunities (1½ - 2 hours)  
Private meeting to agree conclusions  
Feedback to subject staff

Additional meetings involving only one or two reviewers could be arranged for specific purposes e.g. to discuss or clarify progression data.

Conclusions

3.60 At the end of the End of Cycle Review event the panel will come to a conclusion regarding the management of the quality of the courses and the academic standard of the awards. In doing so they will take into account the context of the provision and external reference points as well as the primary evidence gathered during the event. The panel’s conclusions will be expressed as follows:

a) Where the panel is satisfied that the quality of courses is soundly managed and the standards of awards are appropriate, it will confirm the continued validation of each of the courses submitted. The panel may qualify this conclusion where there are reservations about the management of quality and the standard of awards in a small proportion of the overall provision; in such a case the areas giving rise to the reservations would be clearly identified.

b) Where the panel has broader reservations regarding either the current management of quality and the standard of awards or the future capacity to maintain quality and standards, it will express limited confidence. A conclusion of no confidence could be reached if the panel considered that there were widespread and serious shortcomings in the management of quality and standards.

c) Where a panel expresses limited confidence, it must be explicit about the impact of this judgement on the future delivery of each of the courses. The panel must state what actions must be taken to allow the continued delivery of the course(s) affected and the time frame in which these must be completed.

d) The panel will identify commendable features of the provision and will make recommendations as to improvements in the management of quality and standards. These will either be advisable, (actions which are believed to be urgently required to safeguard quality and standards), or desirable (recommendations with the potential to enhance quality and/or secure standards).

Report

3.61 A draft report will be prepared within 3 weeks of the end of cycle review event and the School will have the opportunity to comment on it. AQE will provide a standard template
to be used for writing the report. The final report will be agreed by the panel and will be available within 6 weeks of the review.

The structure of the report is standardised and will include details of the following:

- the review panel
- the context of the review
- a list of the courses submitted for review
- the conduct of the review event (i.e. the documentation examined and meetings held)
- the outcomes of the review:
- the conclusions of the panel regarding the management of the quality of the courses and the academic standards of the awards and the continuing validation of each of the courses
- commendable features of the provision and good practice
- recommendations for improvement, together with supporting commentary as appropriate

Response to report

3.62 The School will be required to prepare a response to the report, detailing the actions to be taken to address the recommendations and using a standard template supplied by AQE. The response should be considered by the SASC and submitted no later than 3 months (excluding vacation periods) after the final report is received. The response will then be considered by the Quality and Standards Committee, which will be responsible for ensuring that good practice identified during the review is disseminated across the University.

Mid-cycle review

The process of mid-cycle review

3.63 Mid-cycle reviews are structured around the same subject groupings as for course review. They provide an opportunity to reflect on progress with the action plans arising from review and annual monitoring and to consider standards and quality issues that have emerged since review. However, these should not be regarded as a scaled down review events but rather as an enhanced annual monitoring process. The review event will be a paper-based exercise held on one day.

Scope of the review

3.64 The size and complexity of the subject groups within LSBU vary considerably. Subject areas have different specific characteristics, for instance, the level of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body involvement in the design and content of individual courses. The list of documents set out below will, however, provide a framework that will work for large and complex subject areas and small, contained ones.

Documents for the review

3.65 The following documents should be prepared or collated for the mid-cycle review event.
In advance of the review event:

a) The course team should prepare a self-evaluation document spanning the subject area (ca. 3000 words) as follows:

- **introduction and context** - to include details of the organisation of the provision, a list of the awards within the scope of the review and an indication of student numbers and their distribution

- **educational aims of the provision** - a statement of the overall aims of the course or cluster of courses covered by the review

- **learning outcomes** - evaluation of the appropriateness, to the educational aims, of the intended learning outcomes of the course or each of the cluster of courses, making reference to internal and external reference points such as subject benchmark statements and the FHEQ

- **curricula and assessment** - evaluation of the ways in which course content and methods of assessment support achievement of the intended learning outcomes of the course(s); how curricula and assessment together determine the academic level of the award(s) to which the course(s) lead; the extent to which students achieve the course aims and intended learning outcomes

- **quality of learning opportunities**, which can be further divided into:
  - teaching and learning - evaluation of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning strategies employed by the course(s) for providing students with good learning opportunities to support achievement of the intended learning outcomes and academic standards
  - student admission and progression - evaluation of the ways in which students' progression through the course(s) is supported and monitored, from intake to completion
  - learning resources - evaluation of the effectiveness of the deployment of the resources, human and material, that support the learning of students, and of the effectiveness of their linkage to the intended learning outcomes of the course(s)

- **maintenance and enhancement of standards and quality** - evaluation of the effectiveness of procedures for maintaining and enhancing the quality of provision and the security of academic standards in respect of the course(s)

b) There should be an expanded annual monitoring report for each of the courses falling within the scope of the review, which reflects on the 3 years since the end-of-cycle review. These monitoring reports must include responses to comments made in external examiner reports.

**Note:** Using the format of the course monitoring report will mean that there is a continuous audit trail for monitoring across each year of the cycle. It will also support preparations for professional accreditation events by ensuring that monitoring also addresses specific subject specialist issues.

c) Current course specifications for each course within the scope of the review should be appended to the SED.
Available at the review event:

d) In addition courses should provide the following:
   • annual monitoring reports since validation or last end-of-cycle review
   • minutes of relevant Course Board meetings for past two academic years
   • sample module information (sample size and range to be agreed with SASC Chair)
   • professional or statutory body reports
   • action plan from end-of-cycle review
   • any other documents deemed relevant to the subject area under review

The review event

3.66 The mid-cycle review event will be scheduled and organised by the School through the SASC Chair and SQEA. The event will be structured as follows:

a) Panel: The panel will consist of:
   • a Chair from another School (AQE will advise on appropriate Chairs)
   • an external adviser with relevant subject/professional expertise (and ideally familiarity with QAA review processes)
   • two internal panel members (one of whom should be from another area within the School and one from another School)
   • a student representative (subject to availability).

   The SQEA will act as secretary to the review and prepare the subsequent report.

b) Agenda: The event will take place within one day during which the panel will scrutinise the submitted documents. The review exercise is entirely paper based and does not, therefore, include meetings with staff or students or inspection of resources.

   Time should be allotted at the start of the review for the panel to be briefed on their role and the scope of the event and, at the end, to formulate their conclusions. As for end-of-cycle review, the panel will come to a conclusion regarding the management of the quality of the courses and the academic standard of the awards. In doing so they will take into account the context of the provision and external reference points as well as the primary evidence gathered during the review.

   The panel may provide oral feedback on their conclusions to the subject area leaders at the end of the event.

c) The panel’s conclusions:

   i) The panel shall make an overall judgement on the progress that has been made in addressing the recommendations of the last end-of-cycle review and with the action plans arising from annual monitoring.

   ii) In making this judgement, the panel will specify the following:

      • the extent to which the courses have engaged with the quality processes (i.e. how well are they doing with annual monitoring)
• which recommendations have been fully addressed, partially addressed or not addressed
• commendable features of the provision
• matters which have arisen since the last review which the panel believe should be addressed.

d) **Report**: A draft report will be prepared within 3 weeks of the review, and the subject area team will have the opportunity to comment on it. The final report will be agreed by the review panel and will be available within 6 weeks of the review. The report will include details of the following:
  • the review panel
  • the context of the review
  • the conduct of the review (i.e. the documentation examined)
  • the panel’s judgement with regard to progress with addressing the recommendations of the last end-of-cycle review and with the action plans arising from annual monitoring. The report will specify the following:
    o which recommendations have been fully addressed, partially addressed or not addressed
    o commendable features of the provision
    o matters which have arisen since the last review which the panel believe should be addressed.

e) **Response to the report**: As mid-cycle review maps onto the annual monitoring process, the next round of annual monitoring should include a reflection on the following:
  • progress with the annual action plans
  • any specific issues identified from the mid-cycle review
  • evidence of how all the advice given in the report has been put into effect.

