Department of Academic Quality (DAQ)

A guide to
Validation for Servicing Officers

This guide is intended to support faculty and Department of Academic Quality servicing officers in providing administration for validation events

For forms, templates, and further guidance about validation, please contact:

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Introduction

Who is this guide for and what does it cover?

This guide has been written for validation servicing officers. Guidance and templates are available on the DAQ website to assist you in this role; these will be referenced as appropriate in this guide.

NB: Guidance/forms/templates for validation are regularly updated – to ensure you are using the correct version please refer to the DAQ website rather than reusing copies stored locally.

Validation at DMU

Validation is the process through which the university establishes that a new programme is academically viable, that academic standards have been appropriately defined and that it will offer DMU students the best opportunity to learn. It is about assuring quality but must also be about promoting best practice and adding value by enhancing the quality of the proposal.

Validations at DMU fall into two broad categories:

Devolved validation

The programme is to be delivered by DMU staff, on campus and/or in a community, corporate or clinical setting, or via distance learning. Here, the faculty is responsible for the validation administration.

Non-devolved validation

This is where partner institutions are involved in delivering or supporting an element or an entire DMU programme. All validations for programmes delivered overseas are treated as non-devolved. Here, responsibility for validation administration falls to the Educational Partnerships (EP) team for UK provision or Global Partnerships Unit (GPU) for overseas provision.

The DMU approach to validation involves holding an event during which a panel of academic peers and representatives from key professional services departments scrutinise the new proposal. Arrangements for the event and the level of scrutiny involved will depend on the type and level of risk a proposal poses (see the DAQ Guide to Validation, section 3). The faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent will advise which event type is appropriate.

For some programmes, the purpose of the validation may also be to obtain recognition by an associated Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB). In these cases you may also need to take account of the specific requirements of individual PSRBs and tailor arrangements accordingly. Again, the faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or Head of Quality will advise.

Overview of servicing officer roles and responsibilities

For devolved validations, normally the QA Administrator will take on the role of servicing officer.   In practice, however, the approach may vary from faculty to faculty. The faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent has overall responsibility for the management of the validation schedule and should identify who should take on the role of supporting each validation event.

In all cases the servicing officer will have responsibility for writing the validation report and acting as the key point of liaison between the panel and the programme team. Other key responsibilities include:

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- Booking the venue, refreshments, transport and/or accommodation for the external panel member or organising the meetings virtually via MS Teams (where a virtual validation is required)
- Ensuring the validation documentation is collated and circulated to the panel
- Acting as the key point of contact between the panel and the programme team in respect of collating and sharing the panel's initial observations and circulation of the programme team's responses to these in advance of the validation
- At the validation, taking minutes on all discussions, including a list of issues that are likely to be identified as conditions, recommendations or observations
- Drafting and circulating the validation report
- Liaising between the panel and programme team following the validation as the programme team respond to any conditions or recommendations.

Servicing officers undertaking non-devolved validations may have more complex arrangements to oversee depending on the nature of the collaborative arrangements, particularly in the case of overseas provision. Further guidance can be sought from the Partnership Officers in DAQ.

The validation servicing officer should attend a validation induction/briefing session provided by DAQ, contact the Quality Officer, Taught Programmes to arrange.

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Section 1: Development and approval stage

Stages leading to validation

Prior to validation, programme teams are required to undertake a process of development and approval. This involves completing a series of stages to ensure the proposal has the support of the faculty via consideration at the relevant Programme Management Board (PMB) (or partner institution for Validation Service provision), Faculty Executive Committee/Faculty Leadership Board and the faculty's Development and Review Committee (DARC). University-level approval is given by the Taught Programmes Management Committee (TPMC).

Non-devolved proposals should be sent to the Validation Service Board for note. Once the necessary approval to proceed has been obtained a period of development work will follow and preparation for validation will commence. It is at this stage of the process that servicing officers will be appointed to provide support and assistance in making the necessary arrangements in preparation for validation.

Timing and scheduling

DAQ advises that new proposals for validation should be presented to TPMC **at least six months prior** to the planned start date. Normally a (devolved) validation event should take place a minimum of three months prior to the planned programme start date. There may be exceptions, where proposals are approved for fast-track validation, where shorter timescales apply.

The faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent is responsible for drawing up a validation schedule, to be updated after each DARC meeting throughout the session and the Associate Dean Academic will refer to TPMC. For non-devolved validations this will be undertaken by Educational Partnerships/GPU.

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Section 2: Preparing for the validation event

The validation panel: constitution

The constitution of the panel will depend on the level of risk involved, to be determined by the faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent in consultation with DAQ, if required.

Depending on the validation type and level of risk involved a combination of some or all of the following members will form a panel:

Devolved validation (types A, B and C)

Chair* (all validation types)
Academic representative from another faculty (all validation types)
External panel member(s) (all validation types)
Library and Learning Services representative*** (validation types B and C)
Department of Academic Quality representative (all validation types)
Student representative**** (all validation types)

Faculty servicing officer (all validation types)

For Apprenticeship programmes, a member of the Central Apprenticeship team should also be included on the panel

Non-devolved validation (type D)

Chair*
Educational Partnerships or Global Partnerships Unit representative
External panel member(s)**
Library and Learning Services representative
Student representative****

Educational Partnerships or Global Partnerships Unit servicing officer

* Senior academic member of staff from outside the proposing faculty (Executive Board member or designate if a new collaborative partner)
**The external panel member for non-devolved provision should have subject and/or partnership expertise.
*** For devolved validations the Library and Learning Services representative should not normally be your subject librarian (contact the Director of Library and Learning Services for an appropriate nomination).
****The student representative may either be a school or course representative (from within or outside the proposing faculty) or a member of the De Montfort Students' Union (DSU) Executive.

For a **distance learning validation**, it is helpful if one of the panel members is experienced in the development, delivery and management of distance learning provision.

For a full description of the roles and responsibilities of individual panel members see the Guide to Validation for Panel Members.

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Appointing panel members

Responsibility for appointing panel members falls to the faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent or Educational Partnerships Manager (non-devolved validations) although servicing officers may be required to assist in this process.

DAQ advises that panel members are appointed at the earliest convenience. This will be particularly relevant when appointing the panel chair and external panel member(s) not only to ensure their availability but also, in the case of the latter, to have more chance of securing the services of high calibre external expertise.

To assist in the appointment of panel members DAQ holds a central database on experienced/trained members of staff, updated annually. It is a requirement that panel members and chairs attend a DAQ briefing session. They should also be offered an opportunity to observe and/or participate in a validation event before undertaking the role of chair themselves.

Nomination of external panel member(s) will also require approval by the PVC/Dean (or Partnerships Manager (Quality) for collaborative provision) and the Head of Academic Quality, DAQ, before their appointment can be agreed. A Nomination of External Panel Members form can be found on the DAQ website.

Right to work in the UK

In order for the University to comply with its legal duties under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act (2006) the University must ensure it has checked that all external panel members are eligible to work in the UK. External panel members are asked to indicate their status on the external panel member nomination form. Servicing officers are required to ask external panel members to send an electronic copy of their passport/equivalent prior to the validation. The external must bring any originals with them to the event and show a copy to the servicing officer on the day. Servicing officers may wish to ask the external to join the initial panel meeting earlier so they can show a copy of their passport/equivalent on the day. Servicing officers should keep a log of when you saw the passport together with a copy of the passport/equivalent with the validation documentation.

Expenses

The faculty will pay for all travel and accommodation costs associated with the panel members, including the daily fee for the external panel member, which is normally £150.

Validation event programme

At an early stage in the preparation process, a draft programme should be drawn up in consultation with the faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent or relevant contact for non-devolved validations and the identified validation chair. You should consider the travel needs of your external panel member(s) when establishing a start time. Suggested programmes for different validation types can be found in Appendix 1. Please note, however, that the requirements may vary according to the nature and location of the validation. For non-devolved validations a programme is likely to be tailored to the individual collaborative proposal, particularly if validation occurs alongside partner approval and/or in the case of overseas validations.

Validation documentation

A comprehensive list of documentary requirements is provided in the DAQ Guide to Validations, section 3. Requirements should generally be addressed in one of two key documents: the programme handbook and the validation document.

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Submission and circulation of documentation

As a minimum the validation panel must receive the appropriate documentation for the type of validation, plus the Guide to Validation for Panel Members. In addition, external panel members must receive a campus map, travel documents (if appropriate) and an expenses claim form.

To do their job effectively, panel members need time to read the documentation thoroughly and to seek clarification in advance on points identified. The validation documentation must therefore be circulated for receipt by the validation panel at least three weeks before the validation event. If the validation documentation is submitted less than two weeks before the validation event the validation panel chair should discuss with the Head of Academic Quality/Partnership Manager (Quality) whether the validation should go ahead on the intended date.

A full list of actions to be taken by the servicing officer before, during and after validation is outlined in the checklist in Appendix 2.

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Section 3: The validation event

Servicing officer's role

Your main role at the validation event is to take notes on the key points of discussion. As outlined in the programme for the day this will begin with a private meeting of the validation panel at which the main areas of questioning will be agreed and allocated to members of the panel to lead. Servicing officers will be required to make a note of the key areas of discussion during the respective meetings/allocating of questioning and to assist the chair in making sure the panel stick to the timings outlined on the programme as far as possible. You will also be required to note the outcome of validation including any conditions, required actions, recommendations and observations/commendations.

Outcomes of validation

At the end of the validation, the panel must decide whether it wishes to approve the proposal. The panel's recommendation will fall into one of the following categories:

- **Indefinite approval**, without or without conditions and/or recommendations
- **Approval for a fixed period**, with or without conditions and/or recommendations
- **Not approved** – an invitation given to resubmit
- **Not approved** – recommendation that the proposal be withdrawn

Indefinite approval, which is the standard length of approval, is granted subject to the normal processes of ongoing review and University protocols for the approval of modifications to programmes.

Conditions

These serious issues must be addressed to the satisfaction of the panel, normally **before** delivery of the programme can commence or, in the case of a revalidation, to allow the programme to continue in operation after a specified date. When setting conditions, the panel must specify clearly what is to be done, by whom and by when, and what the arrangements will be for ensuring that the given conditions have been satisfied. In certain instances, it may be appropriate to set deadlines for some conditions that fall after the planned start of delivery. An example of this would be for the programme team to submit the learning materials for year two of a distance learning programme in the latter stages of the first year of delivery.

Please be aware that no deadlines should exceed 31 July, where a programme has an Autumn start date. Whilst conditions are outstanding the status of the programme remains 'subject to validation'.

Required actions

These are also serious issues that must be addressed to the satisfaction of the panel; however, they may have a longer completion date. In certain instances, it may be appropriate to set deadlines for some conditions that fall after the planned start of delivery. An example of this would be for the programme team to submit the learning materials for year two of a distance learning programme in the latter stages of the first year of delivery or for the programme team to provide evidence of resources that are not required in the first year of teaching.

Recommendations

These should be addressed by the programme team and the programme management board(s) as part of subsequent review and development activities. The programme team is required to submit a formal response to the recommendations to the panel as a follow-up to the validation.

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Observations/Commendations

In addition to citing conditions and recommendations of approval, the panel may also wish to identify **key observations** arising from the validation process, to include exemplary features to commend and examples of potential good practice.

Issues not discussed during the day will not be included as conditions unless the panel discusses them with the programme team before the report back.

At the final feedback session, the chair should feed this all back to the programme team.

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Section 4: After the validation

Formal notification of outcome of validation

Where a new programme has been approved, DAQ will circulate formal notification of the validation outcome. This is to ensure that the relevant professional services department are aware of the impending start of the programme and take action accordingly. To ensure this happens, it is important that the Quality Officer (Taught Programmes) is included in the distribution for all validation and revalidation reports.

Once conditions have been met and signed off by the Chair, an additional 'formal' notification will be circulated to professional services departments to ensure they are aware the programme is now fully approved.

The validation report

The servicing officer is responsible for producing the validation report. The report acts as a record of the outcome of the validation event and provides an overview of the proposal and commentary on the main points of discussion. A validation report proforma is provided for this purpose, available from the DAQ web pages, and guidance on its completion can be found in Appendix 3.

The report is split into sections.

The outcome

This section provides a summary of what has been validated, key individuals involved and any conditions, recommendations and observations.

Confirmation of consideration of internal and external benchmarks

This section provides confirmation of consideration of external benchmarks such as QAA subject benchmarks and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). It also requires confirmation of consideration of equality issues and enhancing learning through technology (ELT)

Commentary

This section provides an overview of the key issues discussed during the event and provides context to the conditions, recommendations and observations which make up the outcome.

Authorisation

This section provides an audit trail of the individuals and committees which have approved or endorsed the report. This must be fully completed by the Servicing Officer prior to circulating the final report.

Circulation of draft report and validation follow-up

Prior to completion and circulation of the full report, the servicing officer must complete a summary of the outcome (basic programme information, panel membership and Section A of the validation report) and circulate this to the panel, programme team and Quality Officer (Taught Programmes) within two working days of the validation event. This is to allow the programme team the maximum amount of time to respond to any conditions/recommendations.

The full draft report should be circulated to the panel chair for approval no later than two weeks after the validation event, allowing the chair a week to respond with any changes. The report should then be circulated to the remaining panel members, again allowing a week for responses. Once approved by the

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panel, the draft report should be circulated to the programme leader (or programme coordinator for non-devolved/collaborative provision) for confirmation of factual accuracy, allowing one week for a response.

Circulation of final validation report

The final approved report should be circulated to a number of key individuals, as detailed on the validation report proforma. These include the panel, programme team, the relevant programme management board, the faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent, the PVC/Dean, and the Faculty Academic Committee (FAC). The programme management board receives the report for formal consideration, and the PVC/Dean and the FAC, for note (non-devolved reports should also be presented to the Faculty Collaborative Partnerships Committee (FCPC).

A copy of the report must also be sent to the Quality Officer (Taught Programmes), DAQ, for presentation to the Associate Professors Advisory Group for endorsement.

Responding to conditions

It is the responsibility of the faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent to oversee the process of meeting conditions of approval (although they will seek support from the servicing officer). The faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent should ensure that:
- The documentation submitted in response to conditions is received by the date specified in the validation report
- A copy of the response to conditions is forwarded by the validation servicing officer to the external panel member(s) for approval, as appropriate
- The chair of the validation panel formally and in writing approves the responses to conditions if appropriate, submitting this to the validation servicing officer
- If the conditions of approval are deemed not to have been fully met, a further response is requested from the programme team, again to be endorsed by the relevant panel member(s)

The programme leader is responsible for co-ordinating the follow-up activity. This will include the provision of evidence to the panel that changes have been made and action taken in response to the conditions set, as well as the preparation of a formal response to any recommendations. The documentation produced must be sent to the validation servicing officer for onward transmission to the panel. Where they have received responses, panel members must confirm to the validation servicing officer that they are satisfied with the action taken in response to the conditions and recommendations set.

The relevant programme management board will monitor progress and seek reports of action taken to address the issues therein, in line with the deadlines set by the validation panel. The validation servicing officer will be the conduit for the follow-up action and should provide notification/updates on responses to conditions as appropriate. To facilitate this responsibility, the validation servicing officer is encouraged to use an Excel spreadsheet, which will allow for the tracking of progress and the identification of any overdue actions which need to be chased.

For devolved validations, it is the responsibility of the panel chair to write to the PVC/Dean and Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent of the relevant faculty to confirm progress in meeting conditions, including final confirmation that all conditions have been met.

Maintaining records

For devolved validations, the faculty is responsible for maintaining records. A validation file should be maintained within the faculty and should contain the following (servicing officers are also advised to maintain the same information in electronic form):
- Completed Programme Proposal Form and any accompanying market analysis
- Complete set of validation documentation, including panel membership, appendices etc.

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- Relevant extracts of the minutes of all relevant programme management board, DARC/Faculty Academic Committee meetings at which the development was discussed
- Relevant extracts of the minutes and notes of all programme team/project team meetings at which the development was discussed
- Completed nomination form for external panel member, signed off by PVC/Dean and Head of Academic Quality
- Validation report and evidence of approval by panel
- All responses to conditions and recommendations, as appropriate
- Relevant extracts of the minutes of all relevant programme management board and DARC/FAC meetings at which the validation report and the programme team's responses to it have been considered and endorsed
- All correspondence with the panel chair and other panel members showing consideration, and ultimately, approval of the responses. In particular, correspondence from the panel chair indicating that all conditions have been met to the satisfaction of the panel, thus indicating full approval for the programme to commence.

Educational Partnerships/Global Partnerships will maintain the records for all non-devolved validations.

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Appendix 1: Validation types and example programmes

Indicative validation types

Type of validation	Indicative risk level	Validation event
Modifications to existing curriculum (see Guide to Curriculum Modification)	Low	N/A. Approval via Curriculum Modification process/form
Modifications to existing curriculum requiring revalidation (see Guide to Curriculum Modification): • Substantive change to award title • Changes to programme outcomes • Addition of new mode of study, e.g. DL, where there is no existing experience in type of delivery • Addition of new pathway to programme • Significant changes to programme structure	Low-Medium	Event Type A
New programme in existing subject area	Medium	Event Type B
New professionally-accredited programme or amendment to existing professionally accredited programme*	Medium-High	Event Type C
Programme in entirely new subject area	High	Event Type C
Programme delivered by UK or overseas collaborative partner(non devolved)	Medium-High	Event Type D (non-devolved)

Example programmes

Below are indicative event programmes suitable for each type of validation event. The programme team should discuss with the faculty Associate Professor (Quality) or equivalent any additional or different requirements as appropriate, for example the inclusion of a tour of facilities. Some elements of each programme may not be required for each event.

Please note these might vary with a virtual validation taking place on MS Teams and should be discussed and agreed with the Chair of the event.

Event Type A

10:00 – 10:315	Arrival, introductions and private meeting of the panel
10:15 – 10:30	Presentation by programme team
10.30 – 11.00	Private meeting of the panel
11.00 – 12.00	Discussion between the panel and the programme team
12.00 – 12.30	Meeting with existing students (or consideration of written submission)
12:30 – 13:15	Private meeting of the panel and lunch
13:15 – 13:30	Feedback to the programme team on validation outcomes

Event Type B

10:00 – 10:15	Arrival and introductions
10:15 – 10:30	Presentation from the programme leader to the panel

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10:30 – 11:00	Private meeting of the panel
11:00 – 12:15	Discussion between the panel and the programme team
12:15 – 13:00	Lunch and private meeting of the panel
13:00 – 13:15	Feedback to the programme team on validation outcomes

Event Type C

09:30 – 09:45	Arrival and introductions
09:45 – 10:00	Presentation from the programme leader to the panel
10:00 – 10:30	Private meeting of the panel
10:30 – 11:00	Discussion between the panel and members of the Faculty Executive
11:00 – 11:30	Private meeting of the panel/break
11:30 – 13:00	Discussion between the panel and the programme team
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch and private meeting of the panel
14:00 – 14:15	Feedback to the programme team on validation outcomes

Event Type D
Non-devolved (collaborative provision)

As this may be part of a larger event, the times are subject to other factors. Please contact the Partnerships Manager (Quality) or Partnerships Officer (Quality) in DAQ for advice.

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Appendix 2: Servicing Officer's checklist

Action to be taken	Date
Before Validation	
Obtain details of panel membership from Faculty Associate Professor Quality (or equivalent), most importantly panel chair and external advisor (list of potential panel members/Chairs available from the Department of Academic Quality - DAQ)	
Confirm availability of panel chair and external advisor on date identified (Faculty Associate Professor Quality to confirm date)	
Once the date has been finalised, contact Quality Officer, DAQ to source a DAQ rep and student rep	
Send email to external to confirm involvement and date of validation and to request confirmation of travel and accommodation requirements (if validation held in person)	
Book travel and hotel accommodation for external advisor, if required	
Email confirmation of validation date and timings to internal panel members	
Send MS Teams invites / Make room booking and refreshments bookings if applicable	
Draw up a schedule for the validation, in conjunction with the Chair of the validation	
Prepare documentation approx. 4 weeks before validation	
Distribute documentation to panel for receipt at least 3 weeks before validation, along with confirmation of the programme for the day, panel membership and panel members' comments form. Copy in the Associate Professor Quality (or equivalent) and the programme leader for their information.	
For external panel member an expenses claim form (and map, if on Campus) should also be sent	
Collate panel members' initial comments on documentation and circulate to programme team and panel asking for responses from the programme team.	
Circulate any response from the programme team, and any additional documentation, to panel as soon as possible and no later than one week before validation	
At Validation	
Make notes on all discussions, keeping a list of potential conditions, required actions and/or recommendations	
After Validation – Production of Report	
Prepare draft outcome report detailing outcomes of the validation, i.e. approve/not approve, conditions, required actions, recommendations, etc (within 48 working hours of validation)	
Obtain panel chair approval of draft document	
As soon as the chair has approved the document, circulate to the programme team and anyone else implicated (including Quality Officer, DAQ, faculty quality team)	
Prepare validation report (within one month of validation)	
Circulate draft report to panel Chair (with a week for comments)	
Revise report as necessary and circulate draft report to remaining panel members, including external (with a week for comments)	
Revise report as necessary and circulate draft report to programme leader, to comment in terms of factual accuracy (with a week for comments)	
Revise report as necessary and circulate final, approved report (as per list identified in the Guide to validation for servicing officers)	
After Validation – Monitoring Responses to Conditions	
Co-ordinate the circulation of the programme team's responses to conditions, required actions and recommendations to the panel Chair and other panel members, as appropriate	
Keep in touch with the programme leader, panel Chair and Faculty Associate Professor Quality in this respect	
Keep copies of all responses and panel members' comments in validation file	
When all conditions have been approved by panel, write to panel members, programme team, and Quality Officer, DAQ, to confirm full approval granted for programme to commence	

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Appendix 3: Validation report guidance

The following annotated version of the validation report proforma provides guidance for the servicing officer in completing the report.

De Montfort University

Validation of <Award and Programme Title>
(add the title here, for example BA (Hons) English)

<Date of Validation>

Programme title: For example BA (Hons) English

Type: Undergraduate single honours; undergraduate joint honours; or postgraduate

Award (including exit awards):
For an honours degree the exit awards will be BA; DipHE; CertHE
For an integrated master's programme the exit awards will be BA (Hons); BA; DipHE; CertHE
For a foundation degree the exit awards will be DipHE; CertHE
For a master's programme the exit awards will be PgDip; PgCert
For a postgraduate diploma the exit award will be PgCert

For any other awards, if in doubt please refer to the Senior Officer, Taught Programmes, DAQ

Mode(s) of study:
Available modes of study are full-time; part-time; full-time by distance learning; part-time by distance learning. Please note that 'blended learning' is not a mode of study but a description of how the curriculum will be delivered.

Owning Faculty:

Owning Programme Management Board:

Programme Leader Designate:

Location of Delivery: This will normally be at DMU, but if some of the delivery will take place elsewhere, for example a clinical or corporate setting, this can be included here

Date of First intake: The month and year in which the first students will enrol

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VALIDATION PANEL

Chair	Name, role/job title outside of the validation panel
External Panel Member	Name, role/job title outside of the validation panel
Academic Representative (Faculty of)	Name, role/job title outside of the validation panel
Head of Department of Academic Quality (or nominee)	Name, role/job title outside of the validation panel
Student representative	Name/programme/faculty
Library and Learning Services Representative	Name, role/job title outside of the validation panel

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Servicing Officer	Name, role/job title outside of the validation panel
(PSRB representatives as appropriate)	

SECTION A: **OUTCOME**

Approve/Not Approve: **Delete as applicable**

Length of approval: **State whether the approval is indefinite or time limited. The default position and standard phrase is 'Indefinite subject to the quality monitoring processes of the university.' Fixed-term approval may be given in some circumstances (see the Guide to Validation) but is mainly used where programmes must have a fixed-term approval to meet Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements**

1   **Conditions of validation**   **Deadline**
            When setting conditions (see section 3 of this guide) they must specify clearly what is to be done, by whom, and by when. The programme may not start enrolling students if conditions of validation are still outstanding. Deadlines must balance this requirement with allowing the programme team sufficient time to formulate their response.

1.1

1.2

2   **Mechanism for approval**
            This means the method by which conditions should be approved. Normally the programme team's response should be sent to the servicing officer by the specified deadlines. The faculty's Associate Professor (Quality) should initially review the response, which the servicing officer should then forward to all (or specified members) of the panel. The report should normally include the phrase 'Documentation produced in response to conditions' should be submitted to the servicing officer in the first instance, for transmission to the panel'.

3   **Recommendations**
            The programme team is not required to implement the recommendations of the panel, but must give them consideration and provide a formal response to the servicing officer as part of the follow-up to the validation.

3.1

3.2

4   **Commendations or observations**
            To include any commendations and/or areas of good practice identified by the panel, and any other observations the panel wishes to make.

4.1

4.2

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Where conditions are set, please cross reference with the section of the report which gave rise to the condition, by annotating the end of the relevant sentence in the body of the report, for example (Condition 1.1 refers).

SECTION B: CONFIRMATION AND COMMENTARY ON REFERENCE MADE TO THE RELEVANT EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS IN PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DELIVERY

<comment here>

Commentary should be made here regarding whether the panel feels that the programme outcomes and module learning outcomes reflect the appropriate level of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in relation to the award being validated. The external panel member and DAQ representative can advise during the validation event. If the panel feels that the programme/modules are not at the appropriate academic level, a condition must be set requiring the programme team to review the programme/modules against the FHEQ.

If a QAA subject benchmark exists for the subject area, it should be confirmed that this has informed the programme development. If there is a QAA subject benchmark but it hasn't been used to inform the development, a condition must be set requiring the programme team to review the development against the relevant benchmark.

SECTION C   AWARENESS OF EQUALITY ISSUES

<comment here>

The equality prompts proforma should be completed as part of the validation documentation. Please provide a statement to confirm whether this has been completed. If it hasn't, or if it has been submitted without comments from an Equality Reviewer, a condition must be set that a completed set of prompts be submitted following the validation. In this section any specific debate about equality and access issues can be captured.

SECTION D   ENHANCING LEARNING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY (ELT)

<comment here>

The completed enhancing learning through technology (ELT) checklist should form part of the validation documentation. Please provide a statement to confirm whether this has been completed. If it is missing or incomplete a condition must be set to ensure submission of the completed ELT checklist following validation. Any specific debate about ELT in the curriculum can be captured in this section or if more appropriate in the teaching and learning section.

SECTION E   COMMENTARY ON DELIVERY OF PROGRAMME

This section should include commentary under the following key headings. Some of the background information may not be discussed in detail at the validation event but will be found within the validation documentation. Commentary should provide details on the main points of discussion and cross-refer to any conditions set or commendations noted.

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The bullet points below act as a guide to what areas should be covered under each heading, but the list is not exhaustive.

1   Proposed student market
- **Who the programme is aimed at (UK/EU/international recruitment); specific groups of students**
- **Why applicants/students will find the programme attractive (its distinctive features)**
- **How the programme will meet the needs of employers and the employability needs of students**
- **Projected student numbers**

2   Recruitment and selection
- **Entry requirements, including any arrangements for non-standard entry**
- **Selection process – will applicants be required to attend an interview/audition or provide a portfolio etc.**

3   Curriculum design
- **Programme structure and any implications for other faculties/subject areas**
- **Identification of new/existing and core/optional modules**
- **Mode(s) of delivery**
- **Opportunities for work-based learning/placement/professional practice**
- **Balance between theory and practice, where appropriate**
- **Opportunities for progression to further study**

4   Resources

4.1   Physical resources
- **Details of learning environment/location including any off-site provision or specialist facilities**
- **Classrooms, labs, studios**

4.2   Learning resources
- **IT/access to computers**
- **BlackBoard**
- **Electronic resources (particularly for distance-learning)**
- **Library resources**
- **Any specialist resources**

4.3   Staff resources
- **Staffing – members of the programme teaching team**
- **Role/involvement of technicians, administrative staff etc.**

4.4   Staff development to support programme delivery
- **Identification of needs/staff appraisal**
- **Opportunities for further study for staff**
- **Conferences/seminars etc.**

5   Student guidance and support
- **Induction/faculty and programme handbooks**

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- **Personal tutoring/PDP**
- **Support for students with learning differences**
- **Preparing students for progression to employment or further study**
- **Counselling/financial support**

6   Learning, teaching and assessment strategies
- **Teaching and learning methods, including integration of ELT**
- **Assessment strategy**
- **Assessment details – including types, weightings, spread**
- **Learning outcomes – match between module and programme outcomes and assessment**
- **Role of project/dissertation (where applicable)**

7   Any other observations
- **Any other significant observations not covered elsewhere in the report**

SECTION E   AUTHORISATION OF REPORT

Report approved by chair	<date>
Report approved by panel	<date>
Copy of final report circulated within faculty, including FAC	<date>
Copy of report filed within faculty	<date>
Copy sent to Quality Officer, Taught Programmes, DAQ	<date>
Copy sent to PSRB, where relevant	<date>

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