

PROGRAMME REVIEW AND REVALIDATION

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List of abbreviations and glossary of terms

Figure 1 MMU Programmes – Review

[Click here for link to the CASQE webpage with Practice Guidance Notes for staff embarking on PARM events](#)

[Click here for a link to the appendices listed in this document](#)

New from September 2011

- Collaborative Partner arrangements - Introduction of MMU “Recognised Tutor Status” (RTS) to ensure partner staff have appropriate qualifications to deliver the programme. RTS triggers entitlement to a limited set of University resources. Recommendations relating to suitability of collaborative partner staff should be made at the PARM event by the Panel on receipt of CVs (at appropriate level and in MMU required format)
- Further clarification of reports required to be submitted in respect of collaborative partner proposals
- Amendment to the fees for external assessors for the 2011/2012 session.
- Standing Panels for reviews – criteria for a programme being reviewed by Standing Panel rather than Faculty-based event clarified.
- Standing Panel Review – further information about timing and function of the Student Meeting and the Programme Team’s response to the report of the student meeting.
- Document Approval checks (daffing):
 - required for all documentation, including programmes to be submitted for Standing Panel review
 - documents should be sent to CeLT for checking of curriculum design and content at the same time that the F/CQA and CASQE Officer undertakes “daffing”.

New from October 2010

- **Introduction of new PARM procedures**
- **Introduction of PARM Standing Panel**
- **Revised proformas**

PROGRAMME REVIEW

Notes:

- (i) *Periodic Reviews is undertaken at Programme Specification level only*
- (ii) *The following processes have, primarily, been developed to accommodate programmes where the locus of responsibility resides with a designated Faculty. It is recognised that some deviation from the procedures may be necessary to accommodate the specific circumstances of University-wide programmes. Where such changes are required, these should be approved, on a case by case basis, by the Head of CASQE.*

1. **AIM**

The aim of programme review is to ensure on a periodic basis that the design, academic standards and quality of learning opportunities of existing taught programmes remain appropriate to the awards to which they lead and are informed by reference to institutional regulations and policies, national benchmarks and relevant professional and employment demands.

The achievement of this aim is monitored by the Academic Board through its consideration of an annual evaluation report from the Academic Development Committee's (ADC) Academic Standards Sub-committee on the processes of programme approval and review.

The outcome of the review process is, normally, the continued approval and **revalidation** of the programme

The formal institutional review should take place after a period of reflection on curriculum design and research into target markets undertaken by the Programme Team in consultation with the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CeLT), the Centre for Academic Standards & Quality Enhancement (CASQE), the Collaborative Partnership Office (CPO) (for collaborative proposals), Planning and Management Information (P&MI) and the Faculty Executive Group as part of the University's planning process.

Programme review for **honours degree programmes** should, normally, always include the curriculum and student support arrangements for **Combined Honours** subject provision.

2. **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

Collaborative provision is defined in the Academic Regulations and Procedures Handbook Section on [Academic Partnership Guidance](#).

2.1 **Partner Approval Process for Collaborative Partners**

All new collaborative partners must be approved at institutional level before the University can consider the "academic" element of a proposal. This process is known as the **Partner Approval Process**.

For guidance on any approval arrangements involving collaborative provision please contact the Collaborative Partnership Office (CPO). The Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator (F/CQA) should contact CASQE for advice on the approval status of a proposed collaborative partner if CPO determine that a Partner Approval Process needs to be undertaken.

Guidance on the Partner Approval Process can be found in the Academic Regulations and Procedures Handbook [Partner Approval Process](#).

2.1.1 Existing/Approved Partners

The periodic review of externally validated or franchised provision delivered by existing collaborative partners will, follow the same processes as those for an MMU “home” programme.

Where the periodic review involves the addition of new collaborative partners to the programme who have already been through the Partner Approval Process this will, generally, follow the same processes as those for an MMU “home” programme. However, there will be additional document requirements which will relate to the specific partner physical resources and programme management arrangements for the particular proposal under consideration.

Where a review involves arrangements with existing collaborative partners which pre-date the introduction of the Partner Approval Process, the collaborative partner will not be reviewed at institutional level.

2.1.2 New Partners

Where a review involves the approval of a new collaborative partner, which has not been through the Partner Approval Process, this process must be undertaken BEFORE the Academic Scrutiny stage (see [Section 4](#) below).

2.2 Recognised Tutor Status

With effect from September 2011, collaborative partner staff teaching on MMU-approved provision may be eligible for MMU “Recognised Tutor Status” (RTS). Conferment of RTS entitles partner staff to access a limited set of MMU resources. In order to obtain RTS, staff CVs (in the recognised MMU format for PARM events) must be submitted for consideration by the PARM Panel. The Panel will, if appropriate, make a recommendation to the University that they are suitable for RTS. RTS for staff approved in these circumstances will be effective until the next periodic review of the approved programme. A record of RTS approved staff will be held by the Collaborative Partnership Office.

3. STAGE 1: STRATEGIC APPROVAL

Any proposals to modify programmes, as part of the review process, must promote the University’s strategic objectives and follow institutional planning processes. They must, therefore, be supported by the Dean and aligned with the Faculty Strategic Plan, via consultation with their relevant head of Department and Dean of Faculty prior to submission for formal consideration.

3.1 **Strategic Approval at Faculty Level**

Once the proposal has been aligned with the Faculty Strategic Plan, the Programme Team must complete and submit a **Strategic Approval Form (SAF-R+D)** for consideration by its Programme Committee and the Faculty Executive Group.

In preparation for this the Programme Team must consult with appropriate stakeholders/ resource managers and other interested parties with regard to their plans for modification of the programme.

3.1.1 Consultation

The Programme Team must undertake the following consultations:

- **Academic consultation** should seek to provide assurance that:
 - the disposition of the University's subject provision, as proposed, remains valid and appropriate to the aims of the institution.
 - the academic development of programmes in one part of MMU have regard to similar provision elsewhere in MMU in order to avoid duplication, eliminate potential confusion to applicants, demonstrate comparability of academic standards internally and provide for appropriate institutional academic cross-fertilisation on a subject basis and the dissemination of best practice.
- **Resources consultation** aims to ensure that there is a viable business plan to support the programme. This includes consultation with relevant services and support areas to ensure that all resource stakeholders affected have the opportunity to evaluate and fully cost their proposed contributions **in advance** of planned programme developments which will impact upon their work, to provide evidence of the University's ability to fund and resource developing provision and to foster close and integrated working relationships between programme providers and service providers.
- **Administrative consultation.** The Programme Team must formally consult with the relevant senior Faculty/Campus SAS management teams (initially via the Head of Faculty/Campus SAS) to ensure that their proposals can be implemented and supported within the administrative resources available.
- **Student consultation.** The Programme Team must formally consult the students on the programme who may be **directly affected** by the proposed change(s). Such consultation may include giving each student a written statement of the proposed changes and inviting his/her comments thereon and also meeting with student programme representatives to discuss the proposed changes. Details of any changes subsequently approved should be published and issued to all students on the programme. An indication as to how student comment on modification proposals was obtained should also be provided on the SAF-R-R.
- **Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) consultation.** Although it is more common for changes to be driven by the requirements of PSRBs, where this is not the case, the Programme Team should ensure that the proposed changes do not have any unforeseen consequences for the approval or accreditation of the programmes by relevant PSRBs.
- **CASQE consultation.** The Programme Team should consult CASQE if proposals involve:
 - the inclusion of a new University award which is not currently approved by the University and included in the *Regulations for the Academic Awards of the University*

- **any** variations to the approved University regulations and codes of practice.
- **CELT consultation.** The Programme Team should contact CELT at the earliest opportunity for advice on the development of curriculum and programme design.
- **Collaborative Provision consultation**
The programme Team should contact the Collaborative Partnership Office at the earliest opportunity in relation to any proposals involving collaborative partners.

Stakeholders being consulted (two standard MMU consultation forms are available for this purpose - [ARPH Appendix PARM4](#) (for stakeholders) and [ARPH Appendix PARM5](#) (for External Examiners) should be requested to respond to the relevant department or faculty within a maximum period of two weeks from its receipt. Inevitably, in some cases, where complex issues require face-to-face discussions, this timescale may not always be practicable. It is critical that Programme Teams build sufficient time for eliciting and acting upon consultation within their preparations for review.

In order for stakeholders to respond appropriately they should receive

- an informative summary of developments/changes planned, eg a draft **Strategic Approval Form (SAF-R-R)**
- any other information relevant to the particular stakeholder

3.1.2 Response to Consultation Process

Upon the receipt of External Examiner and Stakeholders' comments, the Programme Team must take careful account of such comments **and modify, where appropriate, its original proposal to reflect comments.** The SAF R+D subsequently submitted by the Programme Team to its FEG must provide, in the relevant sections of that form, succinct evidence of the consultations that have taken place, ie names of persons consulted/responding, brief outline of comments and action taken to address issues raised.

FEG Approval

Once consultations have been fully completed, the Programme Team should amend and finalise the SAF-R (taking account of the outcome of the consultations) and submit it to its FEG for consideration.

In addition to the basic programme information and details of the proposal, the SAF R+D **must** demonstrate how service providers, external examiners and other stakeholders (including other departments/ faculties providing cognate disciplines) have been consulted regarding the proposed changes and how any resource or strategic implications have been addressed as a result of the consultation.

Additional documentation required for collaborative provision and for academic partnership arrangements, is determined by the level and complexity of the arrangement. Contact the Collaborative Partnership Office and CASQE for details.

Following approval by the Faculty, **a signed hard copy of the SAF R+D PLUS an electronic copy** should be submitted to Planning and Development (P&MI) for

University Strategic Approval. In addition, where new collaborative partners are involved, **confirmation from CPO that the partner has passed, as a minimum, the Due Diligence stage of the Partner Approval Process**

3.1.3 Strategic Approval at University Level

P&MI will circulate the SAF R+D to Deans of Faculty (together with any staff nominated by Deans) for consultation. At the same time the form will be published on the P&MI website for information. It is incumbent on Deans (and/or nominees) to contact P&MI with any concerns or comments.

At the end of the consultation period, the SAF R+D will be considered by the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Any comments received from Deans and nominated staff will also be submitted and taken into consideration in the decision making process.

The final decision on Strategic Approval is published on the P&MI website and reported to both the appropriate faculty and to CASQE.

Any queries regarding the approval of the SAF R+D during this stage should be directed to P&MI.

The DVC reports annually to the Academic Board on those programme proposals for which Strategic Approval has been granted.

Strategic Approval is only granted for a specified period of time. For example, Strategic Approval given during the 2010 /11 academic year would normally remain valid for the 2010/11 and the 2011/12 academic years ie the intended year of approval and the following year. Should the valid Strategic Approval period expire before Stage 2 (Academic Scrutiny) has taken place, the University will require evidence that the Academic Rationale and Business Plan for the proposal remain current in the light of the passage of time.

3.1.4 Approval of a New University Award

*This applies to any award or qualification not within the current list of approved academic awards (ie not, for example, a BA or BSc simply within a new subject area). If in doubt, check the section of the **Regulations for the Academic Awards of the University**:*

http://www.mmu.ac.uk/academic/academic_policy.php

Only the Academic Board may approve a new University Award. If this is proposed, the following procedure should be followed in tandem with initial scrutiny of the SAF R+D by the FEG:

- (i) Initial consideration of the proposal by the Faculty Academic Development Committee using *Appendix PARM14 "Request for New University Award"*, which requires a rationale for the proposed new award, how it aligns with the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, MMU's Academic Framework and a descriptor for the award.
- (ii) Submission of the request form, **signed by the Dean of Faculty**, to CASQE.

- (iii) Initial consideration by the Head of CASQE prior to submission to the Academic Development Committee (ADC). ADC will, if appropriate, make a recommendation to the Academic Board.
- (iv) The Academic Board considers, and if appropriate, approves the proposal.

3.1.5 Variation or Exemption from the University Regulations

All MMU programmes (and other programmes leading to MMU awards(s)) are required to be fully compliant with the University Assessment Regulations for either Undergraduate or Taught Postgraduate Programmes of Study (as appropriate).

The Programme Team should review any existing, approved exemptions/variations from MMU Regulations to ensure that these remain valid in light of any proposed changes. The Programme Team will be expected to confirm whether or not such exemptions/variations should continue following the periodic review.

Where reasons for regulatory exemption derive from the requirements of a PSRB, and where, for example, a PSRB has established a programme in such a way as to ensure that the PSRB alone is able to take responsibility for, and maintain control of, programme regulation, the Programme Team must provide details at the earliest opportunity to CASQE so that ADC, through its Academic Standards Sub-committee may be consulted as part of the approval in principle process.

Where a proposal requires a **new or additional** variation/exemption, the Programme Team must indicate the need for separate approval of any variations/exemptions **before** moving to Stage 2 – Academic Scrutiny. Where a request for variation or exemption from University regulations must be sought, this will be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Academic Standards Sub-committee for consideration. The Programme Team should be aware that this may lengthen the process.

Requests for variation/exemption should be submitted, in the first instance, to the Head of CASQE who will, if appropriate, make a recommendation to the Academic Standards Sub-committee.

Submissions should provide enough evidence to allow a recommendation to be made and should include, as a minimum:

- A brief pen picture of the programme and its intended student audience
- A rationale for the proposed variation/exemption
- Details of the specific MMU Regulation(s) to be changed and the specific wording of the proposed replacement regulation(s)
- Evidence of the PSRB requirement for the variation/exemption (a letter from the PSRB or the specific PSRB Guidance or Section of their Regulations that requires a variation to the University's Regulations)

3.2 Strategic Approval at University Level

P&MI will circulate the SAF R+D to Deans of Faculty (together with any staff nominated by Deans) for consultation. At the same time the form will be published on the P&MI website for information. It is incumbent on Deans (and/or nominees) to contact P&MI with any concerns or comments.

At the end of the consultation period, the SAF R+D will be considered by the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Any comments received from Deans and nominated staff will also be submitted and taken into consideration in the decision making process.

The final decision on Strategic Approval is published on the P&MI website and reported to both the appropriate faculty and to CASQE.

The DVC reports annually to the Academic Board on those programme proposals for which Strategic Approval has been granted.

Strategic Approval is only granted for a specified period of time. For example, Strategic Approval given during the 2011 /12 academic year would normally remain valid for the 2011/12 and the 2012/13 academic years ie the intended year of approval and the following year. Should the valid Strategic Approval period expire before Stage 2 (Academic Scrutiny) has taken place, the University will require evidence that the Academic Rationale and Business Plan for the proposal remain current in the light of the passage of time.

4. STAGE 2: ACADEMIC SCRUTINY

4.1 Level/Nature of Academic Scrutiny

Academic scrutiny will take place in one of the following ways:

- (i) University PARM Standing Panel
- (ii) Faculty-based PARM Event

Wef September 2011 the default process for the periodic review of all programmes will be by PARM Standing Panel, with the exceptions listed below.

4.1.1 Scrutiny by University Standing Panel

Prior to the start of the academic year in which the programme is to be reviewed, members of CASQE will identify programmes which, potentially, are suitable for review by University Standing Panel and will request the following programme data in order to review the overall “health” of the programme. On receipt of this documentation the Head of CASQE will confirm whether it is appropriate for Standing Panel Review:

- **Uniview Data for the previous 3 years:**
 - Applications
 - Enrolments
 - Retention
 - Progression
 - Good Honours
- **National Student Survey (NSS) responses for previous 3 years**
- **External Examiner reports for previous 3 years**

Meeting with Students

Where a decision is made to **review via the University Standing Panel**, a meeting with students will be required a minimum of **8 weeks prior to the Standing Panel** and a report of that meeting should be sent to the Programme team and to the Head of CASQE as soon as possible thereafter. The report will be used to finalise panel arrangements. Should any significant concerns be raised by students, the Head of CASQE may require either:

- specific/additional action taken by the Standing Panel and Programme Team, or
- a full faculty-based periodic review event.

4.1.2 Scrutiny by Faculty-based PARM Event

Programmes which fall into one or more of the following categories should undertake a **full faculty-based** review panel:

- Programme Specifications involving professional, statutory or regulatory body accreditation
- Externally validated programmes (collaborative partnership)
- Programme Specifications which include a substantial* franchise element (collaborative partnership)
- Programmes where National Student Survey (NSS)/student feedback , external examiner feedback and/or Uniview data raises cause for concern

* *Substantial franchise element = franchise of a whole MMU award*

5. FORMAL PLANNING MEETING

In preparation for either type of periodic review (Standing Panel or full Review Event), and in order to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made and requirements completed, the Faculty/Campus SAS, via the Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator, must convene a Formal Planning Meeting. The meeting will comprise as a minimum:

- Programme representative(s) (normally the Programme Leader)
- A senior Faculty/Campus SAS Manager
- Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator

In addition the following should be made aware of the meeting so that they may attend if they want to or if the nature of the review is such that input from them is required:

- Head of Department or equivalent
- CASQE representative
- CPO representative

The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the review including:

For Standing Panel Reviews:

- timeline for the review process;

- where new collaborative partners are involved, confirming with CPO/CASQE the status of the Partner Approval Process with a view to ensuring that this is completed **before** the Review event;
- ensuring collaborative partners understand all procedures and are fully involved in the process;
- arrangements for meeting with students prior to the Standing Panel;
- date for submission to Standing Panel;
- documentation (including any additional documentation required for collaborative partner proposals);
- arrangements for seeking External Examiner support for changes;
- compliance with regulatory regulations and/or PSRB requirements;
- arrangements for approval of any new university awards, variations from regulations, codes of practice etc.

For full Review Panel Events:

- an appropriate timeline for the approval process;
- where new collaborative partners are involved, confirming with CPO/CASQE the status of the Partner Approval Process with a view to ensuring that this is completed **before** the Review event;
- ensuring collaborative partners understand all procedures and are fully involved in the process;
- practical arrangements for the event ;
- documentation for the event;
- arrangements for seeking External Examiner support for changes;
- panel membership;
- programme team representation;
- compliance with regulatory regulations and/or PSRB requirements;
- arrangements for approval of any new university awards, variations from regulations, codes of practice etc.

A formal record is made of this meeting using a *Formal Planning Meeting Proforma* by the Faculty Quality Administrator and circulated to all relevant parties.

6. DOCUMENTATION FOR PERIODIC REVIEW

Documentation may vary depending on the type of review undertaken (Standing Panel or full event) or requirements of external PSRBs. However, the core documentation for reviews includes:

6.1 Course Development Plan

There should be a single Plan for each Programme Specification under consideration and should provide a valuable analysis of the health of a course through the following sections:

Section 1: Background and context

Provide a very brief summary of the history of the course(s) and an overview of how the course(s) is delivered, e.g. full and / or part time, distance / blended learning, traditional taught units or a mixture of theory and practice, PSRB accredited. Identify when the course(s) was validated or last reviewed

Section 2: The Strategic Approval Form (SAF+D)

(as approved by P&M), which should have a sound academic rationale for the developments and a robust business case to ensure their viability

Section 3: An Analysis Key Issues

Provide an assessment of the quality of the course

Section 4: Proposed Changes

- Briefly state the modifications proposed as part of the review and the date(s) for implementation eg It is proposed to introduce, with effect from September 2011, a new award/route of BA (Hons) Clay Pots within the existing Shiny Pots Undergraduate programme.
- Provide details of transitional arrangements for current students transferring onto revised course.
- Provide outline diagrams of current and proposed course structure.
- List all changes to the course(s) as part of the review.

Note: This information is required for the University academic database and should include any changes to the course structure which will need to be recorded for the student record system and which might not necessarily be captured within a revised programme specification, eg units (ie removed, added, title changes). The information should be briefly outlined in bullet points in an appropriate format to allow the list to be extracted from the Course Development Plan and included in an Appendix to the Modification Report

- Routes/award titles (final and interim) - new
- Routes/award titles (final and interim) - amended titles
- Routes/award titles (final and interim) - discontinued
- Unit Specifications - new
- Unit Specifications – amended titles
- Variations to /exemption from University Regulations
- Changes to course structure (eg from 6x20 units to 4x30)

Section 5: Action Plan

Provide an action plan that addresses the issues raised in Section 3 include who is responsible for action, when and how the plan will be reviewed.

