Programme Approval and Review

Definitions

Programme approval: is the process by which new taught programmes (including Master of Research (MRes) programmes) are checked against academic quality and standards expectations.

Programme review: is the quinquennial process of reflecting on existing taught programmes' delivery (including Master of Research (MRes) programmes) and student experience and planning for the next cycle of programme enhancement.

Note that postgraduate research degrees (including PhD, Integrated PhD and Professional Doctorate programmes) are approved and reviewed by the [Programme Approval and Review: Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes](#) process.

Purpose

The University is committed to developing and delivering a transformative student experience, offering programmes which enable our students and alumni to thrive and setting them apart as: curious; engaged; articulate; ethical; culturally aware; enterprising; and socially and environmentally responsible.

The University's Senate must be able to give assurance to its governing Council that its programmes meet the conditions for registration as set by the Office for Students (OfS). These are defined in section B of the [Conditions of registration - Office for Students](#). Senate delegates responsibility for defining, managing and monitoring programme quality assurance processes to its Academic Quality and Standards Subcommittee (AQSS).

AQSS recognises that programme teams are best placed to specify and develop a high-quality student learning experience within their areas of expertise. This policy seeks to empower them to do so, within the framework of the University's education strategy, quality assurance processes and regulations and in compliance with national expectations of programme quality, drawing expertise and support as necessary from the professional services.

Associated processes

Strategic Approval

Programme Approval and Review links to the University's Strategic Approval process and will only begin after the programmes have completed the strategic business approval process.

Education Partnerships

Programmes where aspects of the teaching, learning, assessment or student support are delivered in partnership with other organisations must seek partnership approval under the appropriate Education Partnerships Approval Procedure. Partnership approval ensures that the additional risks and benefits of delivering a programme in partnership are evaluated and understood by both institutions initiating such arrangements. Partners also undertake a mutual assurance to deliver academic standards and student experience equivalent to a standard University of Southampton award.

A legal agreement will also be required. Consult the [Education Partnerships Policy](#) for further information.

Where the partner is not based in the UK, there will be a need for additional strategic approval from the Vice President International or their advisers.

Annual Monitoring

Outcomes and actions arising from Programme Approval and Review are monitored through Annual Monitoring. Conversely, outcomes from Annual Monitoring may inform Programme Review.

Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)

The Programme Approval and Review process may be closely linked to Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) accreditation or registration. The points in the process where a PSRB may wish to be involved will vary and are a matter for discussion between the programme team, the chair of the AQSS panel and representatives of the PSRB.

Programme approval

Strategic Approval

Proposals for new programmes must be submitted to the University for consideration via the annual strategic approval process and Programme Approval cannot start until permission to proceed has been granted.

This is likely to require:

- a consideration of available management information and potential market size,

- a test of financial viability,

- an agreement about levels of new resource (staff, space, financial or legal expertise etc) and

- a check that proposed programmes do not overlap or adversely affect the legitimate interests of other Schools.

A new programme which has permission to proceed via the strategic approval process, may be advertised to applicants provided all documentation is clearly marked as 'subject to programme approval'.

Education Partnerships

It is not necessary to have achieved full partnership approval prior to starting Programme Approval, but at least stages one and two, the strategic business approval and initial partner due diligence, and full partner due diligence, should have been completed.

The [Overview of Programme and Partnership Approval Processes Flowchart](#) shows the typical sequence of events for the two processes. This will be agreed between the chair of the Education Partnerships Subcommittee, the chair of the Programme Approval panel appointed by AQSS, taking into account the indictive risk level in each case. The Collaboration Approval Panel will be scheduled separately, unless the two Chairs agree that it would be feasible to combine the agendas. It should take place prior to programme development. There should be at least one common panel member and the recommendations/conditions of the Collaborative

Approval Panel should be incorporated and addressed in the Programme Approval meeting and roll-out action plan.

Timing

AQSS: To assist AQSS in planning its work, it is helpful for Schools to give notice of requests for approval of new programmes to the first AQSS meeting of each academic year. In cases of strategic need, new programme approval requests can, however, be notified to AQSS at any time and all reasonable attempts will be made to support the approval process for programmes notified outside the usual cycle.

Programme teams should be aware that very late entry into a recruitment and admissions cycle can result in a very small number of enrolments, which can in turn have an adverse effect on student experience. In such cases AQSS will ask programme teams to explain how the quality of student experience will be assured until cohort sizes grow sufficiently to create a sense of learning community among the students and close monitoring of student satisfaction will be required.

UCAS: Ideally, Undergraduate programmes which recruit through the UCAS cycle, should be ready for marketing by the University's summer open days, held approximately 15 months prior to the planned first enrolment of students.

Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA):

The CMA works to promote competition for the benefit of consumers, both within and outside the UK, and has issued advice to help higher education providers understand their responsibilities under consumer protection law, when dealing with undergraduate students. The University recognises this advice as good practice and adopts it for programmes at all levels of study. The CMA publishes a short guide on a single page, which summarises the consumer protection duties of universities.

Before a student applies for a programme, the University must be able to provide information on the course content and structure, the total cost including any costs in addition to the student fee, and a copy of any regulations relating to the programme. These should be in close to final form before their first publication,

and any [material changes](#) to the [material information](#) must be notified to students prior to the time when they are formally offered a place to study the programme.

The Consumer Protection Advisory Group of Education and Student Experience Committee (ESEC) oversees conditions for compliance with CMA guidelines and defines [a schedule](#) for publishing information to applicants which must be adhered to for all new programmes. Advice on compliance with CMA expectations can be provided by the Academic Registrar via the [Quality, Standards and Accreditation Team](#) (QSAT).

Programme team

The programme team is led by the Deputy Head of School (Education) and includes the key members of academic staff within the discipline who will develop and deliver the programme. It should also, wherever possible, include at least one representative student, ideally enrolled on an existing programme in a related discipline.

Programme Approval process

Approval panel: for each new programme, or cognate cluster of new programmes, AQSS will appoint an approval panel comprising:

- two members of academic staff from outside the proposing School, one of whom will be AQSS's nominated panel chair,

- and the Associate Dean (Education) of the faculty proposing the programme.

QSAT holds a record of staff trained to take each of these roles and their recent and current allocation to approval panels.

The chair of the panel may invite other members of academic or professional services staff to join the panel or to advise. The Curriculum and Quality Assurance (CQA) team will provide administrative support to the panel.

Initial meeting:

The initial meeting between the approval panel and the programme team considers the outline plans for the programme(s) based on:

- drafts of the programme specification;

- assessment strategy;

- the delivery mode and delivery location;

- the need to meet any non-UK approval or compliance frameworks; and

- a risk assessment, developed by the programme team, which takes into account:

  - their experience of developing programmes of the kind proposed;

  - the scale and complexity of the programme and its associated resource needs; and

  - the timeline for development.

The panel, in discussion with the programme team, will decide whether the programme should be developed on the *self-development track* or the *supported track*.

Self-development track: if the approval panel identifies that the programme development team:

- has the necessary experience and expertise in developing programmes of the kind proposed,

- is confident to identify and request professional services support as needed,

- understands the governing quality framework and compliance constraints and

- has allowed sufficient time to generate a high-quality programme design prior to enrolling the first cohort of students,

then the programme will be judged low risk in terms of academic quality and standards and allocated to the self-development track and programme teams may proceed to the next stage of approval without close oversight.

Supported track: If the approval panel identifies that the ambition of the programme team exceeds their existing experience and expertise, or the programme is for other reasons deemed to present a higher risk in relation to assuring quality or setting standards, perhaps due to delivery location, level of resourcing, short development timescales etc, the programme will be allocated to the supported track. Defined expertise will be identified to support one or more aspects of programme development during the next stage of approval.

Programme development

Further development of the programme is supported by toolkits to assist with the aspects of design which are strategic or compliance priorities.

These include guidance on:

- aligning with national frameworks and benchmarks for HE qualifications,

- specifying learning outcomes,

- assessment design,

- developing learning activities,

- race equality,

- accessibility for disabled students,

- embedding employability and

- other matters of emphasis in the current education strategy.

Toolkits are divided into those through which it is compulsory to work to ensure legal, ethical and regulatory requirements are met and those which programme teams may find useful based on the mode of delivery, the discipline and characteristics of the students likely to enrol etc.

Members of CHEP or QSAT should be consulted where further advice on programme development is needed.

The development of the programme should be informed by consultation with a representative group of current students and peer reviewed by at least one external adviser. The primary external adviser should be an academic staff member in the discipline, but from outside the University, with knowledge of the quality and standards expectations of UK higher education. They should complete the report template.

Additional advisers experienced may also be involved who provide specialism in particular aspects of programme design or delivery. In addition, programme teams may need to consult the PSRBs of their discipline or representative groups of employers.

The output of the programme development phase will be:

- the programme specification;

- a map showing where each programme learning outcome is assessed;

- a report from the external adviser(s) with a response from the programme team indicating how any recommendations have been incorporated into the programme design;

- a request for consideration of any amendment, variation or exemption from the standard progression regulations, and

- a roll-out action plan indicating how further development, monitoring and enhancement will be enacted over the five-year period between programme approval and the first programme review.

- Additionally, for programmes delivered in partnership, a response from the Programme team demonstrating that the Collaborative Approval Panel Report conditions have been met and indicating how any recommendations will be addressed within the action plan.

Approval meeting

The approval meeting between the approval panel and the programme team considers the programme documentation, the reports from and responses to the external adviser(s), any requests for exemptions from the standard progression regulations and the roll-out action plan.

Where a programme has been developed on the supported track, the additional experts assigned to support the team may also be invited.

For programmes requiring partnership approval a member of the Collaborative Approval Panel should also be invited. The CQA team will provide administrative support to the panel.

The outcome of the meeting may be:

- a decision to approve the programme, which may be subject to completion of a defined list of minor actions; or:

- a decision to defer approval pending the completion of more substantial additional programme development, in which case a further meeting of the panel may be required for final sign-off.

Following programme approval, for programmes developed on the supported track, a decision will be made about the level of continuing support necessary to implement the roll-out action plan.

At this stage programmes may move to the self-supported track, or a timescale and conditions for such a move may be defined.

Completion and reporting

For programmes delivered in partnership, the partnership approval process is only complete once the Memorandum of Agreement has been signed by authorised personnel at the University and the partner.

The programme approval process is complete once the panel has approved the programme and any minor actions have been reported as complete by the programme team. At this time the chair of the approval panel will report the approval to AQSS.

The secretary of AQSS will inform the Directors of Professional Services that a new programme has been approved.

Approval of the new programme should be reported by the Deputy Head of School (Education) to the School Programmes Committee, which is responsible for:
- monitoring quality and standards,
- progress against the roll-out action plan, and
- student satisfaction and reporting on these via the Annual Monitoring process.

The School Programmes Committee is responsible for reporting the admission requirements for the programme (acceptable qualifications, offer level), including any requirements for qualification in English Language, to the Director of Global Recruitment & Admissions (a member of AQSS).

The Head of Faculty Student Administration is responsible for ensuring that all necessary actions are taken to:
- create the programme(s) and any associated modules within Banner;
- ensuring that the programme has an accurate Key Information Set (undergraduate programmes only) on the DiscoverUni webpages;
- ensuring that the entry requirements for the programme are reported to the Recruitment and Admissions team and, for undergraduate programmes, that a UCAS code is requested;
- for programmes delivered in partnership, that the partnership approval process is completed, including consultation with Legal Services to arrange for a Memorandum of Agreement to be negotiated and signed by authorised personnel at the University and each partner. Refer to the Education Partnership Approval Procedure for details.

The Communications and Marketing team, in conjunction with the programme team, is responsible for developing marketing materials and web pages to promote the programme.

Programme Review

Strategic Approval

Programmes identified by faculties as consistently failing to recruit to target or with ambitious plans for revisions to delivery requiring significant extra resource will need to be referred to strategic approval and to receive approval to proceed prior to starting Programme Review.

Education Partnerships

Programmes aspects of the teaching, learning, assessment or student support are delivered in partnership with other organisations must seek simultaneous renewal of their partner approval through the partnerships approval process. There will also be a requirement for a legal agreement to be renewed. Where the partner is not based in the UK, there will be a need for renewal of strategic approval from the Vice President International or their advisers.

It is not necessary to have achieved full partnership approval prior to starting Programme Review, but at least stages one and two, the strategic business approval and initial partner due diligence, and full partner due diligence, should have been completed.

The Overview of Programme and Partnership Approval Processes Flowchart shows the typical sequence of events for the two processes. This will be agreed between the chair of the Education Partnerships Subcommittee and the chair of the Programme Review panel appointed by AQSS, taking into account the indictive risk level in each case. The Collaboration Approval Panel will be scheduled separately, unless the two Chairs agree that it would be feasible to combine the agendas. It should take place prior to programme development. There should be at least one common panel member and the recommendations/conditions of the Collaborative Approval Panel should be incorporated and addressed in the Programme Review meeting and roll-out action plan.

Timing

AQSS: To assist AQSS in planning its work, Schools are asked to give notice of plans for review of programmes to the first AQSS meeting of each academic year.

To assist with aligning programmes in clusters for review, Schools may request permission from AQSS to defer review of one or more programmes for up to two years or may choose to review one or more programmes sooner than required.

For programmes delivered in partnership, Schools should be mindful of the need to keep partnership and programme approval cycles in alignment and of the additional steps involved in renegotiating the Memorandum of Agreement.

Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA):

The CMA works to promote competition for the benefit of consumers, both within and outside the UK, and has issued advice to help higher education providers understand their responsibilities under consumer protection law when dealing with undergraduate students. The University recognises this advice as good practice and adopts it for programmes at all levels of study. The CMA publishes a short guide on a single page, which summarises the consumer protection duties of universities.

Prior to making changes to a programme, a proportionate level of consultation with and communication to applicants and current students must be carried out and the schedule for publishing information to applicants and current students must be adhered to. Advice on compliance with CMA expectations can be provided by the Academic Registrar via the Quality, Standards and Accreditation Team (QSAT).

An aim of Programme Review is to allow programme teams to make future enhancements to programmes based on pre-approved plans. However, programme teams still need to be mindful of CMA expectation for consultation and communication and are advised to work in partnership with current students as changes are implemented and evaluated, to ensure there are no unexpected and disadvantageous side-effects for the student experience. The Student Voice Toolkit describes a number of ways in which staff may choose to bring the student voice into change projects and initiatives.

Programme team

The programme team is led by the Deputy Head of School (Education) and includes the key members of academic staff within the discipline who will develop

and deliver the programme. It should also, wherever possible, include at least one representative student.

Programme review process

Clustering: programme review may be carried out for individual programmes, but Schools are encouraged to consider clustering programmes into cognate groups for simultaneous review as this is likely to reduce effort and increase administrative efficiency.

Review Panel

For each programme, or cognate cluster of programmes, AQSS will appoint a review panel comprising:

- two members academic staff from outside the proposing School, one of whom will be AQSS's nominated panel chair, and

- the Associate Dean (Education) of the faculty proposing the programme.

QSAT holds a record of staff trained to take each of these roles and their recent and current allocation to approval panels.

The chair of the panel may invite other members of academic or professional services staff to join the panel or to advise.

The CQA team will provide administrative support to the panel.

SWOT analysis and first stage of toolkit

The programme team, assisted by guidance, examples and toolkits, will consider the available data and information regarding the programme in the period since it was first approved or last reviewed, and assess its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). As a minimum programme teams must consider:

- performance on continuation, completion and (career) progression against Office for Students (OfS) thresholds for the lowest available Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) level which includes the programme and for the associated split metrics;

- performance on continuation, completion and (career) progression against [OfS TEF benchmarks](#) for the lowest available CAH level which includes the programme and for the associated split metrics;
- Other measures of student performance ([academic progression](#)), attainment (a.k.a[. degree outcomes](#)) over the preceding 3 years and any longer-term trends;
- Student Feedback:
- [NSS](#) scores (for UG programmes),
- PTES (for PGT programmes),
- SSLC minutes and
- any other formal feedback from students on their learning experience; over the preceding 3 years;
- external examiner comments over the preceding 3 years;
- accreditation or other external assessments of quality and standards, any requirements or recommendations made by a PSRB since approval/last review;
- minutes of programme team meetings and exam boards
- data on Academic Appeals, Student Complaints and Academic Conduct cases.
- other education strategic priorities of the University as specified from time to time.

Toolkits are divided into those through which it is compulsory to work to ensure legal, ethical and regulatory requirements are met and those which programme teams may find useful based on the mode of delivery, the discipline, outcomes of the SWOT etc.

At this stage only the first section of each compulsory toolkit need be completed.

The programme team should make an initial ranking of its priorities for enhancement work.

Engagement with the Annual Monitoring process in the years preceding Programme Review should ensure that the programme data and information have been reviewed regularly and the SWOT analysis is to a large extent a process of summarising and consolidating what is known about the programme.

Initial meeting

The initial meeting between the approval panel and the programme team considers the SWOT analysis and the prioritisation of the areas for enhancement. In discussion with the programme team, the panel will consider whether the prioritisation encompasses any aspects of the programme in need of urgent action to assure quality or standards;

- aligns appropriately with the University's strategic priorities;
- fits well to the experience and expertise of the programme team;
- presents significant challenge in terms of scale, complexity or resource management.

The panel may propose different or additional priorities and will decide whether the programme should be enhanced on the *self-development track* or the *supported track*.

Self-development track: if the review panel identifies that the programme team:

- has the necessary experience and expertise to enhance the programme in the selected areas,
- is confident to identify and request professional services support as needed, understands the governing quality framework and compliance constraints and
- has identified any major weaknesses needing urgent remediation,

then the programme will be judged low risk in terms of academic quality and standards and allocated to the self-development track and programme teams may proceed to the next stage of review without close oversight.

Supported track: If the review panel identifies that the ambition of the programme team for enhancement exceeds their existing experience and expertise, or the programme is for other reasons deemed to present a higher risk in relation to assuring quality or setting standards, perhaps due to delivery location, level of resourcing, urgent need for remedial action etc, the programme will be allocated to the supported track. Defined expertise will be identified to support one or more aspects of programme development during the next stage of review.

Enhancement action plan development

Development of a 5-year enhancement action plan for the programme is supported by completion of the second stage of those toolkits which were selected as strategic enhancement, quality and standards or compliance priorities.

The development of the enhancement action plan should be informed by consultation with a representative group of current students and peer reviewed by at least one external adviser.

The primary external adviser should be a member of academic staff in the discipline, from outside the University, with knowledge of the quality and standards expectations of UK higher education and should complete the report template.

They may be supplemented by additional advisers experienced in specialist aspects of programme design or delivery. In addition, programme teams may need to consult the PSRBs of their discipline or representative groups of employers.

The output of this phase will be an enhancement action plan specifying proposed enhancement actions to be taken immediately or over the next five years, a report from the external adviser(s) on the enhancement action plan and a response from the programme team indicating how any recommendations have been incorporated into the plan. Additionally, for programmes delivered in partnership, the Collaborative Approval Panel Report conditions must have been met and any recommendations must be addressed within the action plan.

Approval meeting

The approval meeting between the review panel and the programme team considers the enhancement action plan and the reports from and responses to the external adviser(s). Where a programme has been allocated to the supported track, the additional experts assigned to support the team may also be invited. For programmes requiring collaborative provision approval a member of the Education Partnerships Committee may also be invited.

The CQA team will provide administrative support to the panel.

The outcome of the meeting may be:

- a decision to approve the enhancement action plan, which may be subject to completion of a defined list of minor actions; or:

- a decision to defer approval pending the completion of more substantial additional planning, in which case a further meeting of the panel may be required for final sign-off.

Following approval of the enhancement action plan, for programmes on the supported track, a decision will be made about the level of continuing support necessary to implement the enhancement action plan.

At this stage programmes may move to the self-supported track, or a timescale and conditions for such a move may be defined.

Completion and reporting

The Programme Review process is complete once the panel has approved the enhancement action plan and any minor actions have been reported as complete by the programme team. At this time the chair of the review panel will report the approval to AQSS.

Approval of the new programme should be reported to the School Programmes Committee (SPC) by the Deputy Head of School Education. SPC is responsible for monitoring progress against the action plan and student satisfaction and for reporting on these via the [Annual Monitoring](#) process.

The Head of Faculty Student Administration is responsible for

- ensuring that all necessary changes to programme(s) and associated modules are made within Banner;

- ensuring that web pages are updated as required and the programme has an accurate Key Information Set (KIS) (undergraduate programmes only) on the DiscoverUni webpages.

- For programmes delivered in partnership, that the Education Partnership Review Procedure is completed, including renewal of Memorandum of Agreement where required.

The process for approving existing University of Southampton taught programmes to be delivered at another location or in a different mode of delivery

The process should be used where it is proposed that an existing University of Southampton taught programme is delivered:

- at a branch campus of the University; or:

- at an approved collaborative partner of the University; or:

- in a different mode of delivery e.g. online delivery.

Strategic approval

Prior to the AQSS approval process the business decision to go ahead is completed (this is not AQSS business). A programme which has permission to proceed via the strategic approval process, may be advertised to applicants provided all documentation is clearly marked as 'subject to programme approval'.

Education Partnership

If the programme is to be delivered with a new partner, partner approval is also required through the partnership approval process, which mutually assures partners of their comparable reputation, capability and resourcing.

Approval Process

The [programme delivery form](#) is designed to capture any proposed variations to the existing programme and the rationale for these changes. The programme delivery form is completed by the programme team and signed off as satisfactory by the Deputy Head of School (Education) for the Schools involved and any partners. The programme team (including representatives from the branch campus or partner institution where applicable) will be supported in completion of the programme delivery form by QSAT to ensure that the required level of detail is included.

AQSS will appoint an approval panel comprising:

- AQSS's nominated panel chair;
- and the Associate Dean (Education) of the proposing faculty.

The chair of the panel may invite other members of academic or professional services staff to join the panel or request their advice in advance.

There is no requirement for an external adviser or student involvement as external and student input will have taken place as part of the programme approval or review process for the existing version of the programme.

The CQA team will provide administrative support to the panel.

The panel will review the information in the programme delivery form and the associated programme documentation (programme specification, and module profiles if amendments are proposed) and consider any proposed variations to the existing programme and the rationale for these variations. If further information is required, the panel may decide to call a meeting with the programme team or request further information by email.

Once the panel is satisfied that all the questions in the programme delivery form have been answered sufficiently and that they have enough information to make a decision, the panel will decide on one of the following outcomes:

- approve the programme for delivery in the new location or in a different mode of delivery, which may be subject to completion of a defined list of minor actions.
- decide that the variations proposed are extensive enough to warrant the full programme approval process.

Completion and Reporting

The approval process is complete once the panel has approved the programme and any minor actions have been reported as complete by the programme team. At this time the chair of the panel will report the approval to AQSS and programme delivery can commence.

Approval of the programme should be reported to the School Programmes Committee (SPC) by the Deputy Head of School Education. Where the programme involves a partner institution or branch campus, the panel report should also be shared with the Education Partnerships Subcommittee with the expectation that the Subcommittee would escalate any trends, reoccurring issues, recommendations or suggestions to the AQSS.

Programme Approval and Review Guidance on Same and Related Programmes

Introductory text

This guidance note explains how the University of Southampton defines an existing taught programme as the 'same' or 'related' when a version of that programme is delivered at a different study location (UK-Southampton, branch campus or with a partner) or by a different mode of delivery (online, hybrid or in-person). It provides the parameters around what is required (Y), variation permitted (CAN DO) and not permitted (N) to meet each definition.

Note: Programme leads must follow the Programme Approval and Review process for approving existing UoS taught programmes for delivery at another location or in a different mode of delivery (pp.18-20).

Key

Y – required (must do)

N –not permitted (must not do)

CAN DO – variation permitted (but not required)

Note that programmes which meet the criteria for 'same programme' but which do not have, or are not planning to have, the same PSRB accreditation must follow the requirements for 'related programme' and specifically, must not share a programme title.[1]

	Characteristic	Same programme	Related programme
A Programme Details			
A1	Same award	Y	Y
A2	Same programme title	Y	N
A3	Same programme stem	Y	Y
B Programme Design & Delivery			

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[1] Exceptions are permitted subject to the relevant PSRB rules. Plans must be in place to apply for PSRB accreditation as soon as relevant PSRB rules allow.

	Characteristic	Same programme	Related programme
B41	Same Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	Y	CAN DO Minor variations/additions to meet local regulatory body requirements are acceptable.
B2	Same credit architecture in core (i.e. number of credits allocated to each core module)	Y Minor variations/additions possible to meet local regulatory body requirements.	CAN DO Possible to vary with awareness of added complexity of administering variance.
B3	Same total number of credits in a year.	Y	Y
B4	Balanced credit by semester	CAN DO Preferable	CAN DO Preferable
B5	Same credit architecture in options (i.e. number of credits allocated to optional modules)	Y	CAN DO
B6	Same variations to standard regulations	Y	Y – WHEREVER POSSIBLE Caveat for double degrees where variation may be required to meet local needs.
B7	Full range of same themes/pathways	CAN DO Themes with the same name must have, as a minimum, the same core modules; option	CAN DO Themes with the same name must have, as a minimum, the same core modules; option modules

	Characteristic	Same programme	Related programme
		modules must be relevant to the theme.	must be relevant to the theme.
B8	Subset of same themes/pathways	CAN DO Themes with the same name must have, as a minimum, the same core modules; option modules must be relevant to the theme.	CAN DO Themes with the same name must have, as a minimum, the same core modules; option modules must be relevant to the theme.
B9	Unique themes/pathways	CAN DO Unique themes must have distinct names	CAN DO Unique themes must have distinct names
B10	Core/compulsory module list, as a minimum, to be identical	Y Must have, as a minimum, the same core and compulsory modules, but could have more compulsory modules and fewer options. Minor variations to meet local regulatory requirements are acceptable. Minor variations in module content permitted e.g. local law, local variation for reading list.	CAN DO Must have sufficient overlap to justify the 'related' title.
B11	Modules of same title to have same module profile and to	Y Minor variations permitted, eg to account for local legislation or	Y Same profile but may map to different PLOs

	Characteristic	Same programme	Related programme
	contribute towards same PLOs	codes of practice; locally adapted reading lists	depending on programme structure. Minor syllabus variations permitted, eg to account for local legislation or codes of practice; locally adapted reading lists.
B12	Subset of same options	CAN DO	CAN DO
B13	Unique options	CAN DO	CAN DO
B14	Identical teaching materials in common modules	CAN DO Sharing is good practice.	CAN DO Sharing is good practice.
C PSRB accreditation			
C1	Accredited by the same PSRB(s).	Y - WHEREVER POSSIBLE Subject to rule of PSRB(s) this will involve either: A) Single shared accreditation Or B) separate accreditation by the same PSRBs.	CAN DO
C2	Additional accreditation	CAN DO Subject to rule of all PSRBs.	CAN DO Subject to rule of all PSRBs.
C3	One version not accredited	N	CAN DO
D Assessment			
D1	Same assessment strategy in common modules	Y	Y

	Characteristic	Same programme	Related programme
D2	Identical assessment instruments in common modules	CAN DO Standards must be the same.	CAN DO Standards must be the same.
D3	Same examiner(s) for common modules	CAN DO Discussion between examiners is good practice.	CAN DO Discussion between examiners is good practice
D4	Same external examiner (EE)	CAN DO Liaison between EEs is required if not, and Associate Dean Education must attend both Boards of Examiners (BoE) (See BoE policy)	CAN DO
D5	Same pre-Board and Special Considerations Board (SCB)	CAN DO Mechanisms to ensure parity of treatment for students with comparable circumstances must be in place if not.	CAN DO Mechanisms to ensure parity of treatment for students with comparable circumstances must be in place if not.
D6	Same Board of Examiners	Y This could be run as 2 separate meetings, but with sufficient overlap of membership to ensure common application of standards.	CAN DO
E Programme approval and review			
E1	Same timing for programme review	Y	CAN DO

	Characteristic	Same programme	Related programme
F Recruitment and admissions			
F1	Same threshold academic standard on entry (not necessarily the same as same accepted grades).	Y	CAN DO