

FAST TRACK REVALIDATION PROCEDURES: BLACKPOOL & THE FYLDE COLLEGE A RISK BASED APPROACH

SEC/2016/3/0542 (amended 26/02/19)

OVERVIEW

Lancaster University has been in partnership with Blackpool and the Fylde College for over 20 years. The University's approach to its collaborative teaching partnerships is underpinned by a commitment to help partners build their own capacity to manage quality and standards effectively. Over recent years the revalidation of programmes at Blackpool and the Fylde College has often been achieved without any conditions imposed by the revalidation panel (60% of programmes in 2013/14 with no conditions and 50% of programmes in 2015/16). In light of this, the University propose a revised risk based approach to revalidations. This would comply with the requirements of the QAA Quality Code chapters B1: *Programme Design And Approval*, B8: *Programme Monitoring And Review* and B10: *Managing Higher Education Provision With Others: 'the level of scrutiny and reporting involved in the processes of programme monitoring and review is proportionate to the scale and risk of the provision being considered.'*

Validation

The validation of new programmes is considered higher risk and will continue under the established validation processes.

Revalidation (incorporating Periodic Review)

The revalidation of existing provision is considered to be lower risk for the reasons outlined above. All Programmes undergo a revalidation process every five years. To determine whether a Programme should be considered for a fast track revalidation, the following points will be considered by ASQ:

- A programme has been running for more than five years;
- The scale of the proposed changes, as determined at Outline Planning Permission stage, is low or uncontroversial;
- Appropriate due diligence has been carried out by ASQ including a review of external examiner reports, programme consultant reports and Annual Programme Review reports over the last three years, with no areas of concern identified;
- The Programme Consultant has been consulted and has not raised any concerns which need to be explored during revalidation;
- No substantial issues have been raised following the College's internal meetings and the report of the College External Advisor.

Documentation

Along with the revalidation documentation the panel will receive minutes from the College internal Stage 2 revalidation meeting and a report from the College's External Advisor.

Panel

The Panel will consist of a Lancaster University Chair and a Subject Specialist along with a member of ASQ as with full revalidation events.

An External Assessor will still need to be appointed as part of the Lancaster panel to ensure externality. Documentation will be sent out to the External Assessor with a template for comments by correspondence. The fee for panel members including External Assessors acting by correspondence on Fast Track revalidations will be £300. If a short meeting is deemed necessary with the programme team a further £50 will be paid as a half day rate.

Process

The Fast Track process is designed to be less onerous for both the Panel and the Programme Team. The Panel are directed to identify any **substantial** areas of concern and/or areas where additional clarification is required from the College.

Any questions for students and employers (where appropriate e.g. on Foundation Degrees) will be communicated by correspondence via the College.

Depending on the areas of concern raised it may prove useful to hold a short meeting with the programme team. This decision will be reached by the ASQ representative and the Chair.

Amendments to the documentation

The College will submit revised documents containing any clarifications along with answers to the Panels questions, **within three weeks of the report being sent to the College**. The revised document(s) should be submitted to ASQ at the University, highlighting clearly in the body of the text where revisions have been made. In addition, a summary of the changes, with page numbers, should be provided in a separate document.

Panel Decision and Conditions and Recommendations

Following necessary clarifications from the Programme Team, the Panel will take a decision on the revalidation proposal, and will recommend **one** of the following to the University.

- (a) **To validate/revalidate** the programme as it stands for the following five years.
- (b) **To validate/revalidate** the programme for the following five years **subject to** a number of Conditions (changes which must be satisfactorily addressed prior to the commencement of the delivery of the programme) and/or Recommendations (areas that the Programme Team are invited to review but which are not considered essential changes).
- (c) **Not to validate/revalidate the programme at this stage** due to substantial concerns about one or more aspects of the programme, e.g. staffing/resources, academic content/coherence, etc. The Panel will then advise the College as to whether or not a resubmission of the proposal is possible and, if so, the time-scale for resubmission.

The recommendation will be reported by ASQ to the appropriate University committees and/or representatives.

Following this, the programme will be submitted for **final approval** to the Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, who has delegated authority from Senate.

If, following consideration by the Panel of the revised documentation, there remain substantive issues with the programme which need wider discussion within the University; these may be referred to the Collaborative Provision Teaching Committee (CPTC) for wider consideration.