Section 6: Appendices:

- **Summary CVs of staff teaching on the modified course(s)**
Staff CVs must be submitted on the MMU CV format for PARM events – [ARPH Appendix DOC5](#). This is particularly important for collaborative partner staff when seeking Recognised Teacher Status

and for programmes involving Collaborative Partnerships:

NB The guidance below relates to new arrangements proposed as part of the review. Where there are no new proposals, the focus of these reports should be on confirming that the partner can continue to provide an appropriate level of support for its existing provision (please cover all areas indicated below)

- **Report on Partner's Human Resources**

The report should focus on resources in place to ensure that the partner can deliver the particular programme/proposal under consideration. It should include information on the staffing levels within the subject area generally and, in particular, those to be attached to the proposal; the effect of any other teaching commitments on their ability to deliver the MMU programme; an assessment of whether the partner staff are suitably qualified to teach the MMU-approved programme, how MMU will ensure that any staff who require staff development to attain the necessary level to teach MMU programmes will be undertaken; what staff development activities are available for partner staff at the partner and at MMU; how will MMU ensure that any future staff employed by the partner to deliver the MMU programme are suitably qualified.

- **Report on the relevant physical resources available at the partner institution for delivery of the proposed arrangement**

The report should focus on the specific resources in place to support the programme/proposal under consideration. As part of the Partner Approval process the University will have received (i) information on the general resource provision eg buildings, classrooms, lecture theatres etc and (ii) an assessment of learning support resources by the MMU Library. The aim of this report is supplement the information already received; it should address any specific requirements to support the programme and must be completed by an academic with knowledge of the subject-based resource requirements. Requirements will differ based on the subject provision but may include: science laboratories; computing facilities (specific hardware and software requirements); teaching kitchens; sports equipment; books and e-resources; student access to MMU facilities which will depend on the nature of the partnership.

- **Details of programme management arrangements, particularly where the programme relates to more than one partner**

This report should focus on the partner's programme management arrangements (including assessment of students). Programme management arrangements will vary depending on whether the proposal is "externally validated" or a "franchise" and if there will be more than one partner involved. Outline how the partner will manage the programme and how, particularly in the case of franchises, these arrangements will link into MMU home programme. Indicate how MMU staff will be involved in these arrangements.

For guidance on the content of this document see *Guidance on Writing a Course Development Plan for Periodic Review on the [Practical Guidance Notes webpage](#).*

6.2 Report on Outcome of Consultation with External Examiner(s)

Any review proposals submitted for consideration must include the written support of, and comments from the relevant subject external examiner(s).

The Programme Team must submit draft documentation to the F/CQA in sufficient time to enable the F/CQA to send the proposals to the relevant external examiner(s) for their comments and support.

External Examiners should be requested to:

- (i) Review the existing curriculum content for the programme under review
- (ii) Recommend Approval of, or changes to any new units

The documentation sent to External Examiners should relate only to the areas for which they are responsible. For example, where a new route is to be introduced which will use a mixture of existing and new units, the External Examiner should receive **all** the units for the new route to enable them comment on the overall cohesion of the new route and to make their recommendations on the new units.

An External Examiner Consultation Form [ARPH Appendix PARM5](#) should be sent to the External Examiner(s) together with the programme documentation.

Responses from External Examiner(s) must be included in the documentation submitted for scrutiny.

Where an External Examiner has recommended a change to the proposals or has raised issues which need to be addressed, the Programme Team must submit a written response to these indicating either how the changes have been implemented or why they have not been implemented.

Failure to provide evidence of external scrutiny will delay the approval process.

6.3 Report on Meeting with Students (for Standing Panel Events only)

The University values the “student voice” as an essential part of the review process. In order to ensure that that the student voice is heard in an appropriate manner, the relevant Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator will, in conjunction with the Programme Leader, arrange for a senior member of academic staff from the Faculty* to meet with students to discuss their learning experience. The notes of that meeting (produced by the Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator) and any other notes or reports pertaining to the student voice, will be submitted to the Review Standing Panel as part of the review documentation.

* *the member of staff should be a senior member from a different department (or equivalent) of the home Faculty, who is independent of the Programme Team.*

A range of students (both existing and those who have recently completed their studies) from all levels and modes of attendance, including representatives from collaborative partnership arrangements should attend the meeting to offer views from all perspectives of the programme.

The Programme Team **must not** be present at the meeting.

Meetings with Student Representatives should take place a minimum of 8 weeks before a Standing Panel and a report of that meeting should be sent to the Programme Team and to the Head of CASQE as soon as possible thereafter. The report will be used to finalise panel arrangements NB significant student concerns may result in a decision for a full review event. The Programme Leader must provide an action plan in response to issues raised by students. The action plan should be detailed and include completion dates for activities and indicate the staff member responsible for undertaking action (NB staff should be identified by role (eg programme leader, link tutor rather than by name).

The action plan should be submitted to the Standing Panel with the report on the student meeting.

6.4 Revised Programme Specification

For 2011/12 the Programme Specification will be available in paper form and is available as [ARPH Appendix DOC2](#).

6.5 Unit Specification Proformas

For events held during 2011/12 the following unit specification proformas should be used:

Undergraduate Programmes

All undergraduate programmes must align with the revised University curriculum structure. An on-line unit proforma is available from the P&MI website and should be used for all MMU-based 15, 30 and 60 credit units:

https://www.pmi.mmu.ac.uk/mmu_academic_database/mmu_ad_home.asp

Postgraduate Programmes

For periodic reviews in 2011/12, the existing paper-based unit specification proforma available from the [ARPH Appendices DOC6](#) on the CASQE webpage should be used.

Collaborative Programmes – all levels

For reviews in 2011/12, the existing paper-based unit specification proforma available from the [ARPH Appendices DOC3](#) on the CASQE webpage should be used.

NB The only exception is where partners are using units already approved (or proposed) for MMU-based delivery.

6.6 Other Documentation

In addition to the general information for the Panel, other documentation may be required by the University (as deemed appropriate by the Head of CASQE) or by PSRBs. These should be confirmed at the Formal Planning Meeting.

7. SCRUTINY BY PARM STANDING PANEL

For information on the remit and membership of the PARM Standing Panel see the Academic Regulations and Procedures Handbook Section [PARM Standing Panel](#).

7.1 The PARM Standing Panel

The PARM Standing Panel, is a centrally based panel comprising internal and external representatives. The panel will meet on regular pre-determined dates through the year which are published, in advance, across the University.

The Panel undertakes a variety of actions in relation to the review and modification of existing programmes, and the approval of a limited range of new programmes and awards (OPP).

CASQE and Faculty/Campus Quality Administrators will hold the dates of PARM Standing Panel meetings for the academic year together with deadline dates* for submission.

* *The deadline dates will be for receipt, by CASQE, of finalised, completed and copied documentation.*

7.2 Preparation and Submission of Documentation for submission to PARM Standing Panel

The following comprises the minimum standard documentation required for a PARM Standing Panel review. However, additional or alternative documentation may be agreed at the Formal Planning Meeting in consultation with the Head of CASQE:

- **Programme Specification** (draft)
- **Unit Specification proformas** (All existing and new proformas)
- **Course Development Plan** (including approved SAF R+D)

- **Report from current External Examiner(s)** on proposed changes to the programme*
- **Report on meeting with a range of existing students** (including collaborative, where relevant) and students who have recently completed their course of studies**
- **Programme Team Action Plan in response to issues raised by students in the student report**

* *The Programme Team is responsible for requesting external examiner comments and recommendations (see section 5.3 below)*

** *The F/CQA is responsible for organising meeting with students (see section 5.4 below)*

Documentation for the Standing Panel should be completed and gathered by the Programme Team and submitted to the F/CQA in sufficient time for appropriate checks to be made to ensure their completeness and accuracy (using the Document Approval Form ie “daffing”) prior to submission to CASQE.

At the same time, a copy of the documentation should be submitted to CeLT for checking of curriculum content and design.

The F/CQA, CASQE Link Officer and CeLT will be responsible for undertaking the “daffing” of documentation.

The F/CQA is responsible for providing the requisite number of copies for CASQE to circulate to Standing Panel members.

CASQE will circulate documentation to the PARM Standing Panel **two weeks** in advance of a Panel meeting.

Late submission of proposals requiring full scrutiny by the Panel will not be accepted.

7.3 Attendance at the PARM Standing Panel

The Programme Team will not be required to attend the PARM Standing Panel meeting to discuss its proposal with Panel members. However, a designated senior member of the Team (normally the Programme Leader) should be available during the Panel’s deliberations so that specific queries can be dealt with speedily in order to obviate the need for unnecessary delays or conditions. . Should any specific issues arise, the Standing Panel Chair will require the attendance, in person, of one or more of the programme team, to discuss particular areas which require clarification or are of concern

7.4 Outcome of the PARM Standing Panel

Having considered the proposal, and where appropriate, the PARM Standing Panel will make a recommendation to the ASSc to approve the proposal.

The outcome of the PARM Standing Panel’s scrutiny will comprise:

- A recommendation on whether or not the programme should remain in approval (with or without conditions)
- **For collaborative partner proposals only** – a recommendation on whether the partner staff identified to teach on the programme are suitable for Recognised

Tutor Status (new staff) or should continue to attract Recognised Tutor Status (RTS status must be renewed as part of the periodic review process).

- any conditions which must be fulfilled prior to commencement of the modified programme
- a deadline date for submission of the programme team's response to any conditions
- any recommendations which must be considered as part of the programme's annual monitoring exercise
- any good practice noted by the Standing Panel
- its recommendation to the University to approve or not approve the proposal.

Where conditions are set, the programme team must provide a written response (plus any supporting documentation required).

Report

The outcomes (action focused) will be recorded in a PARM Standing Panel Report which will be sent to the Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator for circulation to the Programme Team and other interested parties.

Response to Conditions

The response must be recorded on Section B of the PARM Standing Panel Report template by the Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator and returned, together with any supporting documentation, to CASQE by the deadline date. CASQE will seek approval of the Standing Panel Chair.

On receipt of the report and confirmation that the programme team has made a satisfactory response to any conditions, the Head of CASQE will make a recommendation to the Academic Standards Sub-committee to confirm the outcome of the Panel.

Proposals **must not be implemented** until any conditions of approval have been approved by the Standing Panel Chair.

8. SCRUTINY BY FULL REVIEW PANEL

A Review Panel must:

- be able to make impartial judgements on the comparability of a programme, in terms of standard and content, with similar programmes offered elsewhere in higher education in the UK, and be able to consider the programme in a national perspective;
- address the requirement in QAA's Code of practice for independence and externality;
- include members familiar with current developments in the field of study;
- include at least one member, where appropriate, with relevant experience of industry, commerce, public service or the professions;

- include members with an understanding of current practice and developments in teaching, learning and assessment in higher education;
- be aware of the University's requirements for the award(s) relevant to the modification(s) under consideration (or the requirements of any other relevant awarding body);
- be aware of the additional requirements involved in the modification of programmes involving collaborative provision as set out in the Institutional Code of Practice for Collaborative Provision (see the section on Collaborative Provision in the Handbook).
- be aware of the requirements of any professional, regulatory or statutory bodies associated with the programme and the requirements of the University as set out in the Institutional Code of Practice for Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (see relevant Section of the Handbook).

8.1 **Panel Membership**

The composition of a Review Panel should therefore normally include the following:

- A Senior University Representative (Chair)
- One External Assessor
- Faculty Academic Development Committee Representative
- Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator

Exceptionally, the following panel members may also be required:

- Additional external assessor(s) – *where more than one discrete subject area is under scrutiny (seek the guidance of CASQE)*
- Academic Board Research Degrees Committee Representative (from another Faculty) - *for research proposals (see below)*
- CASQE representative – *where provision is particularly complicated or requires PSRB involvement*

- i A **Senior University representative**, who shall chair the Event.
The person appointed under this category by the Head of CASQE (in consultation with the Faculty) is a representative (but not necessarily member) of the Academic Board from another faculty. The University Representative is not expected to possess relevant subject expertise although the use of independent internal expertise is encouraged wherever appropriate and the person so appointed may have appropriate experience in other features of the proposal such as the level of study, the awarding body requirements (eg BTEC), or the mode of delivery. CASQE maintains a database of approved chairs who are trained and updated annually.

The University Representative should be able to participate in the process impartially and effectively, bringing detachment and objectivity to his/her task of leading the event.

- ii one independent **external assessor** of high academic/professional standing in a relevant subject area.

The role of the external assessor is to assist the Panel in fulfilling its terms of reference by providing an independent academic and/or professional perspective of the proposal(s) under consideration. External assessors are appointed because they possess the same sort of attributes as external examiners and are able to draw upon subject expertise and knowledge of good practice and make appropriate comparisons between MMU proposals and similar programmes, either at their own institution or at other institutions, eg where they may be serving as an external examiner. Nominations for external assessors are submitted for approval to the Head of CASQE on [form PARM8](#).

- iii a **Faculty Academic Development Committee representative**. The person appointed under this category by the Chair of FADC is a senior member of the home Faculty, independent of the Programme Team, who acts as a representative (but not necessarily a member) of the FADC.
- iv The **Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator** who attends to ensure compliance with University regulations and QA procedures and services the event.

8.2 **Additional Panel Members**

Additional external and/or internal members are appointed to the Panel as directed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Head of CASQE where the nature of the programme review merits it. For example, specific consideration of the need for additional Panel members should be given for the following types of programme:

(a) Professionally accredited programmes

In those cases where a joint MMU/PSRB Event is planned or where the programme leads to a professional award only, the Programme Team/Faculty is expected to liaise with the relevant professional body at an early stage during the Strategic Approval process in order to provide the opportunity for appropriate representation on the Panel. This ensures both that the University aligns its procedures and timescale to any professional requirements and that the professional body has confidence in the University's approval process. Where a PSRB nominates more than one independent external assessor to serve on the Panel, or in cases of representation by more than one PSRB (eg a professional body and the HPC), and at least one of the PSRB nominees fulfils the University's criteria for the appointment of external assessors, the number of MMU-nominated external assessors may be reduced, provided that there remains on the Panel at least one external assessor independent of both the Programme Team and (except as a provider of programmes accredited by the PSRB) the PSRB.

In the case of some joint events, therefore, the Panel will include external members jointly serving institutional and professional body objectives. In other cases the interests of the professional body are invested in a distinct subset of the Panel.

(b) Foundation Degrees

Where employer representation is a required or significant element in programme design, development, operation and/or purpose.

(c) Large/complex provision

For the University Combined Honours Programme, the University Foundation Year or in other cases where a complex proposal is being considered which encompasses a number of different subject areas, consideration must be given, during the strategic approval stage (ie within the SAF-R-Rs submitted by the Faculty), to the necessity of Panel expertise in each of the component subject areas, particularly where the programme for the event provides an opportunity for subject-focused discussions. It may be possible, however, for large and/or complex multidisciplinary provision to be considered by a Panel comprising generic rather than subject-specific expertise in cases where there are satisfactory arrangements for the quality assurance of the component subject curricula undertaken by “home” contributor programmes. In this case, the limited role required of the Panel’s scrutiny and consideration must be clearly explained and understood.

8.3 Nomination of External Assessors

External Assessors should hold relevant academic posts or otherwise demonstrate that they have the appropriate standing, experience and expertise in the subject/award under consideration. Their own academic qualifications should be of a level equivalent to the proposal under consideration (ie an external assessor scrutinising a masters proposal should, at least, hold masters level qualifications themselves). External Assessors with particular professional status or background may be appointed to focus on the proposal’s relevance to the specific professional field.

External assessors nominated by the Faculty for appointment by the Head of CASQE must exercise independent judgement, and so should not have any current or recent **(at least 5 years)** association with the Department or Programme Team (for example, by acting as an external examiner) which might be seen to compromise their objectivity.

The standard form for the nomination of external members is provided as [ARPH Appendix PARM8](#).

The Faculty should contact a proposed external member in the first instance in order to ascertain whether the person concerned is willing to be nominated to serve on a Modification panel. The Faculty must ensure in such circumstances that external nominees are made fully aware of the commitment in time which participation in programme review may involve, ie normally at least one half-day visit to the University and time for scrutiny of programme documentation.

Once the Faculty has established a nominee’s suitability and availability, a nomination form [ARPH PARM8](#) should be completed, signed by the Dean of Faculty or Head of Faculty/Campus SAS and submitted to CASQE for the approval of the Head of CASQE.

Letters of appointment to external assessor nominees approved by the Head of CASQE are sent out by officers of the CASQE and are copied to the relevant Faculty/Campus

Quality Administrator who arranges for the external assessor to be contacted with regard to the detailed arrangements of the Event.

Faculties should make every endeavour to ensure that appropriate External Assessor nominees are appointed as early as possible and their nomination is submitted well in advance of the date of the event.

8.3.1 Payments to External Assessors

2011/12

MMU-Based Events and Collaborative Partner Events based in the UK

For Faculty-based Panel events held at the University or in collaborative partner accommodation within the UK, the University will pay:

- a standard fee to External Assessors of £100 per day
PLUS
an additional £50 for each programme/proposal considered by the Panel (up to a maximum of £200)
- reasonable travel and subsistence expenses ie:
 - standard MMU mileage rates
 - standard train fares and, where appropriate, air fares
 - taxi fares
 - standard rate hotel accommodation

Faculty-based Panels held Overseas

The events held overseas, the University will pay:

- a standard fee of £300 plus an additional £50 for preparation per event.
- reasonable travel and subsistence expenses ie
 - standard MMU mileage rates
 - standard train fares and, where appropriate, air fares
 - taxi fares
 - standard rate hotel accommodation

External Assessors claiming travel and substance costs must attach appropriate receipts to claim forms in order to obtain reimbursement.

8.4 **The Review Event**

Once Strategic Approval is granted, the Head of Faculty/Campus SAS or their nominee (eg Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator) normally sends out the notice of meeting. Where more than one Faculty is involved, the Faculty with management responsibility for the programme convenes the Panel and provides for representation from other Faculties as appropriate. It is appropriate for one Panel to consider two or more related

programmes provided that it has sufficient internal and external representation and that the event is of appropriate structure fully to address all issues.

8.5 Aims of the Event

The aims of the Event are to determine the continued academic viability and appropriateness of modified programmes, with particular regard to:

- programme aims and learning outcomes
- curriculum content
- learning teaching and assessment strategies
- student admission, retention, progression and success
- student support arrangements
- employability
- learning resources
- quality and standards
- examples of innovation, good practice and systemic processes for the enhancement of the quality of student learning opportunities in the presentation of the proposal

8.6 Schedule for the Event

The schedule for a Modification Event needs to reflect the scope and complexity of the programme under consideration. A typical programme might comprise a half day event as follows:

- i **Initial private meeting of the Panel** (c. 30-45 minutes)
to identify issues raised by its reading of programme documentation and to formulate a detailed agenda of issues to explore with programme representatives;
- ii **Panel meeting with student representatives** of the programme (c. 30-45 minutes) including:
 - current students at different stages on the programme and (where appropriate) on different routes
 - recently graduated students
 - Combined Honours students (where relevant)
- iii **Brief Private Panel meeting** (c. 15 minutes) to reflect on proposed agenda for the meeting with programme team representatives in light of discussions with students
- iv **Panel meeting with key programme representatives** (c. 90 minutes) including:
 - the relevant Head or nominee
 - Programme Leader designate
 - Other members of Programme Team with key responsibilities
 - Members of the partner organisation(s) including a representative of the senior staff (for collaborative proposals)
 - Dean of Faculty (where relevant or required)

- v **Final private meeting of the Panel** (c.15 minutes)
to take stock of its discussions and to reach a judgement on whether to recommend continued approval of the course and to formulate any conditions of approval and/or recommendations for further consideration
- vi **Oral feedback**
to programme representatives of the outcome of the Event with an indication of the nature of any conditions of approval and/or recommendations for further consideration. The outcome may be described in general terms, pending the circulation of a report by the Panel Secretary, or in more precise detail if a Panel has formulated an agreed wording.

8.7 **Faculty/Programme “Observer” at Private Panel Meetings**

The Panel may agree to a programme or Faculty representative to be present with “silent observer” status at private meetings of the Panel. The presence, with “silent observer” status, of a person with a direct interest in the process and the outcome of the panel’s deliberations contributes to the development of confidence in the work of Panels within the institution. Whilst Heads of Department/Programme Leaders may be seen as having this direct interest, it is recognised that there are others of whom this may be equally true.

An observer with silent status should not participate in debate or discussion but may respond and offer information if it is requested by the Panel. With regard to the question of the confidentiality of matters raised in private session, it is considered that the observer can report to colleagues the substance of the debate but without attributing comments/views to individual members of the Panel. It is, however, to be noted that the Panel retains the right to specify that a certain matter is to be treated as confidential.

Those persons requesting and being granted the opportunity to be present with silent observer status at private meetings of the Panels should note that it is **open to a Panel Chair to ask them to withdraw when, in the judgement of the Panel Chair, this seems appropriate.**

8.8 **Documentation for the Event**

In organising an Event, the Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator should ensure that all participants are made aware of the purpose of the Event and each participant’s distinctive role within the process.

A Panel needs to have sufficient programme and supporting information to carry out its role, ie to determine the continued academic appropriateness of the existing programme(s) as modified. Documentation for the Panel should therefore comprise the following as a *minimum*:

General Information

- o **Event Programme and Agenda**
Including details of venue, timings, agenda headings

The agenda should normally address the following issues (although these may require some amendment depending on the nature of the programme):

- Introduction and Context
- Consideration of Proposal(s)
 - Programme aims and learning outcomes
 - Curriculum content
 - Learning, teaching and assessment
 - Student admission, retention, progression and success strategies including, for Foundation Degrees, the named progression route(s) for successful students
 - Student Support arrangements (including PDP arrangements)
 - Employability
 - Combined Honours and Foundation Year (*if relevant*)
 - Collaborative Provision and Academic Partnership (*if relevant*)
 - Placement and work-based Learning arrangements including student exchange (*if relevant*)
 - Quality and Standards including:
 - The student voice
 - MMU equality policies
 - processes for the systematic enhancement of the students' learning opportunities
 - staff development
 - Ethical Issues
- Any specific issues for consideration raised by the Deputy Vice- Chancellor through the Strategic Approval process
- Event Outcome:
 - Panel's recommendation to the University
 - Condition(s) of approval (with deadline for fulfilment)
 - Recommendations to be addressed explicitly in the next annual monitoring exercise
 - Examples of innovation and good practice
 - Confirmation of next review date
- **Panel membership list**
with an indication of the function of each member, eg Chair of the Panel, External Assessor, FADC representative.
- **List of Programme Team members** and other colleagues (eg from placement institutions) attending the discussions with the Panel
- **For external members:**
 - a copy of the University Regulations for either Undergraduate or Taught Postgraduate Programmes of Study (as appropriate);
 - general briefing information about the University (and/or collaborative partner(s)) and the location of the Event.

Proposal Documentation

- **Programme Specification** (draft)
- **Unit Specification proformas** (All existing and new proformas)
- **Course Development Plan** (including approved SAF R+D)

- **Feedback from current External Examiner(s)** on proposed changes to the programme* together with a response from the Programme Team where the External Examiner has raised queries or concerns

* *The Programme Team is responsible for requesting external examiner comments and recommendations (see section 5.3)*

- **Any additional briefing or supporting material specific to the programme deemed necessary to assist the Panel**
eg Subject Benchmark statement(s), institutional codes of practice on collaborative provision and/or placement, work based learning.
- **Any additional documentation required by PSRBs**

8.9 **Approval of Documentation Prior to Submission to the Panel**

Programme documentation for consideration by a Panel **must** be submitted sufficiently in advance of the provisional date of the Event to a judgement to be reached as to whether the documentation complies with MMU requirements and regulations and to require amendments, where appropriate, to the documentation. A Document Approval Form **DAF1 (ARPH Appendix PARM9)** will be used to record and convey Faculty/CASQE officers' comments on draft programme documentation. The purpose of this prior scrutiny is to ensure that the focus of the Event is on academic issues rather than matters of regulation or other technicalities. It will focus on ensuring:

- Adherence to documentation templates and completeness of documentation provided
- Engagement with the University Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate and for Taught Postgraduate Programmes of Study and evidence of any approved variation/exemption
- Adherence to QAA's Academic Infrastructure, ie the Framework for HE Qualifications, Subject Benchmark statements, Code of Practice
- Consistency with proposed changes identified in the approved SAF-R-R
- Consistency with faculty plans, the University's equality policies and institutional codes of practice.
- Evidence of External Examiner support for the proposed changes.

At the same time, a copy of the documentation should be submitted to CeLT for checking of curriculum content and design.

The Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator should check that any changes or additions required as a result of the officers' scrutiny have been made prior to the distribution of documentation to the Panel.

8.10 **Decision Making Process**

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Panel normally decides the outcome of the event, framed as a recommendation to the ADC's Academic Standards Sub-committee.

There should be no ambiguity at the final Panel meeting about the basis for the outcome of the Event and the status of any conditions or recommendations.

A Panel's recommendation for continued approval of the programme is more than a simple judgement that it continues to meet the specific requirements for an award. In order to be in a position to recommend the continued approval, the Panel will normally

be expected to satisfy itself, through consideration of documentation and open discussion, that the modified programme meets the following criteria established by the Academic Board:

- i A programme leading to an academic award of the University (or other validating body) must conform in terms of standard and learning outcomes to the requirements of the Academic Board's (or other validating body's) definitions of the award.
- ii A programme must have aims and learning outcomes which the curriculum, structure, learning and teaching methods and forms of assessment are designed to fulfil. The aims will include the development to the level required for the award of a body of knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and reflecting academic developments in that field. The aims will also include the University's general educational aims. The learning outcomes will specify in more detail the knowledge and skills to be developed by the programme and evaluated in the assessments.
- iii The Department or equivalent body offering a validated programme must be able to provide the student with proper academic supervision, adequate learning resources and appropriate pastoral support, opportunities to participate in an informed way in programme development, and an atmosphere in which rational debate is encouraged.
- iv The admission of a student to a course or programme of study leading to an award will be based on the reasonable expectation that the student will be able to fulfil the objectives of the programme and achieve the standard required for the award and must comply with the University's admission policy
- v Opportunities to gain an award of the University must be made available to students without any form of discrimination on non-academic grounds and must comply with the University's equal opportunities policy.
- vi There must be an expectation that the quality of teaching on an approved programme will be maintained and where possible enhanced. The teaching staff must be properly qualified and experienced, and their teaching must be invigorated and informed by their active participation in research or related scholarly or professional activities and the University's assessment regulations.

For **collaborative provision**, staff must be able to demonstrate, through their qualifications and experience, that they are suitable for "Recognised Tutor Status".

- vii Programme regulations must comply with the regulations for the Academic Awards of the University, including any amendments which the Academic Board may make to them.
- viii The quality of the student experience is appropriate and there is explicit evidence of student satisfaction. It is expected that such evidence shall normally be provided through a meeting of the Panel with student representatives, although this arrangement may be varied in the case of programmes delivered by flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning);

- ix For **collaborative provision, a signed programme Agreement must in place BEFORE** the delivery of the programme at a new partner organisation may commence.

A guiding principle in judging the academic worth of a programme is “confidence” in the Programme Team, as reflected iii and vi above, although this must not be the sole factor in determining the approval of a modification. Some features of a Programme Team are particularly important in determining an outcome of approval:

- i The Team should reveal a shared understanding of the principles, philosophy and processes underpinning the modified programme.
- ii Staff should be capable of delivering the quality of teaching needed and have the capacity to renew or develop their experience and knowledge in the relevant professional/academic field.
- iii The Team should show that it has genuinely thought through the coherence of the academic programme, i.e. attempted to construct a view of what happens in the intellectual development of students on the programme.
- iv Where significant modifications are proposed, the Team should be able to show that it has thought through the day-to-day experience of what it will be like to be a student on the modified programme.
- v It should have taken detailed account of issues of implementation, including resourcing and student support.
- vi In cases of collaborative provision, the effectiveness of procedures to involve the partner(s) in all of the above. In its discussions, the Panel will expect the formal assurance from a senior member of the partner organisation that specific time and support will be provided for staff teaching at HE level to maintain appropriate development in research and scholarly activity. In addition, the home faculty and department will be expected to indicate how it will work with partner staff to promote an HE culture.

8.11 **Outcome of the Event**

There should be no ambiguity about the basis for the outcome of the Event and the status of any conditions or recommendations.

Approval may be **recommended either without condition or conditional** upon the fulfilment of certain requirements. Conditions of approval should be used for requirements which must be fulfilled in order to ensure that the modified programme meets the standard required for the award. *Changes which are desirable in order to enhance the quality of the programme of study, but which do not affect the threshold standard, should be identified as recommendations which should be considered through the Continuous Monitoring and Improvement process..*

For collaborative provision only – In addition to the making a recommendation for continued approval (including validation of any new elements to be offered) by a collaborative partner, the Panel will be required to make a **second recommendation** on whether the collaborative partner staff are appropriately qualified and, therefore, are eligible for “Recognised Tutor Status”.

Conditions should be expressed precisely and have a realistic date set for their achievement. The Programme Team must be able to understand clearly what action is required and the timescale. The deadline and locus of responsibility for the fulfilment of any conditions should be made explicit by the Panel, as should the means by which the fulfilment of conditions will be deemed satisfied. Recommendations to the Academic Quality and Standards Sub-committee that conditions have been satisfied may be made on the basis of a judgement reached by the Panel Chair, the Panel as a whole or another person or group - (FADC for example) as may be specified in the conditions.

The new or modified programme may not commence until this has been confirmed by a signed report from the Panel Chair.

Recommendations to the Programme Team - the Panel may construct recommendations which the Programme Team must normally consider and address explicitly in the course of its continuous monitoring and improvement processes. The Team is not required to implement the recommendations but evidence of its consideration of them will be sought through the continuous monitoring and improvement process and at the next review of the programme. Where a Panel recommends, in the light of its discussions, that the Programme Team makes a significant change to the programme prior to its next intake (eg change of title), a deadline should be set for the Team to respond to such a recommendation so that programme details may be confirmed at the earliest opportunity.

Recommendations to the Faculty/University – the Panel may, occasionally, wish to raise issues/make recommendations which are more appropriate for consideration at Faculty or University level. These will be submitted either to the FADC or ADC's Academic Standards Subcommittee as appropriate. It is important that any such issue is **not** included as a condition that the Programme Team will be unable to fulfil as this will delay the completion of the approval process.

Identification of Good Practice – is an important part of the Panel's consultations and is reported through the Academic Standards Sub-committee and added to CeLT's database of good practice, for wider dissemination.

Deferral of Recommendation or Recommendation for Non Approval - A Panel may encourage the submission of revised programme proposals within a specified timescale and give an analysis of those areas where the proposal was found to be lacking together with guidance as to how deficiencies may be redressed. In such circumstances a Panel may recommend that it be reconvened in full to consider the revised proposals or that the process is completed by email communication.

8.12 Reporting the Outcome

Once the Panel has agreed the outcome of the event, the Programme Team is invited to rejoin the Panel to receive oral feedback. The Chair will briefly outline the Panel's decision, any conditions of approval and recommendations, the deadline date for a response to any conditions and any good practice noted by the Panel.

8.13 Evaluation of the Event

An evaluation of the effectiveness of Modification Events should be conducted through *inter alia* the completion by participants of evaluation questionnaires [ARPH Appendix](#)

PARM15 with a view to CASQE identifying aspects of the processes which require development and proposing action to be taken in response. The evaluation will contribute to the annual review of the operation of programme approval and review procedures considered by the Academic Standards Sub-committee.

8.14 Preparation and Circulation of the Report of the Event

8.14.1 Confirmation of the Outcome

Within a week of the event, written confirmation of the outcomes of the Panel's deliberations to be recommended to the ADC should be approved by the Chair and circulated to Panel members and the Programme Leader.

8.14.2 Draft Report

Following the Review Event a draft report must be prepared by the Faculty. The nature of this report is directive and need not reflect the entire range of discussion at the meeting, but should ensure that all agenda items are addressed. The MMU template for Faculty Programme Approval/ Review/ Modification Reports is provided as **ARPH Appendix PARM10** of the Academic Regulations and Procedures Handbook to ensure coverage of appropriate issues and to accord with national requirements for the publication of summaries of programme modification reports.

The purpose of the report is to provide an accurate summary of the main points of discussion, together with a clear justification for the Panel's decisions and recommendations. The report should be organised thematically following the template provided, rather than as a chronological record of discussions. The nature of the report and of the conclusion, in particular, will need to reflect the specific characteristics of the programme(s) considered and the nature of the Event.

The draft report **must** be approved by the Chair and circulated electronically to all Panel members, for comment, prior to confirmation, together with an Event evaluation questionnaire. