



# Guidance for Validation

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## Glossary

APP	Academic Planning Panel
CME	Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement
EPA	End Point Assessment
FHEQ	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
FMT	Faculty Management Team
FQAEC	Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
ModCat	Module Catalogue
NSS	National Student Survey
PPP	Programme Proposal Proforma
ProdCat	Product Catalogue
PSRB	Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body
PTES	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
QAEC	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
QEO	Quality Enhancement Officer
QSO	Quality Support Officer
SMT	School Management Team
TEF	Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework
UKES	United Kingdom Engagement Survey
VR0P	Validation and Review Oversight Panel

## Chapter 1: Introduction

1. This Guidance is intended to provide information about the University's validation 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 of a new programme is the quality assurance process used to scrutinise a proposed new programme of study in order to assure Academic Board that it meets the University's expectations of standards and quality. The process of validation is normally conducted via an event. Normally, the event will take place 'face-to-face', however, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst social distancing measures are necessary, the validation process will be facilitated using one of the following approaches:
  - Desk-based, via correspondence.
  - A virtual event, via video conferencing software.
  - A hybrid model, utilising a combination of both the desk-based approach and virtual event.
3. The approach selected will be determined by the nature and specific circumstances of the proposal. It is expected that Degree Apprenticeship programmes will adopt the virtual approach to facilitate the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. In relation to the validation of programmes at new international partners, it is expected that these will be facilitated utilising the hybrid desk-based/virtual model of validation. Regardless of which approach is decided upon, it should be agreed with all relevant stakeholders from the outset
4. Whichever approach is utilised to conduct the validation, should the panel wish to see physical resources as part of their consideration of a programme, this can be facilitated through mechanisms 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.
5. For collaborative programmes undergoing validation, discipline-specific resources required for each module, and confirmation of how those resources will be managed, should be outlined in a [Resource Requirements Summary Template](#). 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.
6. Regardless of the approach selected, an informed and impartial panel, including an external expert(s) and, normally, a student representative, will consider a proposal for a new programme(s) in order to confirm that it meets the required standards and offers high quality learning opportunities for students. The validation process provides the programme team with an opportunity to explain how things will work in practice, with the additional benefit of sharing experiences, and learning from the wider perspective and insight afforded by discussion with University colleagues and external peers.

7. 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 Panel (APP). Only when all three have approved a proposed programme 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 and New Collaborative Programme Approval](#)
8. Development of the University's validation process has taken account of the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF).
9. The University reserves the right to apply flexibility, when operationalising its validation 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 Quality and Standards must approve all such arrangements in the first instance.

*Timescales for completing validation activity*

10. For **internal provision**, undergraduate programmes must normally be fully validated no later than December of the year prior to their intended start date; for postgraduate programmes, with a start date of September, the validation process must normally have been completed by the preceding May of that year.
11. For **collaborative provision**, timescales will be developed to meet the business needs of each individual proposal.

## Chapter 2: The Validation Planning Process

12. The Programme Proposal Proforma (PPP) that is presented to APP, to obtain strategic planning approval for a proposed programme(s), contains a validation planning section, which enables proposing teams to identify matters such as:
- Any anticipated variance from the Academic Framework.
  - Anticipated Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) involvement/requirements that need to be considered/accommodated as part of the validation process.
  - The optimum month in which the validation event should take place (aligned to University requirements)<sup>1</sup>.
  - The desired location of the validation event (principally determined by whether the programme will make use of specialist, discipline specific, resources)<sup>2 3</sup>.
13. Once a programme has received strategic planning approval from APP, this information is utilised by the assigned Event Officer to organise the validation process.
14. Arrangements for the validation of a new programme(s) will normally be agreed virtually in conjunction with the programme team and Director of School. Once agreed, the Event Officer will confirm in writing the agreed approach to conducting the validation, the timeline of activity and documentary requirements, and will also provide the applicable templates. The timeline of activity will also be provided to the relevant Faculty Registrar, Library Services representative, Faculty Marketing Manager and, for collaborative provision, the International Partnerships Manager (where relevant) for information.
15. In certain instances it may be necessary to schedule a planning meeting<sup>4</sup> to agree arrangements for the validation of a new programme(s). For example, if:
- The validation process requires PSRB involvement.
  - The validation process involves the development of a new programme at a new partner.
  - The validation process involves the development of a programme focussed upon a new discipline at an existing partner.
  - The validation process involves a Programme Leader with no prior experience of the University's validation process.
  - The Programme Leader/programme team/School request a planning meeting.
16. For **collaborative programmes** where the proposal involves the development of a new programme at a new partner, or the development of a programme focussed upon a new discipline at an existing partner, the planning meeting must include the involvement of partner staff, and will not proceed without partner staff involvement at this stage<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Internal programmes only.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Applicable to 'face-to-face' events only.

<sup>4</sup> Whilst social distancing measures are necessary, these meetings will take place virtually.

<sup>5</sup> For meetings, which take place 'face-to-face', the attendance of partner staff can be facilitated via video conferencing.

## Chapter 3: Validation Documentation

17. The University's core validation submission comprises:
- Design and Delivery Overview.
  - Programme specification(s) (PDF version(s) taken from ProdCat).
  - Module proformas (PDF versions taken from ModCat).
  - CVs for relevant University or partner staff (academic and key technical staff as appropriate).
18. If applicable to the proposed programme(s) and/or model of validation, the following should also be provided by the programme team alongside the core validation submission:
- Off-site delivery approval template.
  - Approved application for variance.
  - Factfile (for validation events with PSRB involvement only).
  - Programme support materials and/or a tour of the Virtual Learning Environment at the validation event (Distance Learning programmes only).
  - Draft Practice Assessment Records (Degree Apprenticeships only).
  - Learning Journey Plan (Degree Apprenticeships only).
  - Guidance materials for work-based mentors (Degree Apprenticeships only).
  - Draft Commitment Statement (Degree Apprenticeships only).
  - Resource Requirements Summary Template (collaborative programmes only).
19. For **Foundation Degree programmes**, a mapping exercise should be completed to demonstrate comparability of the programme with the named Articulated Progression Route. As a minimum, a level learning outcome mapping will need to be submitted for approval by the Faculty Recognition Group. For further information please see [Guidance for Approval and Monitoring of Articulation Arrangements](#).
20. In addition to the documentation listed above, Academic Registry will provide the validation panel with a copy of the approved PPP for context.

### *Design and Delivery Overview*

21. The Design and Delivery Overview 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.
22. In addition, the Design and Delivery Overview also addresses the programme's resource requirements and proposed student support mechanisms.
23. For **collaborative programmes** the Design and Delivery Overview also addresses roles and responsibilities with regard to programme development, delivery and management.
24. For **Degree 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.



25. 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

#### *Programme specification*

26. The programme specification is a definitive record of a programme and can be accessed by a range of stakeholders, including prospective and current students, employers, External Examiners and PSRBs.

27. Development of programme specifications is undertaken via ProdCat.

28. 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*

29. A module proforma for all modules within a programme(s) should be submitted as part of the core validation submission.

30. Development of module proformas is undertaken via ModCat and a standard template is used across the University. The module proforma should normally be completed by the relevant Module Leader (or nominated person if this varies according to School practice) in conjunction with the Programme Leader.

31. 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*

32. Staff CVs should normally be provided on the agreed University template and submitted as a PDF file. CVs should not contain personal details such as dates of birth, home phone numbers/addresses etc.

## Chapter 4: Student Engagement in the Validation Process

### *Student input prior to programme development*

33. Engagement with students 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 feedback, for example, the National Student Survey (NSS), the UK Engagement Survey (UKES), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), Liverpool John Moores University module appraisal, programme Boards of Study and Staff/Student Liaison Committees. If information, that is relevant to the development of a new programme, has been identified via these mechanisms then programme teams should consider how this feedback can be used during the validation process.
34. It is acknowledged that **collaborative partners** will have their own mechanisms to receive feedback from students and these should be used to inform the validation process.

### *Student input during programme development*

35. The student perspective should be used to inform discussions about the development of a 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.
36. The focus will be concerned with actively engaging students, 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 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 is good about this programme?
  - Do they think the balance between different aspects of the programme is appropriate?
  - Are there any particular topics/subject areas that students 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 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?

### *Evidencing student input*

37. The programme team should outline the activities and outcomes of student involvement in the development phase within the Design and Delivery Overview.

### *Student involvement at the validation event or via the desk-based/hybrid model of validation*

38. If the validation is to be conducted via a 'face-to-face', virtual or hybrid event, then the meeting with students is a private meeting with the panel, so no members of the programme team can be present. Comments made by students during the meeting will not be attributed to any individuals. Usually the panel would like to meet between 5-10 students 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 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, the validation event may go ahead in the absence of a student meeting if it has not been possible to secure student attendance, and evidence of student engagement, during the development phase, has been received by the validation panel.
39. The panel will ask students questions about a wide range of areas, including their views on admission, induction, the learning experience, student support, the quality and usefulness of programme documents, assessment, feedback on work, student feedback mechanisms, the accessibility of the curriculum for all students, and the availability and quality of learning resources and study space. Students will also be given the opportunity to raise and discuss other issues that they believe are relevant to the validation process.
40. If the validation 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 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 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 in order to obtain responses to the panel's questions.
41. It is the programme team's responsibility to secure students to participate in the process of validation and to ensure their engagement.

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

42. The applicable programme team or partner will be asked to identify a student to join the validation panel as a full member. This student 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 validation documentation by the Event Officer. Their role is to offer a student perspective on the proposal and to assist the panel in identifying lines of enquiry that may directly impact upon the student experience. The Chair and Event Officer will brief the student panel member, at the start of the validation process, and support them during the course of the process to ensure their input is managed appropriately.

## Chapter 5: School Endorsement of Documentation

### *Purpose*

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

### *Process*

44. Under the direction of the relevant Director of School<sup>6</sup> arrangements will be put in place to review and endorse draft validation documentation, at School-level, to proceed to Institutional validation . Specifically how this review is operationalised is at the discretion of each Director of School<sup>7</sup>, but timescales for this activity must be determined by the agreed date the finalised documents are required to be submitted to the Event Officer.
45. The relevant Director of School<sup>8</sup> will identify who will undertake the review of the documentation within the School. To facilitate this review, the final draft of all required validation documentation should be submitted electronically by the programme team to the identified School reviewer(s) and the Faculty Registrar, by the agreed deadline.
46. School endorsement confirms that:
- The documentation has been fully edited for typographical errors, and to ensure uniformity and consistency in presentation and style.
  - The proposal is in line with the expectations of the School, as agreed within the approved PPP.
  - The submission is complete, accurate and the correct templates have been utilised.
  - The submission is aligned with the relevant University regulations and policies.
  - The Faculty Registrar has been engaged during the development of the proposal, and has been involved in the review and sign-off of the submission to proceed to Institutional validation.
47. The Director of School<sup>9</sup>, will complete a declaration, utilising the agreed [template](#), confirming that the submission has been reviewed, and is appropriate to proceed to Institutional validation. The completed School declaration must be supplied to the Event Officer alongside the validation documentation.
48. Following completion of the School endorsement stage, the programme team will provide the Event Officer with an electronic copy of the full validation submission (normally via email), including the completed School declaration.

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<sup>6</sup> For collaborative programmes this must be the Liverpool John Moores University Director of School.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 6: The Validation Process

49. The University normally manages its validation activity through a summative, 'face-to-face' event. However, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst social distancing measures are necessary, the validation process will be facilitated using one of the approaches outlined in paragraph 2. Regardless of the model of validation utilised, appropriate opportunities are facilitated for collegiate engagement, regarding the proposal, between the programme team, senior management from the School(s), partner<sup>10</sup>, students, employers<sup>11</sup>, PSRB<sup>12</sup> 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.
50. For event-based validations<sup>13</sup>, advanced comments will be collated by the Event Officer, and will be used to inform the agenda for the meeting. Comments will be shared with the programme team, in advance of the validation event, in order to promote transparency and aid preparation.
51. 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 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 the University's and national expectations of standards and quality, alignment to appropriate University policies and external frameworks/benchmarks, the quality and appropriateness of students' learning opportunities, and identified features of innovative/good practice.

### *Location of the event*

52. 'Face-to-face' events will normally take place at the campus where the programme(s) will be delivered. If the programme team feels there is a reason to hold the event at an alternative venue, this should be discussed with the Event Officer during the planning phase. Due to the impact of COVID-19 it is anticipated that 'face-to-face' events will not be possible during academic year 2020-21. Consequently, event-based validations will be facilitated via the virtual or hybrid methodologies, utilising video conferencing software.
53. 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 process](#) should be used to establish the site approval mechanism, using a risk based approach.

### *The validation panel*

54. Validation panels will be secured by Academic Registry, with the exception of external and student panel members, who should be nominated by the programme team. With the exception of the student panel member, all panel members will normally hold

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<sup>10</sup> As applicable.

<sup>11</sup> For Degree Apprenticeships only, the validation panel are required to meet with employers.

<sup>12</sup> As applicable.

<sup>13</sup> 'Face-to-face', virtual and hybrid events.

academic positions. The University's validation panels have delegated authority to make decisions regarding the approval of programmes on behalf of Academic Board.

55. A validation 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 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 a Degree Apprenticeship).
- One Event Officer.

56. All University panel members will be invited to a briefing session organised by Academic Registry. This briefing session will run annually as an introduction for those that are new to the validation process, and for experienced panel members to share their experiences and for their own updating. Academic Registry will maintain a record of all staff who have attended a briefing session.

#### *Role of panel members*

57. Further information on the role of each panel member can be found [here](#).

#### *The responsibilities of the validation panel*

58. The validation panels are responsible for:

- Assessing that the programme(s) will meet the University's and national expectations of standards and quality.
- Ensuring that students will be provided with the learning opportunities to achieve identified and agreed intended learning outcomes.
- Assessing that the programme(s) will facilitate opportunities for students to achieve beyond threshold standards.
- Ensuring that the programme is in line with national expectations and national benchmarks.
- Exploring issues relating to the discipline, the validity and appropriateness of the structure and content of the programme.
- Ensuring adherence to University policies.
- Assessing the appropriateness of facilities, resources and staffing.
- Assessing the appropriateness of student support mechanisms.
- Ensuring that the proposed management of the programme is appropriately aligned to applicable external requirements and reference points, for example the FHEQ.
- Identifying good and innovative practice in design and delivery.

59. In addition, for **Degree Apprenticeships only**, validation panels will be responsible for:

- 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 that the programme meets the requirements of the relevant Assessment Plan and, where appropriate, the University demonstrates independence of the process for EPA (if it is an integrated Degree Apprenticeship).

#### *Documentation for the validation panel*

60. Academic Registry will prepare the information for the validation panel. It will comprise a briefing pack and the documentation set out in Chapter 3.

61. The briefing pack will contain:

- The itinerary for the validation event<sup>14</sup> and a list of panel members.
- Briefing paper (for collaborative events and events involving a PSRB only).
- Advance comments template for panel members.
- Guidance for Validation 2020-21.
- Programme Proposal Proforma.
- Completed School declaration.
- Fee/expense claim form (external panel members only).

62. The programme team and Director of School will receive details of the agenda for the day<sup>15</sup> 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)*

63. Professional body input in to the validation process will have been confirmed at the planning stage. If the purpose of the validation is also to obtain professional recognition, the PSRB may require representation on the validation 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. For further information on engaging with PSRBs, during the validation process, please see the University’s [Guidance for Engagement with PSRBs](#).

#### *Validation of Programmes Using Shared Modules*

64. If applicable, the programme team will have included information about the programme’s use of shared modules in its Design and Delivery Overview. 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

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<sup>14</sup> Event-based validations only (‘face-to-face’, virtual or hybrid).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

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

65. For event-based validations<sup>16</sup>, the panel will formulate its decision and the Chair will communicate this to the programme team at the end of the event. 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** the standard period of approval is three years.

66. For a validation 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, and whether 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.

67. There are three possible outcomes of validation:

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

68. A positive approval decision confirms that:

- The threshold academic standards of the programme(s) are consistent with the relevant national qualifications framework, and the programme(s) will provide students with the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level.
- The value of qualifications awarded to students is in line with sector-recognised standards.
- Where applicable, the programme(s) aligns with relevant subject benchmark statements, PSRB requirements and degree level Apprenticeship Standards.
- The programme(s) is current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the discipline and developments in teaching and learning. It/they will provide a high quality academic experience for all students and enable students' achievements to be reliably assessed.
- The programme(s) has been designed in line with the University's Academic Framework Regulations and relevant University policies. Where applicable, any variances to the Academic Framework have been clearly articulated and these have been approved according to University procedures.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

- The programme(s) contains appropriate assessment opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of the intended learning outcomes for the award(s).
- There is sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources, student support services and appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

69. Any conditions arising from validation 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.

70. Any recommendations are not requirements, but should be suggestions that the panel believe would improve the proposal.

71. Commendations should relate to identified features of good and/or innovative practice emerging from the panel's consideration of the documentation and the discussions with the programme team.

72. Panel members and the programme team will be asked to provide feedback after the validation process has concluded, in order to identify any suggested enhancements and/or any features of good practice arising from the process. This evaluation process will normally be managed by the Event Officer.

## Chapter 8: Post-Validation Activity

73. Post-validation sign-off will be co-ordinated between the Event Officer, the Chair of the panel and the Faculty Registrar. The Event Officer will liaise with the panel Chair and confirm to the Faculty Registrar when the conditions of validation have been signed-off.

### *Validation outcomes*

74. The outcomes of the validation 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).

75. The validation report will be circulated to the panel for approval, and final sign-off will be confirmed by the Chair to the Event Officer. Once approved by the panel, the validation report will then be sent to the programme team, Director of School, Head of Operations, Faculty Registrar and filed electronically by Academic Registry.

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

76. All responses to conditions should be returned to the Event Officer, by the programme team, who will ensure they are approved 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 the University's Validation and Review Oversight Panel (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 enrolled on it.

77. In exceptional circumstances, in the absence of the Chair, the response to the conditions can be approved by the Academic Registrar. 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.

### *Programme specification and module proformas*

78. Following confirmation that any identified conditions have been addressed appropriately, the applicable module proformas and programme specification(s) should be submitted, via ModCat and ProdCat, for approval by the Programme Leader and/or relevant Module Leaders. For **collaborative programmes**, submission of the programme specification(s) and module proformas will be facilitated by the applicable Liverpool John Moores University School on behalf of the partner. Approval of module proformas and programme specification(s), within ModCat and ProdCat, is undertaken by the relevant Faculty Registrar.

79. Publication of the programme specification on ProdCat will be confirmed by Academic Registry.

80. Once the programme specification has been published by Academic Registry, the programme is regarded as 'live' and the Admissions Team or partner is able to make offers to applicants.

### *Responses to recommendations*

81. 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 through the Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement process (please refer to the [Guidance for Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement](#) for further details). 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*

82. One of the outcomes of the validation process will be the production of definitive documentation, and this will include all the documentation considered by the panel in forming its conclusions.
83. For **internal provision**, the definitive documentation will be compiled by the Event Officer.
84. For **collaborative programmes**, the programme team should provide the Event Officer with a complete set of the definitive documentation, electronically, by the date specified in the event report.
85. The definitive documentation will be stored by Academic Registry.

### *Validation Report and Event Completion Form*

86. In order to confirm completion of the validation process, post-event activity will be summarised and reported to VROP via receipt of the validation report (or Event Completion Form for collaborative programmes), which is completed by the Event Officer. The validation report is regarded as the formal record of the process and it will be filed by the Event Officer alongside the definitive documentation.
87. For each newly validated programme, Academic Registry will update the University's validation WebHub tool with the date of approval and next Periodic Programme Review date.

For **collaborative programmes**, the Event Completion Form will be sent to the programme team, Faculty Head of Operations, Faculty Registrar, Director of School and International Partnerships Manager (where appropriate).

### *Factfile*

88. The Factfile will be finalised, post-validation, by the Faculty Marketing Manager and Programme Leader utilising the programme information contained within the definitive programme documentation, which will be made available by Academic Registry.

### *The Contract*

89. For **collaborative programmes**, the contract with the partner institution will only be signed once the Event Completion Form has been signed off.

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

90. Any subsequent changes required to the programme between the validation and next Periodic Programme Review, will require approval by the appropriate University/Faculty committee (please see [Guidance for Programme and Module Amendments](#) for a summary of the procedure for making changes).
91. For **articulation agreements**, if a change is made to the partner or home award between events, this will require consideration through the appropriate FQAEC, to confirm whether the changes impact on the appropriateness of the articulation/recognition agreement. The Quality Enhancement Officer (QEO)/Quality Support Officer (QSO)/Collaborative Provision Team will advise if a re-mapping is required as part of the approval.
92. For **franchise programmes**, when the internal University Periodic Programme Review takes place, mid-approval cycle, for the partner programme, the Collaborative Provision Team will be informed by the QEO/QSO of any changes made to the programme, and will evaluate what quality assurance activity needs to take place with the partner institution to ensure that they can continue to run the programme.

## Chapter 10: Institutional Oversight

### *Validation and Review Oversight Panel*

93. A copy of the validation report/Event Completion Form should be circulated to the Secretary of VROP as soon as possible after it has been confirmed. The panel is a sub-group of the University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC), is chaired by the Head of Quality and Standards, and normally meets three times per year in order to monitor validation and Periodic Programme Review activity across the University and its collaborative partners. Its terms of reference can be found [here](#).

### *Faculty overview report*

94. At the end of each academic year, the QEO/QSO will produce a Faculty overview report of the validations that have taken place in the Faculty that year. FQAEC will receive the report for information and discussion.

### *Institutional overview report*

95. The Head of Quality and Standards will produce an institutional overview report of validation and review activity, which will bring together the individual Faculty-level reports (following FQAEC consideration), along with key issues and recommendations arising from VROP's scrutiny of validation activity. This institutional report will be considered by VROP before being forwarded to QAEC and Academic Board.