

# Guidance for Validation and Periodic Programme Review

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Academic Registry

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## **Glossary**

APFP	Academic Planning and Fees Panel
AQSC	Academic Quality and Standards Committee
CME	Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement
CPD	Certificate of Professional Development Award
EPA	End-Point Assessment
FHEQ	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
FMT	Faculty Management Team
NSS	National Student Survey
OfS	Office for Students
PSRB	Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body
PTES	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SMT	School Management Team
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
URG	University Recognition Group
VROP	Validation and Review Oversight Panel

## Chapter 1: Introduction

1. This Guidance is intended to provide information about the university's **validation** and **periodic programme review** process, and the associated roles and responsibilities of all participants, for both internal and collaborative programmes. It should be read in conjunction with the university's Academic Framework Regulations and the Curriculum Design Guide.
2. **Validation** is the quality assurance process used to scrutinise a proposed new programme of study.
3. **Periodic programme review** is a retrospective and prospective quality assurance process, which facilitates an opportunity to scrutinise and, as applicable, refresh a validated programme of study.
4. Both **validation** and **periodic programme review** are processes of peer review. An informed and impartial panel considers a programme(s) in order to confirm it meets (or continues to meet) both university and external expectations of standards and quality, offers (or continues to offer) high quality learning opportunities for students/apprentices, and delivers (or continues to deliver) high quality student/apprentice outcomes.
5. The **validation** process provides the programme team(s) with an opportunity to explain how the programme will operate in practice. The **periodic programme review** process provides the programme team(s) with an opportunity to explain the outcomes of their self-evaluation of their programme(s). Both processes provide the programme team(s) with an opportunity to share experiences and learning from the wider perspective and insight afforded by discussion with university colleagues and external peers.
6. Before the **validation** process can begin, strategic planning approval of a proposal is required. Successful completion of this stage confirms support for a proposal from the School Management Team (SMT), Faculty Management Team (FMT) and the university's Academic Planning and Fees Panel (APFP). Only when all three have confirmed their support for a proposed programme(s) can it proceed to validation. Guidance on obtaining strategic planning approval to develop a new programme can be found within the [Guidance for New Programme Approval](#). It should be noted that approval from APFP only constitutes *permission to develop* a new programme; it does not constitute approval of the programme. The latter may only be obtained through the **validation** process.
7. Development of the university's **validation** and **periodic programme review** processes has taken account of the Office for Students' (OfS) Conditions of Registration, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), the requirements of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).
8. The university reserves the right to apply flexibility, when operationalising its **validation/periodic programme review** process, to allow agility where required. When doing so the university adopts a risk-based approach, and ensures continued compliance with relevant national and university policies and requirements. The Head of Academic Quality and Standards must approve all such arrangements in the first instance.

*Timescales for completing validation and periodic programme activity*

9. It should be possible to complete the **validation/periodic programme review** process within 3 – 4 months.
10. For **internal provision**, undergraduate programmes must normally be fully validated or reviewed no later than December of the year prior to their intended start date/next intake date; for postgraduate programmes, with a start/intake date of September, the process must normally have been completed by the preceding June of that year.
11. For **collaborative provision**, timescales will be developed to meet the business needs of each individual proposal.
12. In instances where alternate versions of a programme (such as a “with Foundation” programme or a 240-credit Masters programme) are validated independently of their substantive programme, the validation dates should be aligned. Consequently, in these circumstances, the periods of approval confirmed by validation panels would need to be cognisant of this.
13. A successful **periodic programme review** will result in the ongoing approval of a programme of study. Any proposed changes will normally only apply to students/apprentices entering the programme from the next intake date. Therefore, the timescales for **periodic programme review** must provide applicants with sufficient notice of forthcoming changes. Normally, it is expected that existing students/apprentices will complete the extant version of the programme, as per the published programme specification. If this is not the case, the Programme Leader should speak to the assigned Event Officer as soon as possible.
14. Exceptionally, in parallel to considering a revised version of a programme(s), **periodic programme review** panels are empowered to approve a change(s) to the extant version of a programme(s), which will apply to existing students/apprentices<sup>1</sup>. Where a **periodic programme review** panel approves a change(s) to an existing version of a programme(s), this will be reported to, and monitored by, the Validation and Review Oversight Panel (VROP).
15. Should programme teams wish to transfer existing students/apprentices to a new version of a programme<sup>2</sup>, following **periodic programme review**, then **written consent must be obtained from all affected students/apprentices, including those who are currently not engaging or are on a Leave of Absence**. Prior to seeking to transfer existing students/apprentices to a new version of a programme, the programme team/Programme Leader **must** obtain the approval of both the Director of School and Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor.
16. In instances where consent is required from students/apprentices who are not engaging or who are on a Leave of Absence, arrangements must be in place to ensure that, when the student/apprentice is re-engaged, their written consent is sought to transfer to the new version of a programme.
17. When seeking student/apprentice consent, students/apprentices must be made aware of the alternative options available to them, should they not consent to the proposed change,

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<sup>1</sup> For further details please see the Additional Information section in Chapter 3.

<sup>2</sup> A transfer to a new version of a programme is defined as a situation which necessitates existing students/apprentices to be registered against a different programme code and/or award and/or title than that which they were originally registered against.

including the opportunity to withdraw from the programme, to move to another programme and, if required, to move to another institution.

18. In addition to the above options, in the event that **all** affected students/apprentices<sup>3</sup> do not provide written consent to the proposed transfer, the Faculty may wish to consider offering those students/apprentices the option to continue on the extant version of the programme. **Before** exploring this option with students/apprentices, the programme team/Programme Leader **must** seek support and confirmation from the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor that such an arrangement can be resourced.
19. Written consent must be obtained by the relevant programme team/Programme Leader and evidence of consent must be retained by the programme team.
20. When a programme is undergoing **periodic programme review**, the following statement is added to the programme information on the university's website:

*“This course is currently undergoing its scheduled programme review, which may impact the advertised modules. Programme review is a standard part of the university’s approach to quality assurance and enhancement, enabling us to ensure that our courses remain up to date and maintain their high standard and relevancy.*

*Once the review is completed, this course website page will be updated to reflect any approved changes to the advertised course. These approved changes will also be communicated to those who apply for the course to ensure they wish to proceed with their application.*

*Where changes to modules are necessary these will be communicated, as appropriate.”*

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<sup>3</sup> Including those not engaging or on a Leave of Absence.

## Chapter 2: The Planning Process

### *Validation*

21. A Planning Proposal is presented to APFP, to obtain permission to develop a proposed programme(s). Once a programme(s) has received strategic planning approval from APFP, the assigned Event Officer organises the **validation** process.
22. During the development of the Planning Proposal that will be presented to the APFP, the proposing team should arrange to meet with their Assistant Academic Registrar to identify matters which may affect the validation process, such as any anticipated variance from the Academic Framework.

### *Initiating periodic programme review*

23. Academic Registry manages the university's schedule of **periodic programme review**. Programmes that are approved following periodic programme review are normally approved for a period of 5 years, and the next **periodic programme review** date is recorded on WebHub. Programme teams and collaborative partners will be notified that a programme is due for review in the year preceding the review year.
24. For **internal provision**, **periodic programme review** will often take place in subject clusters rather than on a programme-by-programme basis. The composition of subject clusters will be agreed by Academic Registry in conjunction with Directors of School.
25. In exceptional circumstances an extension to a programme's approval period can be granted, normally for a maximum of one year only. The rationale for requesting an extension should be presented to VROP on the agreed [Extension Request Template](#) and must be approved by the Panel no later than the end of the semester immediately preceding the scheduled **periodic programme review**. In the event that the requested extension is not approved by VROP by the end of the semester immediately preceding the scheduled **periodic programme review**, the programme's approval period will normally not be extended and the activity will normally be required to proceed as planned. In considering the application, informed by the outputs of the university's quality management processes, VROP will make a risk-based judgement based on an assessment of the programme's quality and standards. Applications for an extension must be endorsed by the relevant Director of School prior to submission to the Secretary of VROP.
26. In the first instance, arrangements for **validation** and **periodic programme review** will be agreed via correspondence between the designated Event Officer from Academic Registry and the programme team. If requested by the programme team or deemed necessary by Academic Registry, planning arrangements can instead be made via a planning meeting, which would normally be undertaken virtually. If an activity involves a new Programme Leader and/or new collaborative partner, a planning meeting will continue to be arranged. Again, this will normally be undertaken virtually.
27. Once agreed, the Event Officer will confirm in writing, to all attendees, the agreed approach, the timeline of activity (including the completion of any convergent activities<sup>4</sup>), and documentary requirements, and will also provide any applicable templates. The timeline

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<sup>4</sup> For example, approval of any applications for variance from the Academic Framework or Advanced Standing arrangements, or, for Joint/Dual Awards, an Operational Framework.

of activity will also be provided to the relevant Library Services representative, Faculty Marketing Manager, Faculty Recruitment and Admissions Manager, a designated representative from Student Futures: Liverpool John Moores University's Careers, Employability and Enterprise Service (where applicable) and, for collaborative provision, the International Partnerships Manager (where relevant) for information.

28. Following correspondence on planning arrangements, the Event Officer will look to schedule an interim meeting(s) with the programme team during the development/evaluation phase, to discuss progress towards deadlines and provide formalised opportunities to receive ongoing advice and support.
29. For **collaborative programmes**, if a planning meeting is held it must include partner staff, and will not proceed without their involvement.
30. The **validation** and **periodic programme review** of an **Apprenticeship(s)** will normally be a stand-alone activity and will normally not be clustered as part of the validation and/or periodic programme review of a suite of, cognate, standard programmes.

## Chapter 3: Documentation

31. The university's core **validation** submission comprises:

- A Design and Delivery Overview document (DDO).
- Programme specification(s).
- Module proformas.
- CVs for relevant university or partner staff (academic and key technical staff as appropriate).

32. The university's core **periodic programme review** submission comprises:

- A Self-Evaluation Document (SED).
- Programme specification(s).
- Module proformas.
- CVs for relevant university or partner staff (academic and key technical staff as appropriate).

33. Programme teams should consult the following evidence for the **periodic programme review**:

- Programme Document/Design and Delivery Overview document from validation.
- Self-Evaluation Documents from previous periodic programme reviews.
- Programme Reflection and Action Plan for the periodic programme review period.
- External Examiners' reports and responses.
- History of programme amendments.
- Subject Benchmark Statements.
- PSRB reports and requirements.
- Link Tutor reports (collaborative programmes only).

### *Design and Delivery Overview (validation only)*

34. A Design and Delivery Overview template will be provided to the programme team by Academic Registry, and when completed by the team should be uploaded to the university's curriculum management system, CourseLoop.

35. The Design and Delivery Overview document provides the **validation** panel with key information relating to the design, development and operation of the proposed programme(s) of study. It focusses principally upon the programme team's rationale for their proposed design and model of delivery, including the factors that have informed their decisions including consultation activities with students/apprentices and other stakeholders, for example, employers.

In addition, the Design and Delivery Overview document also addresses the programme's resource requirements and proposed student/apprentice support mechanisms.

36. For **collaborative programmes**, the Design and Delivery Overview also addresses roles and responsibilities with regard to programme development, delivery and management.

37. For **Apprenticeships** the Design and Delivery Overview also addresses the programme's alignment to the applicable Apprenticeship Standard, consideration of the End-Point

Assessment (EPA), the operation of on and off-the-job learning and the appointment and operation of work-based mentors.

38. The Design and Delivery Overview is intended to supplement the other components within the university's core **validation** submission, and should therefore not repeat information that is contained within these other components.

*Self-Evaluation Document (periodic programme review only)*

39. A Self-Evaluation Document template will be provided to the programme team by Academic Registry, and when completed by the team should be uploaded to the university's curriculum management system, CourseLoop.

40. The Self-Evaluation Document provides information for the **periodic programme review** panel about the ongoing operation and management of the programme(s). It should be a reflective, critical, evidence-based appraisal of the programme's operation since it was initially validated or last underwent review.

41. To this end, the Self-Evaluation Document will consider the following main themes:

- Admissions, retention and success.
- Curricula and programme structure.
- Teaching, learning and assessment.
- Student/apprentice support mechanisms.
- Staffing and resource requirements.
- Programme management and quality assurance.

42. Should student/apprentice data be included within the Self-Evaluation Document, programme teams must ensure that students/apprentices cannot be identified.

43. The development of the Self-Evaluation Document should be a collegial exercise. Programme team members should be fully engaged in the review process, sharing the preparation and analysis.

44. It is expected that the self-evaluation will be informed by consultation activities with students/apprentices, External Examiners and other stakeholders such as employers. The university's professional service teams may also be consulted regarding specific aspects of the evaluation, for example, the Teaching and Learning Academy, Marketing, Student Recruitment and Admissions and Student Futures: Liverpool John Moores University's Careers, Employability and Enterprise Service.

45. For programmes that contain **Advanced Standing** arrangements, the Self-Evaluation Document should include consideration of the ongoing comparability of the programmes and the experience of students who enter the programme via this route.

46. In addition, the Self-Evaluation Document provides information to the **periodic programme review** panel regarding any proposed changes to the programme(s) undergoing review, as well as the associated implications for any linked programmes<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> The university defines a linked programme as: programmes where one or more modules are co-taught (including at Level 3); programmes delivered via a franchise arrangement; and programmes

*Programme specification (validation and periodic programme review)*

47. The programme specification is a definitive record of a programme and can be accessed by a range of stakeholders, including prospective and current students/apprentices, employers, External Examiners and PSRBs.
48. Development/update of programme specifications is undertaken via CourseLoop. The programme specification(s) will be reviewed and approved as part of the **validation/periodic programme review** process.
49. For **periodic programme review**, the relevant programme specification(s) will be attached to the CourseLoop proposal by Academic Registry, and updated by the programme team as part of the documentation. Any programme specification updates should reflect outcomes that are documented in the Self-Evaluation Document. Updates will apply to students/apprentices entering the programme from the next intake date. Normally, existing students/apprentices will complete the extant version of the programme(s) as per the published programme specification(s)<sup>6</sup>.
50. For **Franchise programmes**, the programme specification will generally match the specification for the home programme but should include some specific details related to delivery by the partner.

*Module proformas (validation and periodic programme review)*

51. A module proforma for all modules within a programme(s) should be submitted as part of the core **validation/periodic programme review** submission.
52. Development/update of module proformas is undertaken via CourseLoop. The module proformas for any new/amended modules should be attached to the CourseLoop proposal and completed/updated by the relevant Module Leader (or nominated person if this varies according to School practice) in conjunction with the Programme Leader.
53. In relation to **periodic programme review**, updated module proformas for all modules will apply to students/apprentices entering the programme from the next intake date. Any module updates should reflect outcomes that are documented in the Self-Evaluation Document.
54. Normally, existing students/apprentices will complete the extant version of the programme as per existing module proformas<sup>7</sup>.
55. For **collaborative programmes**, completion of the module proformas will be facilitated by the applicable Liverpool John Moores University School on behalf of the partner.

*Staff CVs (validation and periodic programme review)*

56. Staff CVs should normally be provided on the agreed university template and submitted to the Event Officer by email as a PDF file. CVs should not contain personal details such as dates of birth, home phone numbers/addresses etc. Password-protected versions of the

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that offer students the opportunity to apply for entry at a level of study later than the normal entry point (either via an Articulation, Progression or Succession Arrangement).

<sup>6</sup> See also Chapter 1 regarding changes to extant programmes.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Staff CVs will be shared with the validation/periodic programme review panel via CourseLoop.

57. The Self-Evaluation Document should highlight, through consideration of ongoing resources, any changes to the programme staff profile.

*Additional documentation*

58. If applicable to the proposed programme(s), the following should also be provided by the programme team alongside the core **validation/periodic programme review** submission:

- Off-site delivery approval template.
- **Approved** application for variance.
- **Approved** Operational Framework (Joint/Dual Awards).
- Mapping of the programme(s) against the university's Joint/Dual Award requirements (Joint/Dual Awards).
- Confirmation of approval of an Advanced Standing arrangement.<sup>8</sup>
- **Approved** level learning outcome mapping, demonstrating comparability of the programme with a named LJMU Progression Programme (Foundation Degrees)<sup>9</sup>.
- Programme support materials and/or a tour of the Virtual Learning Environment (Distance Learning programmes).
- Draft Practice Assessment Records (Apprenticeships).
- Learning Journey Plan (Apprenticeships).
- Guidance materials for work-based mentors (Apprenticeships).
- Draft Commitment Statement (Apprenticeships).
- For Apprenticeships with an integrated End-Point Assessment, the End-Point Assessment Plan, which must detail roles and responsibilities, assessment methods and include grading descriptors (Apprenticeships).
- Resource Requirements Summary Template (collaborative programmes)<sup>10 11</sup>.

59. Where a **periodic programme review** panel is exceptionally asked to consider changes to the extant version of a programme(s), which will apply to existing students/apprentices, the panel should receive the following:

- A written rationale for the proposed amendment(s).
- An updated programme specification(s)<sup>12</sup>.
- A revised module proforma(s)<sup>13</sup>.
- A new module proforma(s)<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> If it is intended that the programme will permit progression, through Advanced Standing, then evidence this has been approved by the University Recognition Group (URG) **must** be provided as part of the full submission. This evidence should normally take the form of the minute from the URG confirming approval.

<sup>9</sup> For further information please see [Guidance for Approval and Monitoring of Advanced Standing](#).

<sup>10</sup> Virtual and hybrid models of validation/periodic programme review only.

<sup>11</sup> This template should be utilised to detail discipline-specific resources required for each module as well as how these resources should be managed. Alongside the template, programme teams will also be asked to provide appropriate evidence (such as photographs or short videos) of the necessary resources and equipment in situ.

<sup>12</sup> As applicable.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

- A revised curriculum mapping(s)<sup>15</sup>. This can be done via the Mapper functionality in CourseLoop, accessible via the programme specification.
- An updated knowledge, skills and behaviours mapping (Apprenticeships only).
- Evidence-based confirmation that the programme remains aligned with the requirements of the Apprenticeship Standard (Apprenticeships only).
- Confirmation as to how students/apprentices have been consulted with regard to the proposed amendment(s).
- Confirmation as to how employers have been consulted with regard to the proposed amendment(s) (Apprenticeships only).
- Evidence that all affected students/apprentices have provided written consent to the change(s)<sup>16</sup>.
- Confirmation that the External Examiner(s) has been invited to comment upon the proposed amendment(s).
- Confirmation that the External Verifier has been invited to comment upon the proposed amendment(s) (Apprenticeships only).
- Confirmation that the applicable PSRB has been consulted with regard to the proposed amendment(s)<sup>17</sup>.

60. It should be noted that if any of the required documentation, with the required approval status, is **not** submitted to the panel in line with the agreed timescales, the **validation/periodic programme review** event will **not** proceed as planned.

#### *Certificate of Professional Development awards (CPDs)*

61. CPD awards are classified within the Academic Framework as an award that is '10 to 60 credits, at levels 4, 5, 6 and/or 7.' (Please see the [Academic Framework](#) regulations for further details).

#### *Validation of new CPD award programmes*

#### **Internal Provision**

62. This section refers to CPD modules/programmes that are composed of new modules and are delivered by university staff.

63. Planning approval will be required before the validation process commences. This involves the creation of a Planning Proposal in CourseLoop which will need to be signed off at School level then sent to the relevant Faculty Management Team (FMT). Following approval at FMT, the proposal is submitted to the APFP by the Assistant Academic Registrar for the Faculty. Guidance on the initial planning approval stage is available from the Assistant Academic Registrar or Academic Registry.

64. In the first instance, the validation planning phase will be agreed via correspondence between the designated Event Officer from Academic Registry and the programme team. If requested by the programme team or deemed necessary by Academic Registry, planning arrangements can instead be made via a planning meeting, which would normally be undertaken virtually. If the activity involves a new Programme Leader a planning meeting will be facilitated. This will normally be undertaken virtually. .

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> As applicable, and determined by the nature of the change(s) (see [Guidance for Programme and Module Amendments](#))

<sup>17</sup> As applicable.

65. For all new CPD award programmes, a Design and Delivery Overview document will need to be prepared by the School. As the document is used for validation of all new programmes, some information in the Design and Delivery Overview may not be relevant to CPD award programmes, and therefore it is understood that compressed versions for CPDs commensurate to the size of the proposed award programme may be provided.
66. A programme specification, module proformas, CVs for all staff due to teach on the programme, and a resource requirement summary (if applicable) complete the documentation requirements for the validation of a CPD award comprised of new modules. The programme specification and module proforma must be created in CourseLoop, and a list of names of all the staff due to teach on the CPD must be attached to the proposal. A merged PDF should be provided to Academic Registry containing the CVs of all those staff, as the document will need to be password-protected and attached to the proposal by Academic Registry.
67. In the case of CPDs that are *not* accredited by a PSRB, the process listed below in paragraphs 68 to 69 is that which will apply. For CPDs accredited by a PSRB, the CPDs will not be considered by VROP but instead via a validation event which will be held with a full Panel appointed in the same way as for all other programmes (see detail in Chapter 6).
68. An External Advisor (subject specialist) will be identified by the Programme Leader in consultation with the Director of School, no later than 6 weeks before the meeting of VROP to which they wish to submit the CPD for validation (see below). This person should have relevant subject expertise in order to advise on the appropriateness of the curriculum and meet the criteria outlined in the nomination form. The Event Officer allocated by Academic Registry will be responsible for appointing the nominee following receipt of the [External Panel representative/External advisor nomination form](#) and supporting CV. Once all documentation has been submitted on CourseLoop and approved by the Director of School, the External Advisor will be sent a comments form to complete with their feedback, with the deadline for return of this form no later than 1 week prior to the VROP paper deadline.
69. Validation of an internal CPD award will be conducted by VROP. Confirmation of School-level endorsement must be provided by the Director of School within CourseLoop before the proposal progresses to VROP. The documentation presented to VROP will be as described above, and the Programme Leader for the proposed CPD will be requested to attend the applicable meeting of VROP to speak with the panel about any and all activities that necessitate VROP discharging its responsibilities for programme approval.

#### ***Collaborative Provision***

70. This section refers to CPD modules/programmes that are composed of new modules and are delivered with partners' support.
71. For CPDs composed of new modules, planning approval would be required, and would follow the same process as other new collaborative programmes (see information available on the [Academic Partnerships Operational Guidance](#) webpage).
72. In the first instance, the validation planning phase will be agreed via correspondence between the designated Event Officer from Academic Registry and the programme team. If requested by the programme team or deemed necessary by Academic Registry, planning arrangements can instead be made via a planning meeting, which would normally be undertaken virtually. If the activity involves a new Programme Leader and/or new

collaborative partner a planning meeting will be facilitated. This will normally be undertaken virtually.

73. For all new CPD award programmes, a Design and Delivery Overview document will need to be prepared. As the document is used for validation of all new programmes, some information in the Design and Delivery Overview may not be relevant to CPD award programmes, and therefore it is understood that compressed versions for CPDs commensurate to the size of the proposed award programme may be provided.
74. A programme specification, module proformas, CVs for all staff due to teach on the programme, and a resource requirement summary<sup>18</sup> (if applicable) complete the documentation requirements for the validation of a CPD award comprised of new modules. The programme specification and module proforma must be created in CourseLoop, and a list of names of all the staff due to teach on the CPD must be attached to the proposal. A merged PDF should be provided to Academic Registry containing the CVs of all those staff, as the document will need to be password-protected and attached to the proposal by Academic Registry.
75. Once the full set of documentation is prepared, this should be considered initially through the School, as outlined in Chapter 5. Confirmation of School-level endorsement must be provided by the Director of School within CourseLoop before the proposal progresses to panel consideration.
76. Validation of the CPD award(s) will be conducted by a panel. The panel will consist of a Chair, a representative from another Faculty, an external subject specialist, and an Event Officer from Academic Registry. The university normally manages its validation activity through a summative, 'face-to-face' event. This will normally be facilitated virtually using MS Teams.
77. At the end of the validation event, the panel will formulate its decision and the Chair will communicate this to the programme team (see chapters 7 and 8).
78. The outcomes of the panel's considerations will be reported to VROP.
79. The duration of the process will depend on the activities of all stakeholders involved and issues that emerge. A timeline will be agreed as part of the planning process.

#### *Approval of existing modules as CPD awards*

##### ***Internal Provision***

80. In some instances, a programme team may wish to validate a CPD which comprises existing modules which have already been validated. For this, a Planning Proposal should be submitted in CourseLoop, which will need to be signed off at School level then sent to the relevant FMT. Following approval at FMT, the proposal will be submitted to the APFP by the Assistant Academic Registrar for the Faculty. Guidance on the initial planning approval stage is available from the Assistant Academic Registrar or Academic Registry.

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<sup>18</sup> Virtual and hybrid models of validation/periodic programme review only.

81. Following approval at APFP, a Design and Delivery Overview document will need to be prepared by the School. As the document is used for validation of all new programmes, some information in the Design and Delivery Overview may not be relevant to CPD award programmes and therefore it is understood that compressed versions for CPDs commensurate to the size of the proposed award programme may be provided.
82. For existing validated modules, there is no further requirement to engage the services of an External Advisor (subject specialist) in the validation process where the CPD award comprises a single module. If the CPD award comprises more than one module, an External Advisor (subject specialist) must be appointed and asked to provide a report, as outlined in paragraph 68 above.
83. A programme specification and module proforma must be created in CourseLoop. For single-module CPD awards, the final CPD award title will be the same as the module title. If a module within a programme is offered as a CPD, a reference to this should be included in the 'Additional Information' section of the relevant programme specification.
84. Approval of existing modules as CPD awards will be conducted by VROP. Confirmation of School-level endorsement must be provided by the Director of School within CourseLoop before the proposal progresses to VROP. The documentation presented to VROP will be as described above, and the Programme Leader for the proposed CPD will be requested to attend the applicable meeting of VROP to speak with the panel about any and all activities that necessitate VROP discharging its responsibilities for programme approval.

#### ***Collaborative Provision***

85. In some instances, a programme team may wish to offer an existing validated module as a single module CPD. For this, a Planning Proposal should be created in CourseLoop, and this will then be sent to the relevant FMT. Following approval at FMT, the proposal is submitted to the APFP by the Assistant Academic Registrar for the Faculty. Guidance on the initial planning approval stage is available from the Assistant Academic Registrar or Academic Registry.
86. Following approval at APFP, a Design and Delivery Overview document will need to be prepared. As the document is used for validation of all new programmes, some information in the Design and Delivery Overview may not be relevant to CPD award programmes and therefore it is understood that compressed versions for CPDs commensurate to the size of the proposed award programme may be provided.
87. There is no requirement at this stage to engage the services of an External Advisor, as there is no approval of any changes in teaching and learning activity.
88. A programme specification and module proforma must be created in CourseLoop. The final CPD award title will be the same as the module title. If a module within a programme is offered as a CPD, a reference to this should be included in the 'Additional Information' section of the relevant programme specification.
89. Approval of existing modules as CPD awards will be conducted by VROP. Confirmation of School-level endorsement must be provided by the Director of School within CourseLoop before the proposal progresses to VROP. The documentation presented to VROP will be as described above, and the Programme Leader for the proposed CPD will be requested

to attend the applicable meeting of VROP to speak with the panel about any and all activities that necessitate VROP discharging its responsibilities for programme approval.

#### *Periodic Programme Review of CPD awards*

90. All CPD award programmes must undergo periodic programme review at the end of the validated period of approval. The only exception is where a single-module CPD forms part of a larger award. In this instance, it is expected that the Self-Evaluation Document (SED) completed for periodic programme review of the larger award will also consider the single-module CPD(s). In this way it is conceivable that the periodic programme review cycle of a single-module CPD will be determined by the larger award(s) that it serves.
91. If, as part of the periodic programme review process, a programme team intends to change the title of a module that is also validated as a CPD, it is worth considering that this would necessitate a title change of the CPD programme. To do this, a programme revision request would need to be submitted via CourseLoop, which will need to be signed off at School level then sent to the relevant FMT. Following approval at FMT, the proposal is submitted to the APFP by the Assistant Academic Registrar for the Faculty.

#### ***Internal Provision***

92. In the first instance, the periodic programme review planning phase will be agreed via correspondence between the designated Event Officer from Academic Registry and the programme team. If requested by the programme team or deemed necessary by Academic Registry, planning arrangements can instead be made via a planning meeting, which would normally be undertaken virtually. If the activity involves a new Programme Leader a planning meeting will be facilitated. This will normally be undertaken virtually..
93. For all CPDs not covered by the exception in paragraph 87 above, a SED will need to be prepared by the School. As the document is used for periodic programme review of all programmes, some information in the SED may not be relevant to CPD award programmes and therefore it is understood that compressed versions for CPDs commensurate to the size of the proposed award programme may be provided. The SED should be reflective, critical and evidence-based, and the documents listed in paragraph 33 should be consulted when writing the documentation.
94. A programme specification, module proformas, CVs for all staff due to teach on the programme, and a resource requirement summary (if applicable) complete the documentation requirements for the review of a CPD award comprised of new modules. The programme specification and module proforma must be created in CourseLoop, and a list of names of all the staff due to teach on the CPD must be attached to the proposal. A merged PDF should be provided to Academic Registry containing the CVs of all those staff, as the document will need to be password-protected and attached to the proposal by Academic Registry.
95. If a module within a programme is offered as a CPD, a reference to this should be included in the relevant programme specification.
96. In the case of CPDs that are *not* accredited by a PSRB, the process listed below in paragraphs 97 to 98 is that which will apply. For CPDs accredited by a PSRB, the CPDs will not be considered by VROP but instead via a review event which will be held with a full Panel appointed in the same way as for all other programmes (see detail in Chapter 6, below)

97. An External Advisor (subject specialist) will be identified by the Programme Leader in consultation with the Director of School, no later than 6 weeks before the meeting of VROP to which they wish to submit the CPD for review (see below). This person should have relevant subject expertise in order to advise on the appropriateness of the curriculum and meet the criteria outlined in the nomination form. The Event Officer will be responsible for appointing the nominee following receipt of the [External Panel representative/External advisor nomination form](#) and supporting CV. Once all documentation has been submitted on CourseLoop and approved by the Director of School, the External Advisor will be sent a comments form to complete with their feedback, with the deadline for return of this form no later than 1 week prior to the VROP paper deadline.
98. Periodic programme review of an internal CPD award will be conducted by VROP. Confirmation of School-level endorsement must be provided by the Director of School within CourseLoop before the proposal progresses to VROP. The documentation presented to VROP will be as described above, and the Programme Leader for the proposed CPD will be requested to attend the applicable meeting of VROP to speak with the panel about any and all activities that necessitate VROP discharging its responsibilities for programme re-approval.

### ***Collaborative Provision***

99. In the first instance, the periodic programme review planning phase will be agreed via correspondence between the designated Event Officer from Academic Registry and the programme team. If requested by the programme team or deemed necessary by Academic Registry, planning arrangements can instead be made via a planning meeting, which would normally be undertaken virtually. If the activity involves a new Programme Leader and/or collaborative partner a planning meeting will be facilitated. This will normally be undertaken virtually. .
100. For all CPDs not covered by the exception in paragraph 87 above, a SED will need to be prepared by the School. As the document is used for periodic programme review of all programmes, some information in the SED may not be relevant to CPD award programmes and therefore it is understood that compressed versions for CPDs commensurate to the size of the proposed award programme may be provided. The SED should be reflective, critical and evidence-based, and the documents listed in paragraph 30 above should be consulted when writing the documentation.
101. A programme specification, module proformas, CVs for all staff due to teach on the programme, and a resource requirement summary<sup>19</sup> (if applicable) complete the documentation requirements for the review of a CPD award comprised of new modules. The programme specification and module proforma must be created in CourseLoop, and a list of names of all the staff due to teach on the CPD must be attached to the proposal. A merged PDF should be provided to Academic Registry containing the CVs of all those staff, as the document will need to be password-protected and attached to the proposal by Academic Registry.
102. If a module within a programme is offered as a CPD, a reference to this should be included in the relevant programme specification.

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<sup>19</sup> Virtual and hybrid models of validation/periodic programme review only.

103. Once the full set of documentation is prepared, this should be considered initially through the School, as outlined in Chapter 5. Confirmation of School-level endorsement must be provided by the Director of School within CourseLoop before the proposal progresses to panel consideration.
104. Periodic programme review of the CPD award(s) will be conducted by a panel. The panel will consist of a Chair, a representative from another Faculty, an external subject specialist, and an Event Officer from Academic Registry.
105. The university normally manages its periodic programme review activity through a summative, 'face-to-face' event. This will normally be facilitated virtually using MS Teams.
106. In instances where the programme will be delivered over a number of different sites, the university will wish to consider the site(s) of delivery before delivery of the university's programme commences there. The [Additional or New Site Approval Form](#) should be used.
107. At the end of the review event, the panel will formulate its decision and the Chair will communicate this to the programme team (see chapters 7 and 8 below).
108. The outcomes of the panel's considerations will be reported to VROP.
109. The duration of the processes described above will depend on the activities of all stakeholders involved and issues that emerge. A timeline will be agreed as part of the planning process.

## Chapter 4: Student/Apprentice Engagement in the Process

110. Student/apprentice consultation and engagement will take different forms during the **validation/periodic programme review** process as follows:

- By seeking students'/apprentices' views in order to inform the Self-Evaluation Document or Design and Delivery Overview.
- By identifying a small group of students/apprentices to meet/engage with the panel during the **validation/periodic programme review** process.
- By appointing a student/apprentice to act as a full member of the validation/review panel.

111. Engagement with students/apprentices is only one dimension of the process and should be considered in the context of interactions with the teaching team, External Examiners and other relevant stakeholders (employers, PSRBs etc.). The university has a number of formal mechanisms in place to seek student/apprentice feedback, for example, the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), Liverpool John Moores University module appraisal, programme Boards of Study and Staff/Student Liaison Committees.

112. If information, that is relevant to the development/review of a programme(s), has been identified via these mechanisms, then programme teams should consider how this feedback can be used during the **validation/periodic programme review** process. In addition, programme teams should consider further means of involving students/apprentices in developing/reviewing a programme(s), for example focus groups.

113. For **validation**, the student/apprentice perspective should be used to inform discussions about the development of a new programme, and their input should be sought early in the planning and development phase of the **validation** process. Informal information gathering may take place as early as programme teams feel they are ready to share their plans with students/apprentices. The focus will be concerned with actively engaging students/apprentices, currently studying programmes in a cognate area (where available), on all aspects of the programme to be validated. This could include module content, programme aims, delivery, assessment, resources, academic and pastoral support, and professional accreditation opportunities. Possible questions could include, but are not limited to:

- Would students/apprentices consider applying to the new programme currently being developed?
- What factors would influence their decision to study the programme (for example, title, module structure, syllabus content, course fees etc.)?
- What they feel is good about the programme?
- Do they think the balance between different aspects of the programme is appropriate?
- Are there any particular topics/subject areas that students/apprentices would expect to see incorporated within the programme not currently covered by the proposed modules?
- Are there any skills not included that they would expect to see on a programme in this subject discipline?
- What do they think about the assessment types and loading/balance on the programme, and the opportunities for formative and summative feedback?
- Do they think the proposed programme will prepare students for the job market?

- If it is a postgraduate programme, what do the students/apprentices regard as the main benefits gained from studying for a postgraduate degree?
- Would they consider postgraduate study at the university following completion of their undergraduate degree?

114. For **periodic programme review**, the focus of student/apprentice engagement will be concerned with requesting input from current students/apprentices and, where possible, alumni, especially those who are employed in related areas. The development of the self-evaluation should prompt specific lines of enquiry. However, students/apprentices should also be encouraged to provide less directed feedback. Possible questions could include, but are not limited to:

- What is good about the programme(s)?
- Do they think the balance between different aspects of the programme(s) is appropriate?
- Are there any particular topics/subject areas that students/apprentices would expect to see incorporated within the programme(s) not currently covered by the modules?
- Are there any modules where it is not clear how these contribute to the programme(s)?
- Are there any skills not included that they would expect to see on a programme in this subject discipline?
- What do they think about the assessment types and loading/balance on the programme(s) and the opportunities for formative and summative feedback?
- How well do they think the programme(s) prepares students/apprentices for the job market?
- Have the programme team(s) addressed student/apprentice feedback?
- In what ways do they think that students/apprentices contribute to the programme and its development?

115. It is acknowledged that **collaborative partners** will have their own mechanisms to receive feedback from students/apprentices and these should be used to inform the **validation/periodic programme review** process.

#### *Evidencing student/apprentice input*

116. Programme teams should outline the activities and outcomes of student/apprentice involvement in the development phase within the Design and Delivery Overview (**validation**) or the Self-Evaluation Document (**periodic programme review**).

#### *Student/apprentice involvement at the validation/periodic programme review event*

117. The panel will normally meet with a sample of students/apprentices during the **validation/periodic programme review** event, whether virtually via MS Teams, or in person in the case of an on-site event. This is a private meeting with the panel, so no members of the programme team can be present. Comments made by students/apprentices during the meeting will not be attributed to any individuals. Usually, the panel would like to meet between 5-10 students/apprentices from a variety of levels/modes of study (where applicable). Discussions in this meeting give the panel an opportunity to gain the perspective of students/apprentices and may also provide an opportunity to triangulate with the discussions from the meetings with the programme team and senior management. Whilst it is desirable to include a meeting with students/apprentices, the event may go ahead in the absence of a student/apprentice meeting if it has not been possible to secure student/apprentice attendance, and evidence

of student/apprentice engagement, during the development/evaluation phase, has been received by the panel.

118. The panel will ask students/apprentices questions about a wide range of areas, including, but not limited to, their views on admission, induction, the learning experience, support, the quality and usefulness of programme documents, assessment, feedback on work, student/apprentice feedback mechanisms, the accessibility of the curriculum for all students/apprentices, and the availability and quality of learning resources and study space. Students/apprentices will also be given the opportunity to raise and discuss other issues that they believe are relevant to the **validation/periodic programme review** process.
119. If the process is conducted as a desk-based activity, as part of their feedback, panel members are asked to identify, as applicable, questions for which a response from students/apprentices is required. Should questions of this nature be raised, it is the responsibility of programme teams to obtain these responses. However, to support programme teams in undertaking this task, they are also permitted to confirm to the Event Officer a sample of students/apprentices who would be willing to be contacted as part of the process. In these instances, the Event Officer will then liaise with the identified students/apprentices in order to obtain responses to the panel's questions.
120. It is the programme team's responsibility to secure students/apprentices to participate in the process of **validation/periodic programme review** and to ensure their engagement.

*Appointing a student to act as a full panel member*

121. The applicable programme team or partner will be asked to identify a student/apprentice to join the panel as a full member. This student/apprentice should normally be a programme representative or an Academic Interest Representative from a cognate area, but should not normally be affiliated to the programme area under consideration. In-line with other panel members, they will be provided with the documentation by the Event Officer. Their role is to offer a student/apprentice perspective on the proposal and to assist the panel in identifying lines of enquiry that may directly impact upon the student/apprentice experience. The Chair and Event Officer will brief the student/apprentice panel member, at the start of the process, and support them during the course of the process to ensure their input is managed appropriately.

## Chapter 5: School Endorsement of Documentation

### *Purpose*

122. The School endorsement stage is a technical review of the draft submission. The purpose of this aspect of the process is to ensure the appropriateness of the submission prior to it being received by the panel.

### *Process*

123. Under the direction of the relevant Director of School<sup>20</sup> arrangements will be put in place to review and endorse draft documentation, at School-level, to proceed to institutional **validation** or **periodic programme review**. Specifically, how this review is operationalised is at the discretion of each Director of School<sup>21</sup>, but timescales for this activity must be determined by the agreed date the finalised documents are required to be received by the Event Officer, and confirmation of School-level endorsement must be provided by the Director of School within CourseLoop.

124. The relevant Director of School<sup>22</sup> will identify who will undertake the review of the documentation within the School. To facilitate this review, the final draft of all required documentation should be submitted, via CourseLoop, by the programme team to the Director of School by the agreed deadline.

125. School endorsement confirms that:

- The proposal is in line with the expectations of the School, as agreed within the planning proposal approved by APFP (for programmes undergoing **validation**).
- The submission is aligned with the relevant university regulations and policies.
- A complete submission has been prepared and provided by the programme team.
- As applicable, any convergent activities (i.e., an application for variance, an Advanced Standing arrangement, and, for Joint/Dual Awards, an Operational Framework) have been fully approved, and appropriate evidence of approval is included within the submission.

126. If the **validation/periodic programme review** activity necessitates the involvement of a PSRB, the relevant Director of School should also approve all documentation, required by the PSRB, within the planned activities and deadlines for the **validation/periodic programme review** process.

127. Following confirmation that the submission has been endorsed by the Director of School the Event Officer will share the documentation with the **validation/periodic programme review** panel, the Assistant Academic Registrar and a representative from Student Futures: Liverpool John Moores University's Careers, Employability and Enterprise Service (where applicable).

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<sup>20</sup> For collaborative programmes this must be the Liverpool John Moores University Director of School.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 6: The Validation/Periodic Programme Review Process

128. The process will be facilitated using one of the following approaches:

- On-site event.
- A virtual event, via video conferencing software.
- Desk-based, via correspondence.
- A hybrid model, utilising a combination of both the desk-based approach and virtual/on-site event.

129. The approach selected will be determined by the nature and specific circumstances of the proposal. It is expected that most internal programmes undergoing either **validation** or **periodic programme review** will adopt the virtual approach, unless specialist physical resources are required, in which case the event will normally be held on-site in order to facilitate a tour of the resources. **Apprenticeship** programmes will always adopt the on-site or virtual approach to facilitate the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. **Validations/periodic programme reviews of collaborative provision** will normally take place via a on-site event with a new partner or if the programme requires specialist physical resources. Regardless of which approach is decided upon, it should be agreed with all relevant stakeholders from the outset.

130. Regardless of the model utilised, appropriate opportunities are facilitated for collegiate engagement, regarding the proposal, between the programme team, senior management from the School(s), partner, students/apprentices, employers, PSRB and a panel of academic peers. To do this, the panel reads the full set of documentation, provided by the programme team, and submits advanced comments to the Event Officer. Comments will be shared with the programme team, in advance of the event, in order to promote transparency and aid preparation. In the case of collaborative events, the programme team will be asked to provide a written response to the panel's comments in advance of the event.

131. Where it is agreed that the collaborative **periodic programme review** of a programme that requires specialist physical resources can be facilitated via video conferencing, the resource requirement summary will be submitted with supporting evidence such as photographs and/or videos of applicable resources. In addition, if required/requested, arrangements will be made for the panel to access/view learning resources, i.e., learning materials or recorded taught sessions uploaded to a Virtual Learning Environment and/or a demonstration of the Virtual Learning Environment.

132. For events taking place on-site or via video conferencing software, the panel will be asked to provide advanced comments on their review of the submission. These comments will be collated by the Event Officer, and will be used to inform the agenda for the meetings.

133. The desk-based correspondence model mitigates against the lack of face-to-face discussions, and ensures the rigour of the process is not affected, by using enhanced paperwork, which has been developed to facilitate clear and robust dialogue between the **validation/periodic programme review** panel and the programme team, and vice versa. All panel members are required to comment on a range of themes, including the programme's alignment with university and national expectations of standards and quality, alignment to appropriate university policies and external frameworks/benchmarks, the

quality and appropriateness of students'/apprentices' learning opportunities, and identified features of innovative/good practice. This approach is also utilised by the hybrid model of validation/review.

134. For **collaborative programmes**, there may be instances where the situation is more complex, for example, the programme will be delivered over a number of different sites. In these instances, the university will wish to consider the site(s) of delivery before delivery of the university's programme(s) commences there. The [Additional or New Site Approval process](#) should be used.

135. When an existing programme(s) reaches the end of its approval period and requires **periodic programme review**, consideration should be given to the number of sites where the programme(s) is being delivered and the approval mechanism to continue approval of all required sites.

136. If a programme(s) is moving from an existing site to a new site, the site approval activity **must** always be completed before teaching at the new site begins.

#### *The validation/periodic programme review panel*

137. Panels will be secured by Academic Registry, with the exception of external and student/apprentice panel members, who should be nominated by the programme team. With the exception of the student/apprentice panel member, all panel members will normally hold academic positions. The university's panels have delegated authority to make decisions regarding the (re)-approval of programmes on behalf of Academic Board.

138. A panel should normally comprise:

- Chair from a different School than the programme(s) under consideration.
- One university representative from a different School than the programme(s) under consideration.
- One student/apprentice representative.
- One external panel member (a second external can be nominated depending on the size, complexity or level of expertise required for the proposal, for example to ensure appropriate practice expertise is represented where the panel is considering an Apprenticeship).
- One Event Officer.

139. For **validations/periodic programme reviews of Joint/Dual Awards**, the Joint/Dual Award External Advisor should also normally be a member of the **validation/periodic programme review** panel. If the Joint/Dual Award External Advisor is unable to attend an event, they must provide written comments on the proposal, in advance of the event.

140. All university panel members will be provided with briefings organised by Academic Registry. These briefing sessions provide an introduction for those that are new to the process, and for experienced panel members to update their knowledge and understanding.

### *Role of panel members*

141. Further information on the Roles and Responsibilities of each panel member can be found [here](#).

### *The responsibilities of the panel*

142. **Validation** and **periodic programme review** panels are responsible for aspects such as, but not limited to:

- Ensuring that appropriate evidence has been used to evaluate the programme(s).
- Considering the effectiveness of methods used to evaluate the programme(s).
- Ensuring that programme teams have completed a thorough self-evaluation.
- Ensuring that the conclusions of the self-evaluation are appropriately addressed through proposed amendments.
- Assessing that the programme(s) meets/continues to meet university and national expectations of standards and quality.
- Ensuring that students/apprentices will be/are provided with the learning opportunities to achieve identified and agreed intended learning outcomes.
- Assessing that the programme(s) will/does facilitate opportunities for students to achieve threshold academic standards, which are consistent with the relevant national qualifications framework and any applicable sector-recognised standards.
- Assessing that the qualifications awarded to students/apprentices are credible and are only awarded to students/apprentices whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any sector-recognised standards.
- Ensuring that the programme(s) provides educational challenge and is coherent.
- Ensuring that the programme is in line/remains in line with national expectations and national benchmarks.
- Ensuring the programme is effectively assessed and that assessments are valid and reliable.
- Ensuring the programme is effectively delivered.
- Should an arrangement be proposed that would necessitate students at different stages of a programme to be taught and assessed together, to verify that not only does delivery recognise the different challenge needed for each group of students, but also that marking criteria is differentiated.
- Exploring issues relating to the development of the discipline, the (ongoing) validity and appropriateness of the structure and content of the programme.
- Ensuring adherence to university policies.
- Identifying evidence of good practice in the Design and Delivery Overview/Self-Evaluation Document that is worthy of dissemination and recommending methods of dissemination.
- Ensuring that resources, staffing and facilities are appropriate and adequate to deliver a high-quality academic experience and to support students/apprentices succeeding in and beyond higher education.
- Assessing the appropriateness of student/apprentice support mechanisms.
- Ensuring that the programme(s) is effectively managed (or will be) and is appropriately aligned to applicable external requirements and reference points, for example the FHEQ.
- Identifying good and innovative practice in design and delivery.

143. In addition, for **Apprenticeships only**, panels will be responsible for aspects such as, but not limited to:

- Ensuring that the programme, including the training provision, constitutes an appropriate preparation to enable apprentices to meet the nationally approved Apprenticeship Standard of occupational competence.
- Ensuring the 'behaviours' required as an outcome of an apprenticeship are reflected in the programme and module learning outcomes.
- Ensuring that there are clear arrangements for how the apprentice will be supported in the workplace to develop the duties, knowledge, skills and behaviours specified in the Apprenticeship Standard.
- Considering how the university will work with employers to ensure that the working environment within which apprentices are operating is appropriate to enable them to develop the required duties, knowledge, skills and behaviours for the relevant Apprenticeship Standard.
- Ensuring there are opportunities to assess apprentices' progress against the required knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Ensuring that the programme meets the requirements of the relevant Assessment Plan and, where appropriate, the university demonstrates independence of the process for End-Point Assessment (if it is an integrated Apprenticeship).
- Ensuring that an End-Point Assessment Organisation has been appointed in a timely manner (where applicable).

#### *Documentation for the panel*

144. Academic Registry will prepare the documentation for the panel, which will comprise a briefing pack and the documentation set out in Chapter 3.

145. The briefing pack will contain:

- The itinerary for the event and a list of panel members.
- Guidance on using CourseLoop for validation and review.
- Guidance for Validation and Periodic Programme Review.
- Overview of roles and responsibilities of participants.
- Fee/expense claim form (external panel members only).
- Decolonising the Curriculum briefing note.
- Advisory note from Student Futures (for applicable internal programmes only).

146. The programme team and Director of School (and in the case of collaborative events, the Link Tutor and Senior Management at the partner) will receive details of the agenda for the day and details of panel membership from the Event Officer. For programmes that include cross-School or Faculty staff, the Programme Leader should ensure representation from all areas.

#### *Involvement of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB)*

147. Where possible, the timing of **validation/periodic programme review** activity should be aligned to the timing of any accreditation/re-accreditation/monitoring activity required by a PSRB.

148. Professional body input into the process will have been confirmed at the planning stage. If the purpose of the **validation/periodic programme review** is also to obtain professional

recognition, the PSRB may require representation on the panel, and this must be discussed with the PSRB to ensure compliance. It is normally appropriate for the PSRB representative(s) to act as the external panel member. This should be discussed with the Event Officer.

149. When planning conjoint **validation/periodic programme review** and accreditation/re-accreditation/monitoring activity, it will be assessed if it will be possible to waive some of the requirements of the university's **validation/periodic programme review** process, should there be identified cross-over/duplication with the PSRB's process. Requests to waive aspects of the university's standard processes should be made to the Head of Academic Quality and Standards, and approval will **only** be granted in instances where the PSRB's process is judged to be at least as rigorous and robust as the university's process.

150. For further information on engaging with PSRBs during the **validation/periodic programme review process**, please see the university's guidance for [Engagement with PSRBs](#).

#### *Validation of programmes using shared modules*

151. If applicable, the programme team will have included information about the programme's use of shared modules in its Design and Delivery Overview (**validation**) or Self-Evaluation Document (**periodic programme review**). The panel will be alerted to this by the Event Officer, and advised that these are existing, validated, modules. However, should the panel identify any actions for consideration by the team that affect these modules, and these actions are more fundamental than simple typographical corrections, then these should normally be expressed within the outcomes as recommendations rather than conditions of approval. This provides an opportunity for all affected programmes to consider the recommendation and discuss the most appropriate response. This may, or may not, lead to the module(s) in question being updated for all programmes they contribute to, using the university's process for programme and module amendments (as described in Chapter 9).

## Chapter 7: Outcomes of Validation or Periodic Programme Review

152. For all **validations** or **periodic programme reviews**, whether carried out by Panel or via VROP, the panel/VROP will formulate its decision and the Chair/Secretary of VROP will communicate this to the programme team at the end of the event/meeting. This will include a summary of any conditions, and associated deadlines, recommendations and identified good practice. The standard period of approval that the panel can agree is five years. For programmes with **new collaborative partners**<sup>23</sup> the standard period of approval is three years.

153. For a **validation** or **periodic programme review** conducted by correspondence, panel members are required to identify specific questions that they wish to explore with the programme team in order to make a decision on approval. The totality of this feedback is shared with the Chair for consideration in advance of it being shared with the programme team. The questions to be explored with the programme team are then collated into a single template by the Event Officer. The template contains provision for:

- The programme team to provide a response to each of the panel's questions.
- Panel members to confirm their satisfaction with each of the programme team's responses.
- Panel members to confirm their view on whether the programme should be approved/re-approved, and whether approval/re-approval should be subject to conditions.
- Once the final outcomes have been shared with the programme team, the agreed post-event activities are undertaken in line with the guidance provided in Chapter 8.

154. There are three possible outcomes of **validation** or **periodic programme review**:

- Approval/re-approval, with/without conditions and/or recommendations for five years (three years if the programme is with a new collaborative partner<sup>24</sup>).
- Approval/re-approval for a fixed period less than five (three) years, with detailed reasons; with/without conditions and/or recommendations.
- Rejection, with detailed reasons.

155. Any conditions arising from **validation** or **periodic programme review** will be detailed points of action that must be fulfilled satisfactorily by an agreed date. The panel and the Chair will agree how responses to conditions will be considered, whether by the whole panel or by approval of the Chair only.

156. Any recommendations are not requirements but should be suggestions that the panel believe would improve the proposal. The Programme Team will be required to report back on their consideration of these recommendations through the university's Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement process (CME).

157. Commendations may relate to the quality of documentation, staff/student/apprentice involvement in the **validation** or **periodic programme review** process, or identified practice that makes a positive contribution to the assurance of academic standards and/or the quality of students'/apprentices' learning opportunities and outcomes.

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<sup>23</sup> A collaborative partner is considered to be "new" until at least one programme delivered at the partner has successfully completed a periodic programme review with the university.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

158. Panel members and the programme team will be asked to provide feedback after the **validation/periodic programme review** process has concluded, in order to identify any suggested enhancements and/or any features of good practice arising from the process.

## Chapter 8: Post-Validation or Periodic Programme Review Activity

159. Post-**validation/periodic programme review** sign-off will be co-ordinated between the Event Officer and the Chair of the panel. The Event Officer will liaise with the panel Chair and confirm in CourseLoop when the conditions of **validation** or **periodic programme review** have been signed-off.

### *Validation/periodic programme review outcomes*

160. The outcomes of the process will normally be written immediately by the Event Officer for approval by the Chair and/or the full panel, and sent to the programme team for completion of any necessary action(s).

### *Responses to conditions and sign-off*

161. All responses to conditions should be returned by the programme team to the Event Officer, who will ensure they are considered through the process agreed by the panel. If further action is identified, this will be relayed to the programme team with a new timescale for the production of the further information. If a response to the conditions is not received by the relevant deadline, this will be reported to VROP for consideration. Failure to comply with conditions means that the programme details are not updated on the student database and that the programme is not in approval and cannot run or have students/apprentices enrolled on it.

162. In exceptional circumstances, in the absence of the Chair, the response to the conditions can be approved by the Academic Registrar (or nominee). Where there are discipline-specific elements to the conditions, approval by the Academic Registrar will be subject to confirmation from the external panel member that the applicable conditions have been addressed appropriately.

163. Once the response to the conditions has been approved, confirmation will then be sent to the programme team, Director of School, Head of Operations, Faculty Marketing Manager, Faculty Student Recruitment and Admissions Manager, Library Services, Assistant Academic Registrar, and Student Futures: Liverpool John Moores University's Careers, Employability and Enterprise Service (if applicable), and uploaded to the CourseLoop proposal by Academic Registry.

### *Programme specification and module proformas*

164. Following confirmation, by the validation/periodic programme review panel Chair, that any identified conditions have been addressed appropriately, the applicable module proformas and programme specification(s) will be moved by the Event Officer to the implementation stage for sign-off by a CourseLoop System Administrator.

165. Publication of the programme specification will be confirmed in CourseLoop. For **collaborative provision**, the programme specification(s) will not be published until the associated contract has been signed.

166. In relation to programmes undergoing validation, once the programme specification has been published, the programme is regarded as 'live' and the Admissions Team or partner

is able to make offers to applicants. For existing programmes undergoing Periodic Programme Review, please see paragraph 20 above.

#### *Responses to recommendations*

167. Recommendations are not requirements, but they are suggestions that may necessitate action by the programme team. After the programme's first year of operation, it is expected that programme teams address recommendations via the university's monitoring process. It is expected that the programme team will indicate how the recommendations have been considered and whether (or not) any action is being taken to incorporate them in the programme.

#### *Production of definitive documentation*

168. One of the outcomes of the **validation/periodic programme review** process will be the production of definitive documentation, and this will include all the documentation considered by the panel in forming its conclusions. The definitive documentation will be housed within the CourseLoop system.

#### *Validation Report*

169. In order to confirm completion of the **validation/periodic programme review** process, post-event activity will be reported to VROP via receipt of event outcomes.

170. At the conclusion of the **validation/periodic programme review** process, the Event Officer will complete an event report. The report is regarded as the formal record of the process, and it will be filed by the Event Officer alongside the definitive documentation in CourseLoop.

171. Academic Registry will update the university's WebHub tool with the date of approval/re-approval and next periodic programme review date.

#### *Programme Marketing Information*

172. For **internal programmes**, the marketing information will be developed by the recruitment marketing team, in conjunction with the Programme Leader, as part of the **validation/periodic programme review** process, using the information within CourseLoop.

#### *The Contract*

173. For **collaborative programmes**, the contract with the partner institution will only be signed once all conditions have been met and the programme specification(s) and module proforma(s) have been fully signed off in CourseLoop.

## Chapter 9: Changes to the Programme Between Validation and Review

174. Any subsequent changes required to the programme between the **validation** and next **periodic programme review** will require approval by the appropriate university panel (please see [Guidance for Programme and Module Amendments](#) for a summary of the procedure for making changes).
175. For Advanced Standing arrangements, if a change is made to the partner or home award between events, this will require consideration through URG to confirm whether the changes impact on the appropriateness of the articulation/recognition agreement.

## Chapter 10: Institutional Oversight

### *Validation and Review Oversight Panel*

176. Institutional oversight of **validation** and **periodic programme review** is maintained by VROP. The panel is a sub-group of the university's Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC), is chaired by the Head of Academic Quality and Standards, and normally meets six times per year.

### *Institutional overview report*

177. The Head of Academic Quality and Standards will produce an annual institutional overview report of validation and review activity. This will include the key issues and recommendations arising from VROP's scrutiny of validation and review activity. The report is presented to AQSC.