

Programme Design and Development Code of Practice

Academic Governance Approval

Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC)

Academic Sponsor

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)

Professional Services Owner

Assistant Registrar (Quality, Assessment and Partnerships)

Contents

1.	New Programme Development (<i>in development</i>)	3
2.	Changes to Programmes and Modules	4

1. New Programme Approval

In development

2. Changes to Programmes and Modules

Change to any part of a programme or module which is defined in either the programme or module specification.

2.1 Regulatory implications

Changes to programme and module information can impact on requirements set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies. These include:

- Compliance with the [General Ongoing Conditions of Registration](#) with the Office for Students (OfS)
- Compliance with Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations (2008) and Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations (2013) in accordance with the [UK Higher Education Providers – Advice on Consumer Protection Law](#) published by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)
- Alignment with the [UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Course Design and Development](#) published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)
- Completion of the [Student Return](#), [Aggregate Offshore Return](#) and [Unistats Return](#), according to the specifications published by the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA)
- Alignment with programme-level accreditation requirements

The process for making changes to programmes and modules, including oversight, approval and deadlines, are designed to ensure compliance with these requirements.

2.2 Types of Change

Material Changes

Material changes are changes which will have a significant impact on the nature of the student learning experience. Material changes are subject to consumer protection legislation.

Where material changes affect registered students (including students who are suspended or interrupted), the university must consult with students, communicate the change and obtain their consent.

Where material changes affect offer holders, the university must consult with offer holders, and communicate the changes.

Changes to the following information is material:

- Programme title
- Professional accreditation
- Programme description

- Programme learning outcomes
- Programme learning and teaching strategy
- Programme assessment strategy
- Entry requirements
- Module delivery location
- Module Location

In addition, the following changes to the relationship between modules and programme are material:

- Changing a module from core to elective (or vice versa)
- Removing a module from a programme
- Introducing a new core module to a programme
- Introducing a new elective module to a programme
- Withdrawing a module

In addition, the Director of Academic Services has discretion to require any proposal to make non-material, or operational changes, to be approved as a material change. This discretion will be used where the Director of Academic Services determines that a proposal may meet the threshold for material change under consumer protection regulations.

Non-material changes

Non-material changes are changes which affect the quality of the programme but that will have a limited impact on the overall student learning experience. Non-material changes are not generally subject to consumer protection regulations, however proposals to make multiple changes may meet the threshold for material change.

Where non-material changes affect registered students (including students who are suspended or interrupted), the university must consult with students and communicate the change.

Where material changes affect offer holders, the university must communicate the changes.

Changes to the following information is non-material:

- Module title
- Module semester
- Module description
- Module learning and teaching strategy
- Module study hours (including the proportion of hours by type)
- Module assessment strategy
- Summative assessment components
- Formative assessment components
- Associated modules

Operational changes

Operational changes are changes which will have a limited impact on the overall student learning experience. Operational changes are not generally subject to consumer protection regulations, however proposals to make multiple changes may meet the threshold for material change.

Where operational changes affect registered students (including students who are suspended or interrupted), the university must communicate the change.

Changes to the following information is operational:

- Programme school
- Programme manager
- Module school
- Module leader
- Assessment submission deadline
- Module reading list

2.3 Approval Process and Deadlines

Proposals to make changes will be approved as follows:

Type of Change	Paperwork required	Approval by
Material Changes	Programme/Module Specification(s) with tracked changes AND A Programme and Module Change Form	Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC)
Non-material Changes	Programme/Module Specification(s) with tracked changes AND A Programme and Module Change Form	Assistant Registrar (Quality, Assessment and Partnerships) AND Director of Academic Services
Operational Changes	Programme/Module Specification(s) with tracked changes	Programme Manager AND Head of School

All proposals to make changes (including approved operational changes) must be submitted to quality@rau.ac.uk by the submission date.

Changes submitted after this date will not be accepted.

Change effective from	Submission date	Committee Date
Semester 2 - 2021/22	23 November 2021	14 December 2021
Semester 1 - 2022/23	04 April 2022	27 April 2022
Semester 2 - 2022/23	<i>September 2022</i>	<i>September 2022</i>

In exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, late changes may be considered at the

discretion of the Director of Academic Services. Programme Managers should discuss the proposal with the Director of Academic Services in the first instance.

2.4 Changes which require approval as a new programme

In some instances, making changes to a programme will affect the nature of the programme as a whole. In these cases, the proposal should be approved as a new programme and, if required, the original programme should be closed.

The following changes must be approved as a new programme:

- Creating a new award within an existing programme
- Creating a new mode of study within an existing programme
- Changing the duration of a programme
- Changing the location from which a programme is delivered
- Creating a new location for an existing programme

In addition, the Director of Academic Services has discretion to require any proposal to make multiple material, or non-material changes, to be considered as a new programme.

2.5 Changes which require approval of a new module

In some instances, making changes to a module will affect the nature of the module as a whole. In these cases, a new module should be approved and, if required, the original module should be withdrawn. New modules can still be approved through this process.

The following changes must be approved as a new module:

- Changing the module type
- Changing the FHEQ level of a module
- Changing the credit value of a module

In addition, the Director of Academic Services has discretion to require any proposal to make multiple material, or non-material changes, to be considered as a new module.

2.6 Post approval

Once a change is approved Academic Services will be responsible for:

- Updating the definitive programme and module specification(s)
- Communicating the change to relevant Programme Managers and Module Leaders
- Updating information in the student record system (Quercus) and timetabling system (Celcat)
- Liaising with Marketing and Recruitment with regards to information published online and in the print prospectus
- Liaising with Digital Innovations with regards to learning resources (including Gateway and the library)

- Consulting and communicating with offer holders
- Consulting and communicating with students who are interrupted or suspended

Once a change is approved the Programme Manager will be responsible for:

- Ensuring changes are embedded into the delivery of the module/programme
- Communicating the change to affected students (excluding students who are interrupted or suspended)

2.7 Completing a programme/module change form

Description of Changes

The description of changes should be a brief, factual statement of the changes proposed, for example;

Changing assessment component of module XXXX from A to B

Where multiple changes of a similar nature are proposed these can be included on the same form. For example, changes to the learning and teaching approach for a suite of modules can be submitted with one form.

Rationale for change

The rationale should provide a brief explanation for why the changes are required including the impact on the programme as a whole.

When submitting and reviewing proposals, Heads of School and Programme Managers should consider the overall impact to ensure that individual changes won't have an adverse impact on the programme, for example, where changing the assessment components of one module might reduce the variety of assessment types across the programme.

Module Specifications

Programme and module change forms should be submitted with a Module Specification showing tracked changes.

Module Specifications should refer to the relevant QAA Benchmark Statement. Subject Benchmark statements are available online at:

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

Learning Outcomes should be aligned to the relevant Subject Benchmark Statement and the Qualification Descriptors outlined in the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ). The FHEQ, including Qualification Descriptors is available online at:

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks>