









## VALIDATION PROCEDURES

### Aim of validation

The overall **aim of a validation event** is to determine whether or not a proposed new programme fulfils the requirements of the University with regard to the academic standards of the award and the quality and standards of the learning opportunities available to students.

### Agenda for the event

The **Validation Agenda** template should be used, which may be adjusted according to the number of programmes being considered. AQSC will agree the agenda with the College once the date for the event has been confirmed.

### Documentation for Validations

For a Validation proposal, the following documentation must be provided by the College by the due submission deadline (three weeks prior to the event date). Documentation should be provided in both hard copy and electronic format.

- College Strategy document and any supporting documents
- Programme Document
- Internal validation minutes

The **Guidance on Documentation for Validation** document gives details on the information to be provided in the Programme Document.

### Issues to be considered by the Panel

In considering a Validation proposal, the Panel will review the following aspects with **Senior Management** and the **Programme Leader**:

- college strategy for the programme
- market demand/recruitment
- staffing
- resources

The meeting with the **Programme Team** will focus primarily on the following aspects (although the Panel may revisit some issues discussed with the Senior Management team):

- programme aims and outcomes
- programme structure and progression through the programme
- curriculum and modules

- teaching and learning strategy
- assessment strategy
- employer engagement/work based learning (where relevant)
- entry criteria

The kinds of questions a Panel may ask in the meetings are detailed in the **Panel Questions** document.

#### Panel decision and Conditions and Recommendations

In making a decision on the validation proposal, the Panel will make **one** of the following recommendations to the University.

- To validate** the programme as it stands for the following five years.
- To validate** 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).
- To not validate 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.))

#### Reporting on the event

The College is responsible for providing a member of staff to take notes of the meeting and provide a draft report to the University. This should normally be provided within two weeks of the event. The University's **Validation Report Template** should be used. The University will provide a draft of the Panel's decision and any Conditions and/or Recommendations for incorporation into the report.

AQSC will circulate the draft report for consideration and approval by the Panel and forward the final version of the report to the College.

## **REVALIDATION PROCEDURES**

#### Aim of revalidation

The overall **aim of a revalidation event** is to review a currently validated programme and consider whether or not validation may be renewed for a further five years, taking into account the following factors:

- the programme remains current and up-to-date
- the standards of the award are maintained

- student achievement is satisfactory
- there is a continuing demand for the programme
- there continue to be sufficient resources for programme delivery
- QA procedures continue to be implemented effectively for the programme

As part of the procedures for bringing a programme forward for revalidation the College will have carried out a Review of the programme. In addition, revalidation provides an opportunity for the College to propose any minor/major amendments to the programme. The Panel will meet with a group of students on the day to review the student experience and also meet with employers where relevant.

### Agenda for the event

The **Revalidation Agenda** template should be used, which may be adjusted according to the number of programmes being considered. ASQSC will agree the agenda with the College once the date has been confirmed. The **Revalidation Agenda** incorporates elements which are additional to the basic agenda template; these elements are: (a) any matters arising out of the Periodic review of the programme conducted by the College, (b) a meeting of the Panel with students, preferably at least one student from each year of the programme (the College should consult with AQSC if there are likely to be difficulties with securing student attendance) and (c) a meeting of the Panel with employers where relevant.

### Documentation for Revalidations

For a revalidation proposal, the following documentation must be provided by the College by the document submission deadline: (three weeks prior to the event date). Documentation should be provided in both hard copy and electronic format.

- College Strategy document and any supporting documents
- Programme Document
- Internal revalidation minutes (which should include a section on the Periodic Review discussions)

The **Guidance on Documentation for Revalidation** gives details on the information to be provided in the Programme Document. Please note it is expected that the introduction to the Programme Document will outline the outcome of the Periodic Review and the rationale for continuing with the programme.

In addition to the documentation provided by the College, the Panel will be provided with the following by AQSC:

- Report of any issues raised by the Programme Consultant to be discussed at revalidation
- Lancaster University's guidance documents on revalidation
- Last Annual Programme Review (which includes the External Examiner and Programme Consultant report)

### Issues to be considered by the Panel

In considering a revalidation proposal the Panel will look at the programme itself (as described in the **Programme Document**).

The Panel will review any issues arising out of the programme through meetings with:

- Students
- Employers (where relevant)

The Panel will review the following aspects with the **Senior Management team and Programme Leader**:

- any matters arising out of the Periodic Review conducted by the College
- transitional arrangements for the programme
- college strategy for the programme
- market demand/recruitment
- staffing
- resources

The meeting with the **Programme Team** will focus primarily on the following aspects:

- programme aims and outcomes
- programme structure and progression through the programme
- curriculum and modules
- teaching and learning strategy
- assessment strategy
- employer engagement/work based learning (where relevant)
- entry criteria

The kinds of questions a Panel may ask in the meetings are detailed in the **Panel Questions** document.

### Panel decision and Conditions and Recommendations

In making a decision on the revalidation proposal, the Panel will make **one** of the following recommendations to the University:

- (a) **To revalidate** the programme as it stands for the following five years.
- (b) **To 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 next delivery of the programme) and/or Recommendations (areas that the Programme Team are invited to review but which are not considered essential changes).



- (c) **To not 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 make a judgment as to whether or not revalidation of the existing programme can be extended for a maximum of one year or if the programme should be withdrawn until approved at a subsequent revalidation event.)

#### Reporting on the event

The College is responsible for providing a member of staff to take notes of the meeting and provide a draft report to the University. This should normally be provided within two weeks of the event. The University's **Revalidation Report Template** should be used. The University will provide a draft of the Panel's decision and any Conditions and or Recommendations for incorporation into the report.

AQSC will circulate the draft report for consideration and approval by the Panel and forward the final version of the report to the College.

### **STAGE 4: FINAL APPROVAL**

The following procedures apply to both validation and revalidation proposals.

#### Amendments to the documentation

A response must be provided to the Conditions, Recommendations and Housekeeping requirements (including amendments to the proposal and documentation where required) **within six weeks of the event**. The revised programme document(s) should be submitted 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.

Following approval (see below), the College is required to submit a **final version of the documentation** to AQSC for record purposes, in the form of an electronic copy.

#### Final approval

It is the College's responsibility to ensure that Housekeeping requirements have been met and the summary of Housekeeping changes must be signed off by a member of the Quality team at the College.

The AQSC representative is responsible for providing an initial check on whether the conditions of the revalidation/validation have been met, and will advise the Panel members accordingly when circulating the revised documentation. The Panel will confirm whether or not the Conditions have been met. Following this, the programme will be submitted for **final approval** to the Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, who has delegated authority from Senate. A regular report will be made to Senate over the year detailing those programmes which have been approved.

Once final approval has been given, the AQSC representative will write to the College to confirm the approval of the programme, and a letter will be sent to the College Principal at the end of the year listing all programmes which have been approved.

If, following consideration by the Panel of the revised documentation, it is considered that there remain substantive issues with the programme which need further discussion, it will be referred to the RPTC for wider consideration (if there is not a timely meeting of RPTC due, it will be submitted to the Chair of RPTC).

#### Deadline for final approval

All programmes considered for validation and revalidation in the academic year must be given final approval by the University by the **end of May** in that year. It is the responsibility of the College to ensure that any conditions set by the Panel are fulfilled in a timely fashion so that the deadline can be adhered to.

## DOCUMENTATION

- Business Planning Schedule
- Revalidation Outline Planning Permission Form
- Validation Outline Planning Permission Form
- Validation Event Agenda template
- Revalidation Event Agenda template
- Guidelines for the design of Foundation Degrees and Honours top-up years
- Guidance on Documentation for Validation
- Guidance on Documentation for Revalidation
- Panel Questions
- Validation Report Template
- Revalidation Report Template

## RELATED PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

- Monitoring and Review Process
- Annual Programme Review
- Closure of Programmes
- Major Amendment Procedure
- Minor Amendment Procedure

## EXTERNAL REFERENCES

- *QAA Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*
- Subject Benchmark Statements
- *Framework for higher education qualifications*
- *Foundation degree benchmark statement*
- *University Guidelines for the design of Foundation Degrees and Honours top-up years*
- Sector Skills Council frameworks and statements of competencies
- Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Body requirements.