### Course modifications

3.67 It is often necessary to make changes to current courses outside of the cycle of validation and review. Such changes may range from updating the content of individual modules to a major redesign of the course curriculum. The procedures for approving the different types of modifications are described below and are summarised in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modification</th>
<th>Level of approval</th>
<th>Approval process</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major modification</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Change to the title of an award/adding a new award title to a course scheme</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Validation event</td>
<td>Changes to the title of an award also require approval from the Academic Planning Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>The creation of a distance or blended learning mode of delivery</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Validation event</td>
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Changes to the course outcomes | University | Validation event
--- | --- | ---
Delivery of an existing course to a partner institution | University | See Section 4: Collaborative Courses

**Minor modifications**

| Addition, deletion or substitution of modules | SASC | Guidance note B | If changes are made to more than 60 credits at any one level of the award, or to more than 120 credits within the entire award, the course will be subject to re-validation.

| Changing the balance of core and optional modules | SASC | Guidance note C

| Changes to the progression requirements of the course | SASC | Any potential variation from the academic regulations must be discussed with Registry.

| Adding a part-time mode of delivery | School | Approval mainly relates to timetabling and resourcing issues

**Major course modifications**

3.68 The following changes to courses are defined as major modifications:

- changes are made to **more than 60 credits at any one level** of the award, **or to more than 120 credits within the entire award**, through the addition or replacement of units
- there is a **change to the title of the award**
- changes to the **overall learning outcomes** of the course
- the addition of a distance learning or blended learning mode of delivery
- delivery of a course at a partner institution
- it is **recommended through a mid-cycle review**
- a **concern is raised through a PSRB review**.

Major course modifications are approved through a University led validation event organised by the AQE upon notification from SASC. The Academic Planning Panel will be informed of all forthcoming approval events for major course modifications.

**Note:** Any proposed **change to an award title** must be submitted to the Academic Planning Panel for approval, before the validation event can be arranged.
3.69 The process for the approval of major modifications follows that for validation of new courses. However, there are a number of differences which are set out below:

a) The **evaluation** document is different from that required for the validation of a new course and must contain the following:
   - a **reflective and evidenced account of the operation of the course(s)** since its initial validation or since its last review. This document should draw on such sources as: annual monitoring reports, external examiner reports, Course Board minutes and, where appropriate, PSRB or other external reports. At the pre-meeting for the review event, it will be agreed which of these source documents will be circulated to the panel and which will be made available to the panel at the review meeting
   - a summary of **any changes made to the course** since it was first validated or last re-validated. These are the minor incremental changes that are approved through SASC
   - an explanation of the **reasons for the review/re-validation** and the **rationale for any proposed changes to the course(s)** which the panel is being asked to consider as part of the review/re-validation event. Click [here](#) for the template of the Rationale and Overview document for the revalidation.

b) The **agenda for the review** meeting will follow that for new course validations but will normally include a meeting with current and, ideally, former students on the course(s)

**Minor modifications**

**Minor modifications to courses and modules which do not require formal approval**

3.70 The following modifications to courses and modules do not require formal approval. Where appropriate, such changes should be included in the Module Guide.

a) Updating the detailed content and/or routine teaching pattern of a module without changing the learning outcomes or mode of delivery.

b) Updating the reading lists and core texts. (N.B. The Library will need to be informed of the change).

c) Changes to the computing resources or software which students are required to use to meet existing approved learning outcomes. (The School would, however, have to be able to support the resource implications of such a change).

d) The following operational changes to modules:
   - the semester of delivery of a module
   - the module reference number
   - the Division to which the module belongs
   (Although not requiring SASC approval, any such changes must be negotiated with the course leaders for any other courses on which they are taught and must then be recorded on QLS).
Minor modifications to modules which require approval

3.71 Changes to the **defining features of modules** require approval through SASC. Each School will have its own form and procedures for the submission and consideration of modifications but the process should be in line with the principles set in the following [Guidance Note – Module Modification](#). Defining features of a module are:

- title
- aims
- level
- credit tariff
- learning outcomes
- assessment method and weighting between components of assessment

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<tr>
<th>Please note that following SASC approval:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) Modifications must be recorded on the student record system (QLS).</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii) Modifications to modules and courses must be tracked through annual course monitoring to check whether there have been enough incremental changes since validation to trigger the need for a course review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Changes to courses must also feed into the annual updating of the course specification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 4: Academic Collaborations

This section covers:

- Overview and principles for academic collaboration
- Initiating a collaboration
- Risk analysis and due diligence checks
- Financial aspects of a collaborative proposal
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Approval processes for new collaborations
- Memorandum of Cooperation
- Managing collaborations – Collaborations Management Handbook, Academic Link Tutor role
- Monitoring and Review
- Terminating a Collaboration
This section is under review. If you need any information related to the academic collaboration then please contact the Director of Internationalisation.
Section 5: Assessment Processes and External Examining

This section covers:

- Assessment in the context of QAA Quality Code for Higher Education; LSBU Academic Regulations etc.
- Design and approval of assessments
- School/Department responsibilities for assessment – good assessment practice
- External examiners – appointment of; roles; supporting external examiners etc.
- External examiner reports
- Link to Academic Regulations
- Operation of Examination Boards
Context

Purpose and principles of assessment

5.1 The QAA Quality Code for Higher Education sets out the following expectation about assessment:

“Higher education providers ensure that students have appropriate opportunities to show that they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the award of a qualification or credit.” Chapter B6: Assessment of students and accreditation of prior learning.

Additionally, it is expected that:

“Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where: a) the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment b) both the UK threshold standards and the academic standards of the relevant degree-awarding body have been satisfied.” Chapter A3.2: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards.

5.2 The University’s Academic Regulations for states that:

“The purpose of assessment is to measure students’ learning, skills, and understanding. It also contributes to students’ learning because students reflect on their learning and, through feedback, are helped to recognise and enhance their achievements.”

and

“Assessment enables students to demonstrate that they have achieved the outcomes of the course of study on which they are enrolled and achieved the standard of the award for which they are a candidate”.

5.3 Assessment links into a range of University procedures and regulations, including:

- procedures and regulations which are intended to safeguard the integrity of assessment and to reinforce consistent treatment of students and consistent decision-making. Most of these procedures and regulations are separately documented in full, in such documents as the Academic Regulations.
- a summary of responsibilities which the University devolves to Schools and Departments, which are intended to ensure that assessment fulfils its purpose and is valid and reliable
- an outline of the operational arrangements by which Examination Boards ensure accuracy and consistency
- the external examiner system as applied at London South Bank University, including principles, roles, criteria for appointment and for termination of contracts and how external examiners’ reports are used.
5.4 The diagram below shows how assessment relates to other University regulations and processes.

![Diagram of Assessment Design and Approval](image)

### Design and approval of assessments

5.5 The method(s) of assessment chosen for each module requires formal approval, either through course validation or through the approval of modifications to modules. The procedures for these are set out in Section 3 of the Academic Quality and Enhancement Manual.

5.6 The continued appropriateness and the enhancement of the effectiveness of assessments are confirmed through:
- the external examining process (see below)
- annual monitoring of courses and modules (see Section 3 of the LSBU Academic Quality and Enhancement Manual)
- periodic review of courses and subject areas (see Section 3 of the LSBU Academic Quality and Enhancement Manual)
- examination boards (see Academic Regulation).

5.7 In designing assessments the following requirements should be taken into account:
- the amount and timing of the assessment should enable effective and appropriate measurement of students' achievement of intended learning outcomes, so as to ensure the standard of the award and each module contributing to it;
• assessment practice should promote effective learning, (for example, through the use of formative as well as summative assessment);
• the chosen method of assessment should comply with the need for it to be conducted with rigour, probity and fairness and with due regard for security;
• the need to minimise opportunities for plagiarism and other forms of unfair practice.

School/Division responsibilities for assessment

5.8 Responsibility for ensuring that assessment is reliable, valid, at the appropriate level and matched to learning outcomes rests with the relevant academic staff. Systems for fulfilling these responsibilities may be defined for a whole School, or a Department, however, the University expects these to include:

• systems, based on independent internal corroboration, which ensure that assessment tasks are clearly specified, at the appropriate level, allow students to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes, are capable of discriminating between stronger and weaker candidates and avoid inappropriate overlap between different components of assessment in the same module and, as far as possible, also between different modules taken by the same student

• development of assessment criteria which explain how the allocation of marks rewards the different standard achieved by different students. Such criteria may be generic (applicable to many modules) or specific to an individual assessment task. Criteria should be published to students and to relevant staff involved in marking, or in giving advice and feedback (including those offering the same module at any partner organisation)

• marking schemes which detail how marks will be allocated for a specific piece of assessed work (e.g. for specific issues covered, or for dimensions of the work such as analysis, presentation, content), and any features of the work for which a student may be penalised. Marking schemes must be clear enough to support consistency between markers, but should reflect the criteria and the outcomes and not just the examples used in the delivery of the course

• systems for moderation of marking. Some form of moderation between colleagues is always expected, but the method may be decided in relation to the number of students, the number of staff involved in marking, and the strength and maturity of assessment criteria and marking schemes. In many cases, a system based on moderation of a sample of work may be sufficient, with arrangements to identify and act upon marking discrepancies identified through sampling.

• arrangements for feedback to students, which ensure that different markers give broadly the same level of feedback, and that feedback is timely and useful to the student. Feedback systems may vary, to reflect the mode of delivery and the number of students. For example, each student may receive a general analysis of strengths and weaknesses which helps to set brief individual feedback in context. Systems may also include arrangements for students to meet a member of staff e.g. a personal or group tutor, to receive feedback on overall performance.
protocols for the quality management of forms of assessment such as presentations, group work, oral examination or peer assessment. Such protocols should provide for internal corroboration and moderation and external examiner sampling.

protocols for sampling of assessments for scrutiny by external examiners, including:
  o how the sample is selected from across the marking range,
  o the size of the sample;
  o the method by which external examiners access the sampled assessments, (ie by post or at an assessment day at LSBU)
  o the amount of time set aside for external examiner scrutiny of assessments.

5.9 The table below summarises the assessment processes that Schools/Departments are responsible for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Assessment Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The course team meets to discuss the overall assessment of the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft assessments are moderated and confirmed internally before being sent to the external examiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the moderation is available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments for first sit and resit are agreed at the same time to ensure equivalence and that both are approved by the external examiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the external examiner’s approval of assessments is available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments are accompanied by assessment criteria and a marking scheme and these are published to students e.g. in the Module Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students receive constructive feedback on their performance in a timely manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear guidelines for the internal moderation of assessed work are developed and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module boxes are set up (see Section 3 – module monitoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of internal moderation of assessed work is available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear guidelines for the nature of the sample of assessed work to be seen by the external examiner to be developed and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samples of assessed work to be accompanied by relevant supporting information e.g. full mark lists and statistical data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination Boards are conducted in accordance with LSBU regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeals against the decisions of Examination Boards are dealt with in a timely manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment outcomes, including external examiner comments, are considered as part of the Module Review and appropriate actions included in the action plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
External Examiners

Principles

5.10 An external examiner must be appointed for every credit-bearing module which contributes directly to an award. External examiners will also be appointed:

- to HND and HNC courses (which include Level S and Level 4 modules)
- to CertHE and DipHE courses, Foundation Degrees, and other courses consisting only of modules at Levels S, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 and/or Level 5.
- where Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body approval requires external examiner involvement at Levels S or 4.

For other courses external examiners will be appointed to modules at Levels 5, 6 and 7 only.

5.11 Normally, one external examiner will be appointed for a given module, regardless of the courses to which it contributes or the location of study. However, project and dissertation modules which may be undertaken in relation to significantly differing topics, may be assigned to more than one external examiner. Where this is the case, the subject team need to give particular attention to the clarity of marking criteria and the strength of internal moderation arrangements to ensure consistency.

5.12 The appointment of external examiners for London South Bank awards, and for modules leading to London South Bank awards, requires approval by the Quality and Standards Committee, which has delegated authority from the Academic Board to approve such appointments; QSC is advised on the appointment of external examiners by its External Examiner Committee. These are then notified to Academic Board. This remains the case if the course is delivered and/or assessed elsewhere, or if the external examiner reports additionally to another awarding body.

5.13 LSBU does not normally approve modules or courses for delivery in a language other than English. Should, for any exceptional reason, approval be given for an assessment to be undertaken in a language other than English, this approval would also have to include the arrangements for the marking and moderation of the assessment and for external examiner scrutiny.

External examiner roles

5.13 At the time of their appointment external examiners receive an explanation of their role in the booklet “Information for External Examiners”. This booklet is published electronically.

5.14 The principal roles of external examiners are:
- to verify that standards are appropriate for the level and credit tariff of each module of study and to provide independent, impartial comment on standards set and student achievement of those standards. Their capacity to fulfil this role is based on knowledge of standards set and achieved in other Higher Education Institutions, of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Subject Benchmark Statements and (where applicable) of the expectations of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies or co-awarding bodies.
• to verify that the process of deciding assessment outcomes for individual students is fair, fairly operated, and in line with the University’s regulations

5.15 The first of these roles is fulfilled by external examiners appointed to Subject Area Boards. The second is fulfilled also by external examiners at Award and Progression Boards. External examiners appointed to Single Tier Examination Boards fulfil both functions.

5.16 The external examiner also has a role as a “critical friend” in offering constructive comment, criticism and suggestions for enhancement in the area of assessment practice. External examiners are expected to provide an independent view, informed both by practice elsewhere and by engagement with a subject team at London South Bank over a period. For example, external examiners may advise on issues such as:

• the relationships between assessment and learning outcomes
• the clarity of assessment criteria and marking schemes
• the information given to students about assessment
• feedback given to students
• factors which the subject team should consider in evaluating or improving assessment
• the operation of Examination Boards

5.17 External examiners do not themselves assess students, except where course regulations provide for the involvement in assessment of members of the Examination Board other than those responsible for the delivery of the module — for example in forms of assessment which involve presentation to a group of examiners, or in which the Board views a design show or performance. The role of the external examiner is to advise the internal examiners and the Examination Board, and not to determine the outcomes of assessment either of individual students or groups of students.

5.18 External examiners may comment on the content and delivery of a course of study in the light of their engagement with the course team on assessment practice, but they do not have a direct role in the quality assurance of the curriculum or of resources for teaching and learning. These matters are addressed through other systems such as annual monitoring, course validation, course review, and subject review. These systems also involve external academic and professional peers (see Section 3).

5.19 External examiners may meet students, either at the time of the Examination Board or at another time during the year. However, such meetings are to familiarise the external examiner with a course and with the experience of students, and not to determine the outcome of assessment. External examiners should not, therefore, conduct a viva voce examination to determine either a module mark or a student’s classification.

5.20 The roles of external examiners at Subject Area Boards and Award and Progression Boards are set out in the paragraphs below on Academic Regulations and Examination Boards.
The appointment of external examiners

5.21 The Academic Quality and Enhancement Office provides a guide for staff in nominating and providing information to a new external examiner, and also guidance for potential external examiners to help them decide whether they are willing to take on the role.

5.22 External examiners will normally be appointed for a four year term to a Subject Area Examination Board. The term of appointment normally runs from September in the first year until December following the third year (e.g. September 2016 to December 2020). The purpose of this overlap in periods of appointment is to allow the incoming external examiner to approve examination papers and coursework briefs for Semester 1 modules, and the outgoing external examiner to complete any outstanding business arising from the summer or resit Examination Boards. The
subject area external examiner who approves the paper/coursework brief will also sample the marked work.

5.23 Normally, external examiners for Award and Progression Boards will be appointed from amongst the team of external examiners appointed to a broadly related Subject Area Board. If an external examiner is appointed both to a Subject Area Board and also to an Award and Progression Board, the two appointments will usually terminate at the same time.

5.24 The External Examiner Approval Panel chair has the authority to approve the extension of an external examiner’s appointment for one additional year. However, such extensions will only be approved if they meet the criteria specified by the QAA.

Criteria for the appointment of external examiners

5.25 An external examiner should have current or very recent experience of the standards set and achieved in relevant courses at comparable levels in other UK Higher Education Institutions and of current assessment practice in higher education.

5.26 An external examiner should have enough recent examining experience, preferably including external examining experience, to assure the Academic Board of his or her competence in assessment and understanding of academic standards in a broad higher education context. Normally, an external examiner without prior external examining experience will be appointed only if he or she forms part of a team of experienced external examiners on the relevant Examination Board(s).

5.27 The principal criteria for an appointment to a Subject Area Board are:

- subject expertise appropriate to the content, level and context of the modules to be assessed,
- awareness of the Subject Benchmark Statements and of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, and of the standards set and achieved in other Higher Education Institutions.

5.28 The principal criterion for appointment to an Award and Progression Board is experience of the process of assessment and the exercise of discretion within the regulations. Subject expertise is not essential to fulfil the role, but because Award and Progression external examiners are appointed from amongst the team for a relevant Subject Area, they will normally have broadly relevant subject expertise.

Conflict of Interest

5.29 External examiner teams for a Subject Area should be appointed from a variety of different Higher Education Institutions, and where relevant also from professional practice. There should not be:

- more than one external examiner from the same institution in the team of external examiners appointed to the same Subject Area Board or Award and Progression Board (exceptions may be agreed in the case of very large external examining teams dealing with very distinct specialist pathways, such as those on the Framework of Awards by Continuing Professional Development)
- reciprocal external examining between courses or Divisions in two institutions
- replacement of an external examiner by an individual from the same institution
• an external from an institution which has been the source of examiners in the recent past (normally five years)
• a period of at least five years must elapse before an external examiner can be reappointed.

5.30 An external examiner should not normally concurrently hold more than three substantial external examining appointments. An appointment to a Subject Area Board and to an associated Award and Progression Board may be regarded as one appointment.

5.31 An external examiner should not have current or previous close involvement with London South Bank which might compromise objectivity. In the five years preceding appointment an external examiner should not normally have been a member of staff, governor, student, or near relative of a member of London South Bank staff or of an LSBU student, associated with the course or Subject Area.

5.32 An external examiner should not concurrently:
• act as a consultant at London South Bank
• be personally associated with the sponsorship of students
• be required to moderate the work of colleagues who are recruited as students
• be in a position to influence significantly the future employment of students
• be directly involved in the placement of students in the external examiner’s organisation
• be in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the course of study
• be significantly involved, either currently or recently in substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the course or modules in question
• be a member of staff from a partner organisation in a Division which offers courses collaboratively with London South Bank
• be a member of the governing body of a collaborative partner institution.

Timetable

5.34 Typically, nominations for new external or extensions for existing external must be ready for consideration by the May External Examiners Approval Panel. An external examiner approved by May will take up his or her appointment in September and continue until December four years later. His or her replacement will then need to be approved by May to start in September of that year.

5.35 An external examiner may be reappointed in exceptional circumstances but only after a period of five years or more has elapsed since their last appointment.

Procedure for Confirming Eligibility to Work in the UK: UK Border Agency Requirements

5.36 London South Bank University is committed to equality of opportunity in its recruitment, selection and employment practices. To prevent discrimination the University treats all applicants in the same way and verifies the eligibility of all new staff to work in the UK in accordance with the procedures detailed below.

Employing a worker who is not eligible to work in the UK is a criminal offence that carries large financial penalties. Nobody should commence work at the University until their eligibility to work in the UK has been verified under the procedures listed.
below. The University would be liable for the same penalties if it engaged someone as an External Examiner who was not eligible to work in the UK.

At the time of producing this document, the University can engage External Examiners who are UK or EEA nationals, or non-EEA nationals who have been granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK. Some individuals who have been granted visas through the UK’s Points Based System may be eligible to undertake work with specific restrictions but any such cases must be checked with HRM Services.

Obtaining Copies of Documentation

The University requires seeing original evidence of an External Examiner’s right to work in the UK. The relevant academic department will ask External Examiners to provide photocopies of appropriate documentation. This must be either:

- their passport, residence permit or national identity card, showing that they are a British citizen or a national of an EEA (European Economic Area) country, or that they are allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK

or

- other documents as required by the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. A full list of acceptable documentation can be obtained by contacting the Quality Advisor in AQE

The photocopies should include:

- the front cover
- all the pages which give the potential employee's personal details, including photograph and signature
- if the individual is not a British citizen or EEA national, any visa/endorsement which allow the potential employee to do the type of work they have been offered.

The photocopies should be forwarded to AQE along with other relevant documentation. AQE will be unable to confirm an External Examiner’s appointment without this evidence of eligibility to work in the UK.

Verifying the Original Documentation

When the External Examiner makes their first visit to the University, Heads of Subject (or administrators/nominee) will need to see and take copies of the original documentation as detailed above. If the External Examiner is expected to undertake a significant amount of work before visiting the University, they should be asked to send their original documents by courier/secure delivery so that they can be verified.

The person taking copies of the original documentation should ensure they are satisfied that the External Examiner is the rightful holder of the documents by checking:

- photographs to ensure that they are consistent with the appearance (if present) of the External Examiner
The photocopies should be **signed and dated** by the person who has checked the documents and forwarded immediately to AQE who will keep them on file. If there are any queries regarding documentation or an individual's eligibility to work in the UK, please contact HRM Services for further guidance.

A copy of all External Examiner’s identity documents will be held by AQE both in hard copy and electronically for a maximum of five years or until the External Examiner has completed their term of office with the University. Any copies held by the academic department should be securely destroyed as soon as the nomination form has been sent to AQE.

**Terminating an external examiner appointment**

5.37 The appointment of an external examiner may be terminated by the Academic Board if the Academic Board judges that the responsibilities of the appointment have not been or cannot be fulfilled in the manner or to the standard which the University requires. Reasons for termination could include:

- failure to provide reports or providing inadequate reports on the assessment process required by the University
- a change in the external examiner’s circumstances which brings about potential conflicts of interest which might jeopardise objectivity (similar to those outlined in paragraphs 5.30 and 5.31 above)
- persistent refusal to work within the University’s regulations
- relocation of the external examiner far from the UK
- conduct which in the case of an employee of the University would be the subject of disciplinary action

5.38 An Award and Progression Board external examiner who is unable to attend two successive Award and Progression Boards may be asked to withdraw from the Award and Progression Board appointment, but may remain as Subject Area Board external examiner.

**Supporting the work of the subject area external examiner**

5.39 The Head of Division or Subject Group Leader should ensure that the following steps are taken to enable the Subject Area external examiner to fulfil his or her role:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrange for newly appointed external examiners to attend an induction session</td>
<td>The University hosts an annual one day external examiner conference, the afternoon session provides Schools with an opportunity for examiners to learn about the University's procedures and how these operate at School and subject discipline level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send course information to newly appointed external examiners</td>
<td>The Subject Area external examiner’s role in verifying standards is fulfilled in relation to the assessment of individual modules. However, it is helpful for Subject Area external examiners also to be provided with course structure diagrams or course specifications so that they can see how the modules fit into the main courses to which those modules contribute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send the external examiner Module Guides for each module in the contract</td>
<td>Module Guides will normally be sent each semester, but they should be collated together for the external examiner rather than sent piecemeal. The Module Guides are sent to the external examiner for information, and not for approval.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send draft examination papers for all relevant modules</td>
<td>The Assessment Calendar sets dates by which draft examination papers must be sent to external examiners for comment. The external examiner will normally be sent the resit paper at the same time as the first sit paper. Checking the papers is not the responsibility only of the external examiner; the internal moderation process should ensure that draft examination papers are of a suitable standard. External examiners must be asked to comment on and suggest amendments to the question papers within two weeks. Their role is to assist in identifying potential problems at this stage, for example concerning the scope of the paper, possible overlap between questions or with coursework, ambiguity in phrasing, appropriateness of level, questions which might not discriminate sufficiently between weaker and stronger candidates. The marking scheme should also be sent to the external examiner. External examiners comment at this stage on the validity of the assessment, and the standard set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send new coursework briefs for modules assessed wholly or largely by coursework for comment by the external examiner</td>
<td>Where a module is assessed wholly or largely by coursework, the external examiner should normally have an opportunity to comment on the coursework brief. The role in this case is the same as when the external examiner approves an examination paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send all coursework briefs for information</td>
<td>The University’s intention is to improve external examiner involvement in coursework assessment without producing an unacceptable workload. Some coursework briefs are the same in principle year-on-year. Often these are published in Module Guides. The external examiner does not normally need to see the brief each year; however, s/he will do so if they are in Module Guides. Many modules are assessed by a mixture of examination and coursework. Depending on the weighting given to coursework in determining the outcome of the module, it may not be necessary for the external examiner to see coursework briefs for these modules before they are given to students. However, external examiners should be sent the coursework brief(s) together with any draft examination papers to check for any significant areas of overlap.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Establish protocols and make arrangements for the external examiner to sample marked work | • The external examiner should have an opportunity to see and comment upon marked student work for every module for which he or she is contracted. 
• If the module is assessed by a combination of examination and coursework, the external examiner should see samples of both. 
• The nature of the sample may be negotiated between the external examiner and the member of academic staff responsible for the Subject Area, but must be sufficient for the external examiner to fulfil his or her role in relation to all the modules in the contract. The sample will normally include work over a spectrum of marks from fail to 70%+, work at the pass/fail border, or work considered borderline first class. 
• The practical arrangements for sampling may vary both to reflect the type of student work and, within reasonable limits, to reflect external examiner preferences. They might involve: 
  - Semester 1 marked work sent to external examiners during Semester 2. 
  - A visit by external examiners during Semester 2 to look at marked Semester 1 work. 
  - Semester 2 marked work is sent to the external examiner before the Subject Area Examination Board in June. External examiners normally visit the University immediately before the Subject Area Board to look at marked work. |
| Arrange for the external examiner to attend the Subject Area Board | • The week in which the Subject Area Boards will take place is published more than a year in advance, in the assessment calendar. Schools should ensure that the external examiners are advised of the date of the Board at the beginning of the academic year. 
• The external examiner shares in the remit of the whole Board. He or she is asked to advise the Board on each set of marks for a module, on the basis of sampling the marked work. 
• Exceptionally, external examiners may need to comment on issues concerning the assessment which have come to light only after the students have done the work, but which should influence future assessment practice. 
• The external examiner is asked to comment on standards set and achieved, relating these comments to relevant Subject Benchmark Statements. |
The external examiner’s report

5.40 The Head of Division, (or other senior member of School staff) should prepare a response to the external examiners report using the standard response template sent to them by AQE
Using the reports to achieve enhancement of modules and courses

5.41 External examiners’ reports and responses to the reports are considered in module review and annual course monitoring (see Section 3). Subject and course teams must have an effective way of considering the external examiner’s comments, e.g. Divisional meetings or Course Boards. Course and subject teams are not required to do everything which the external examiner suggests, but must give thoughtful consideration to suggestions, and let the external examiner know the outcome.

5.42 External examiner reports, considered together with module performance data and student evaluations, can lead to proposals to modify individual modules, or to set examinations or coursework differently within the same module specification. Similarly external examiner comments on the problems which students have experienced with a particular module in a particular course can lead to proposals for course modification which should be referred to in annual monitoring (see Section 3).

5.43 External examiners may draw attention to ways in which the operation of assessment during the year, or the way in which the external examiner has been involved and informed, have fallen short of what is said in the Module Guide or in other information sent to external examiners – for example, external examiners may report that they have not seen all the Module Guides, or have not seen coursework briefs. Where this is the case, the subject team must take action to ensure that the University’s normal requirements for involving external examiners are fully met.

Using the reports to contribute the University-wide enhancement of assessment

5.44 Each year AQE prepares a report for the Quality and Standards Committee summarising the comments of external examiners on the general operation of assessment. The report is based on external examiner reports, but does not touch on subject-specific issues, and normally includes some recommendations for improvement in University-wide systems for assessment, Examination Boards, and the involvement of external examiners.

External Examiner Fees

5.45 External Examiners’ fees will be paid on receipt of the final Annual Report. Examiners’ expenses may be paid at other times during the year, upon receipt of the appropriate claim. Details of the procedures for claiming expenses are attached to the fees and expenses schedules included with the External Examiner's appointment letter. All fee and expense claims must be submitted within three months of the work it relates to being completed.
### Do's and Dont's of the External Examiner Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Do's</strong></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>check whether some modules in the current external examiner's contract can be reallocated to another external examiner appointed to the same Subject Area Board. The modules in a contract do all not have to be at the same level, or from the same course. The normal workload for an external examiner is about 15 modules.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inform the AQE of any module reallocations and/or decisions that a replacement appointment is not needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(if you are the Dean, Head of Department etc.) make it clear who is responsible for sounding out potential external examiners.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(if you are the Head of Department or Associate Professor responsible for suggesting an external examiner) begin to approach possible examiners as early as possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>acquire an information leaflet and a nomination form from the your school quality advisor or AQE to send to prospective external examiners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ensure that all the nominee's relevant personal details are entered electronically on the nomination form.</td>
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<tr>
<td>make sure all the modules in the contract are listed on the nomination form. (if some of the precise modules are still subject to negotiation, it is better to say this on the form than to hold up the appointment. We can approve the appointment to the board, subject to confirmation of some of the modules).</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>make sure that the nomination form is ready in time for the May meeting of the External Examiner Approval Panel. Deadline for papers is normally 2 weeks prior to the meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>contact the newly appointed external examiner shortly after the appointment to make sure that he or she receives all the information needed to do the job.</td>
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<tr>
<td>assign each new module to a subject area, usually an existing one.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assign the course to an Award and Progression Board, usually an existing one.</td>
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<tr>
<td>make sure that an external examiner has been appointed by May in the academic year prior to that in which a module will run for the first time. The new external examiner needs to be appointed in time to approve exam papers and new coursework briefs for Semester 1 modules.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete a reallocation of duties form (Form EE2) if you are making major changes to an external examiner's role e.g. changing significantly his/her module allocation or extending his/her duties to include the Award and Progression Board. This form needs to go to the External Examiner Approval Panel in the same way as a nomination for a new appointment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Don’ts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>delay</td>
<td>Every module needs to be allocated to an approved external examiner who will act in respect of Semester 1 assessments. The replacement contract will run from September and appointments need to be approved by May of the same year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approach people from a department where you or relevant colleagues at London South Bank is an external examiner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approach people from the same institution as the last external examiner, or the same institution as other examiners appointed to the same Subject Area Board, unless the examining team is very large and diverse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make any private agreements with the proposed external examiner, which may not accord with the contract which he or she will receive. In particular, do not make financial promises, or promises about air or first class travel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>append CVs and publication lists to the nomination form, or use them instead of the nomination form.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contact the nominee to discuss assessment, or send papers for comment, before the appointment has been approved: this can undermine the approval process and cause embarrassment if the nominee is not approved.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assume that a new course means a new external examiner. A new course will not normally require a new external examiner. Creating a new Subject Area Board will normally be needed only if there is a radical curriculum development completely distinct from existing provision. A wholly new postgraduate course with new modules requires appointment of subject area external examiners to those modules almost immediately after validation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Academic regulations and examination boards

5.51 The Academic Regulations courses sets out all of the responsibilities of Examination Boards.

### Preparing for Examination Boards

5.52 The annual assessment calendar specifies the weeks in which the Subject Area Boards and the Award and Progression boards will take place in the summer and the week in which Boards will be reconvened to consider the outcomes of referred and deferred assessment. The calendar is produced by the Academic Registry and approved by Academic Board. Click here for the Assessment Calendar.

An equivalent calendar should be prepared locally for courses which span the academic year or have multiple intakes each year.
### 5.53 Responsibilities in preparing for Examination Boards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head of Division/ subject area leader / nominee</strong></td>
<td>Inform Subject Area external examiners of the date of the Board as early as possible, (ideally at the previous summer exam board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inform members of the Board of the date, time and location of the Board and ensure that they receive an agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Award and Progression Board Chair / nominee</strong></td>
<td>Inform Award and Progression Board external examiners of the date of the Board as early as possible, (ideally at the previous summer exam board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inform members of the Board of the date, time and location of the Board and ensure that they receive an agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module Co-ordinators</strong></td>
<td>Complete marking and internal moderation by the date set in the assessment calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide the course administrator, by the date specified, with marks for each component of assessment for each student registered for the module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Quality</strong></td>
<td>Provide training for Chairs of Examination Boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue Chairs of Examination Boards with letters of appointment and ensure that they have met the requirement to attend the training in order to act as a Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Office</strong></td>
<td>Enter all module marks on the student record system (QLS) by the date specified in the assessment calendar and generate documents for the Subject Area Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make all practical arrangements for meetings, including external examiners’ overnight accommodation (if required).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notify other relevant offices of changes in the provisional marks made at the Subject Area Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generate spreadsheets from QLS for the Award and Progression Board, in cooperation with the Course Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inform the Examination and Conferments Office of the date, time and location of all Examination Boards and send the full agenda for each Award and Progression Board to the Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide a secretary for every Examination Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Record on QLS the end-of-year outcomes for all students except those for whom an award is to be conferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide the Examination and Conferments Office with lists of students for whom an award has been conferred.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deciding the marks for a module at the Subject Area Board

5.54 Before the meeting of the Board:
- internal examiners mark the work, using the agreed marking scheme
- marks are moderated in accordance with the School or Divisional policy
- in the case of a Semester 1 module, students are advised of provisional module marks
- where marks have been ratified by a semester 1 exam board, students will be advised of ratified module marks
- the external examiner for the module reviews an agreed sample of the assessed work, in the light of the assessment criteria and marking scheme

5.55 For each module the Subject Area Board receives:
- a list of provisional marks for all students in all components of assessment
- a short (usually oral) report from the Module Co-ordinator whenever relevant, explaining any issues which may have affected the assessment
- any comments the external examiner wishes to make on the basis of sampling

5.56 External examiners are members of the Board, sharing in its remit. They are asked to moderate assessed work and not to re-mark it. They may not require a change to an individual mark seen as part of a sample

5.57 The Board may decide to scale the module marks on the basis of:
- information from the Module Co-ordinator about problems or errors in the delivery or assessment of the module which may have affected the achievement of all students registered for the module, or of a defined group of students
- external examiner advice that the marking has been too harsh or too generous

If marks are scaled, the Board must be satisfied that there is evidence that students who receive a pass mark have met the learning outcomes of the module, and that marking reflects the published assessment criteria and marking scheme. The method used for scaling marks should be determined by the Subject Area Board.

5.58 The decision to scale the marks rests with the Board, and not with the external examiner alone. However, the Board should have particular regard for the external examiner’s advice, and should carefully consider and record any decision counter to that advice.

5.59 If the external examiner’s view of the marks differs from that of the internal marker, but not to a significant extent, the Board may decide to offer advice for the future. An external view that marking has been marginally too generous or too harsh might also lead the Board to modify individual marks very close to the pass/fail border, without changing others for the same module. The Board’s recommendations should be considered in the context of module monitoring (see Section 3).

5.60 If the external examiner is concerned about lack of consistency in marking, he or she may ask to look at a larger sample, perhaps together with an internal marker, to assist the Board in deciding the marks.

The Award and Progression Board

The scope for exercising discretion at the Award and Progression Board is set out in the Academic Regulations.
Section 6: Student Engagement

This section covers:

- Principles – summary of key mechanisms for Student Engagement
- Student Participation
- Student Surveys
- Monitoring Effectiveness and Enhancement of Student Engagement
Context

QAA Quality Code for HE and Student Engagement

6.1 It is widely accepted that the views of students, individually and collectively, should inform quality systems with the purpose of improving the student educational experience both for current and future cohorts. Student involvement in quality can have a positive influence on the delivery and development of any aspect of the student educational experience, whether implemented by the higher education provider, a school, a division, or an individual member of staff (taken from the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part B: Chapter B5: Student Engagement June 2013).

6.2 The following table summarises the key mechanisms by which LSBU engages with students using the indicators of sound practice from Chapter B5: Student Engagement of the UK Quality Code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Current LSBU practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>HE providers, in partnership with their student body, define and promote the range of opportunities for any student to engage in educational enhancement and quality assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Module Evaluation Questionnaires</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• National Student Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Postgraduate Research Experience Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Course Board Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Representation on University and School committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>HE providers create and maintain an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Module Evaluation Questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National Student Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Course Board Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Representation on University and School committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student’s Union Excellence in Education Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arrangements exist for the effective representation of the collective student voice at all organisational levels, and these arrangements provide opportunities for all students to be heard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student representation, (normally SU President/Vice Presidents), on Board of Governors, Academic Board, QSC, Student Experience Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student representation on SASC and other School Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student representation on Periodic Review panels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• LSBU Student Panel?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4. HE providers ensure that student representatives and staff have access to training and on-going support to equip them to fulfil their roles in educational enhancement and quality assurance effectively.
- Students’ Union run Course Board Representatives engagement and development activities
- Student representation on Periodic Review panels development activities

### 5. Students and staff engage in evidence-based discussions based on mutual sharing of information.
- Student Satisfaction Action Group
- Availability of Course Monitoring Reports, External Examiner Reports, NSS results to Course Boards
- LSBU Student Panel

### 6. Staff and students to disseminate and jointly recognise the enhancements made to the student educational experience, and the efforts of students in achieving these successes.
- ‘You Said We Did’ in Course Guides and Module Guides
- My LSBU – information about NSS, ‘You Said We Did’

### 7. The effectiveness of student engagement is monitored and reviewed at least annually, using pre-defined key performance indicators, and policies and processes enhanced where required.
- Annual report to Academic Board on outcomes of surveys

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**Student participation**

**Course Boards**

**Nature and purpose**

6.3 A Course Board is a forum in which staff and students (normally through student representatives) may formally discuss issues about the operation, general health and potential improvement of a course, or of several related courses.

6.4 Normally, there are two Course Boards a year, (one per semester). They are formal meetings for which an agenda is prepared and minutes taken.

6.5 The primary purpose of Course Boards is to provide a forum for a formal on the record dialogue between staff and students aimed at identifying areas for improvement. Staff would be expected to put into effect the measures necessary to realise the improvements and to report back to the Board on the progress made. Although the normal format involves elected course representatives, other arrangements may sometimes be preferable e.g. a small course may prefer to involve all students. Meetings may be integrated with a scheduled activity which brings students together or which involves students on the same course from different sites.
6.6 Distance Learning Courses should define and publish arrangements for interactive student representation, going beyond the provision of feedback through individual student questionnaires.

6.7 Courses at partner organisations which lead to a London South Bank award are expected to have a forum for staff-student discussion similar to a Course Board, but not necessarily in the same format as at LSBU.

**Membership**

6.8 The membership of a Course Board should normally include:

- the Course Director (Chair)
- all staff with a significant role in teaching the course (including those from Schools other than the one where the course is based)
- an elected student representative of each year and mode of the course
- if two or more courses have a joint Course Board, there should be student representatives from each course
- if a course is offered both at London South Bank and at a partner organisation, the Course Director at LSBU is a member of the Course Board at the partner organisation, and the Course Director at the partner organisation is normally also an ex officio member of the Course Board at London South Bank. They should be sent papers, and efforts may be made to schedule Course Board meetings to coincide with inter-institutional visits
- other support staff representatives by invitation, such as relevant School Librarian
- a course administrator, or other designated member of School staff, should be assigned as minute taking secretary to the Course Board.

**Terms of reference**

6.9 The indicative terms of reference for Course Boards are:

- to discuss staff and student ideas and proposals about the operation, currency, scope, delivery, sequence, and assessment of the course
- to consider summaries of student evaluations and other evidence gathered as part of the monitoring process, and actions taken in response, e.g. Module Evaluation Questionnaires; National Student Survey
- to consider the annual course monitoring report and external examiner reports
- to discuss proposals for improving the management of or access to course-specific learning facilities, within the limits of available overall resource
- to consider initiatives in areas such as staff-student communication, new student induction, and feedback systems
- to comment on proposed modifications to the course
- to report back on actions taken in response to student feedback.

Click [here](#) to download Course Board pack.
Course representatives

6.10 Course representatives are elected annually and receive training provided by the Students' Union in conjunction with the University.

6.11 The Students' Union also provides online advice about the roles and responsibilities of Course Representatives.

School representatives

6.12 Each School has one student representatives selected by an interview process from the pool of course representatives. The School Representative's role is:

- To represent the views of students in their School, and to other students, the Union, the University and other partner organisations;
- To provide a student perspective on issues discussed by these committees;
- To communicate changes and decisions at School level to course reps and other students in the School;
- To communicate with the London South Bank Students’ Union and the University regarding School issues.

Student representation on LSBU committees

6.13 The following key University committees include at least one student representative as ex officio member

- Board of Governors
- Operations Board
- Academic Board
- Quality and Standards Committee
- Research Committee
- Student Experience Committee

6.14 Key School committees, particularly the School Academic Standards Committee, also include student representation. Schools are responsible for finding ways to help and encourage students to take up opportunities to participate in SASC and other relevant committees.

Other types of student participation

6.15 Other types of student participation include:

- Education related focus groups
- Education forum
- Periodic review panels
- Validation panels
Student surveys

Module evaluation questionnaire (MEQ)

6.16 As part of the module monitoring process described in Section 3, all taught modules should be evaluated using a Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ) made available to the students who studied the module during a particular semester or session. The questionnaire should be completed by the students towards the end of the teaching period for the module.

6.17 The MEQ is a standard University-wide questionnaire consisting of three sections:

i) **Section 1:** University wide questions requiring students to express a level of satisfaction with the essential aspects of the operation of the module. All modules share common factors which can have a critical bearing on the student learning experience i.e. the quality of teaching and learning support provided by the academic staff involved and also the resources available to support learning.

ii) **Section 2:** School specific questions that reflect the specific requirements for the delivery of modules different subject areas, e.g. clinical practice, field trips, use of specialist facilities such as laboratories or studios.

iii) **Section 3:** Qualitative comments on specific aspects of the content and delivery of the module.

6.18 The analysis and reporting of the data is explained in Section 3. The information collected via the MEQ will be shared by the Module Co-ordinator with the members of staff to which the information relate.

6.19 When the module monitoring process is complete, the Head of Division should ensure that systems are in place to inform students of the outcomes of the evaluation and the action taken.

National student survey (NSS)

6.20 The administration of the National Student Survey is spread across a range of different areas of the University, each with specific responsibilities for promoting and coordinating the operation of the Survey. Those most involved with the NSS are: Schools, the Students’ Union, Marketing and the Business Intelligence Unit.

6.21 The results of the NSS are disseminated to the Schools and responded to, at subject level, through the course monitoring process and, more strategically, through School strategic planning.

Other internal student surveys

6.22 The University also conducts a number of internal surveys of student opinion, each focusing focus on specific student groups or on areas supporting student learning and student life on the LSBU campuses.

6.23 The focus of the internal surveys is kept under review and periodically adjusted in the light of the continued usefulness of the data each produces. Some surveys may,
therefore, be discontinued and others added over the course of a number of years. The current range of annual internal surveys includes:

- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey.
- Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
- New arrivals survey
- International student barometer
- LSBU graduation survey
- Student support and facilities surveys, e.g. library; catering.

**Monitoring effectiveness and enhancement of student engagement**

6.24 Academic Board receives an annual report on the outcomes of the NSS and of internal LSBU surveys. This report is also considered by the Quality and Standards Committee

6.25 Actions taken in response to MEQs, the NSS and other surveys are fed back to students through the ‘You Said We Did’ campaign. Details of how an aspect of the delivery of a course or module has changed as a result of student comment are included in the next iteration of the relevant course and module guides.

6.27 The Students’ Union has set up its Excellence in Education awards, where students can nominate individuals under the categories of:

1. Best Academic Assessment and Feedback Award
2. Best Placement Provider
3. Building ‘The Students Community’ Award
4. Employability Enhancement Award
5. Innovation in Teaching Award
6. Outstanding Course Rep Award
7. Outstanding Lecturer Award
8. Outstanding Student Support Award
9. Outstanding Supervisor Award
10. Student Experience Impact Award
11. Students’ Union Award
Appendix A
This is the UK Quality Code expectations mapping where we mapped how LSBU meets each of the expectations and who monitors the activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>How LSBU comply</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1: UK and European Reference Points for Academic Standards</strong></td>
<td>Alignment to Framework to Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and subject benchmark statements is required for all new course approvals.</td>
<td>Validation panels, annual monitoring, periodic review panels, external examiner system (examiners report on standards and level of awards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A 2.1:</strong> In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.</td>
<td>LSBU has an ongoing commitment to revising Academic Regulations and Procedures to make sure they are fit for purpose. These are made public on the web site <a href="http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures">http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures</a></td>
<td>QSC can make in year changes to procedures in the best interest of students and if it is made clear they are being added as amendments to existing procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A 2.2:</strong> Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.</td>
<td>The definitive information made available to students and the recording any local protocols of differences from the Academic Regulations, for example because of professional body requirements, are made in the Course Specification</td>
<td>Validation panels, annual monitoring, periodic review panels, and through the external examiner system (examiners report on standards and level of awards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A 3.1:</strong> Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.</td>
<td>LSBU use an approval process which assigns risk to the type of validation event required</td>
<td>Validation panels, annual monitoring, periodic review panels, external examiner system (examiners report on standards and level of awards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 3.2: Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where: a) the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment b) both the UK threshold standards and the academic standards of the relevant degree-awarding body have been satisfied.</td>
<td>Verified for new courses by the validation event and checked through annual monitoring of courses monitoring reports.</td>
<td>Academic Board - with authority delegated to QSC, and checked through the external examiners system for qualification types. Each course monitored by SASC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 3.3: Degree-awarding bodies ensure that processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are implemented which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained.</td>
<td>Individual modules are reviewed every year and this is used for course monitoring reports which feed into School action plans for making continuous improvement.</td>
<td>Checked through validation and re-validation events and by individual external examiners. Monitored by course teams through annual monitoring and through periodic review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 3.4: In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether: a) UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved b) the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.</td>
<td>External advisers are used in validation events and external examiners report on academic standards annually</td>
<td>External examiner reports are used in annual monitoring reports and actions resulting from external examiner comments are discussed at SASCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation</td>
<td>How LSBU comply</td>
<td>Monitored by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1:</strong> Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.</td>
<td>Course design by course teams is further supported through Centre for Research Informed Teaching (CRIT) and checked through validation events, (including using external specialists) with course teams meeting subsequent conditions before a new course is signed off for students to be allowed to enrol. This is checked through being annually monitored and periodically reviewed.</td>
<td>School Academic Standard Committees (SASC) and Quality and Standards Committee (QSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2:</strong> Recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.</td>
<td>Through the specific LSBU Admissions and Enrolment Procedure, Enrolment Declaration and a Complaints and Appeals Procedure for admissions decisions. <a href="http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures#collapseTwo">http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures#collapseTwo</a></td>
<td>Currently PVC Education and Student Experience signs off Procedure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B3:</strong> Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.</td>
<td>Development and embedding the Educational Framework through course design supported by CRIT, checked through validation events. There is annual monitoring of courses, which are also periodically reviewed; external examiners report on university standards and student achievement in relation to those standards.</td>
<td>Through annual course monitoring, periodically reviewed and through academic audit as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B4:</strong> Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.</td>
<td>LSBU Student Services include: Disability &amp; Dyslexia Support; Student Advice, Careers Service, Library and learning resources and includes the learner analytics work and the support for learning team.</td>
<td>The Director of Student Support and Employment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B5: Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

| Course boards; feedback surveys e.g. National Student Survey (NSS), Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs), student participation in Academic Board, QSC, Board of Governors and other committees and sub-committees | Annual monitoring, periodic reviews and academic audit panels as required. |

### B6: Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

| Courses design supported by CRIT and checked through the validation events and then subsequently through annual monitoring, periodic reviews and academic audits as required. There is an Academic Misconduct Procedure embedded in the Assessment and Examination Procedure available on the web [http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures#collapseTwo](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures#collapseTwo) | Validation and re-validation events. Annual external examiner reports are used in annual monitoring. |

### B7: Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

| External examiners report on university standards and student achievement in relation to those standards, this information is used in annual monitoring. Details about the LSBU external examiner system can be found in the in the Assessment and Examination Procedure available on the web [http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures#collapseTwo](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures#collapseTwo) | Reported through SASCs and an annual report to QSC. Any individual external examiner report signalling a not meeting of standards goes directly to PVC E&SE who checks a response from the relevant School is made and recorded at SACs |

### B8: Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.

| Annual monitoring of courses though course monitoring reports and periodically reviewing courses, and academic audits as required. Development and maintenance of a PSRB database recording the LSBU courses that have professional body recognition and when this will be reviewed. | Periodic Review and Academic Audit Panels as required |
| B9: Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement. | Complaints and Appeal can be made using the LSBU procedures available on the web site at http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures#collapseTwo. At the end of the internal appeal or complaints process, a ‘Completion of Procedures’ letter is issued to the student which gives them the right to appeal to the OIA. | All Appeals and Complaints handling have moved to the Gov legal team from 2016-17. |
| B10: Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively. | This follows the same procedures for other course development approval processes checked through validation events. This was the topic for an academic audit in Autumn 2016-17. | Validation panels, SASCs, QSC, external examiner system (standards and level of awards). |
| B11: Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols. This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees. | The LSBU research degrees code of practice can be found online at http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/84355/research-degree-code-of-practice.pdf. | Through supervision and annual monitoring of students development plan. |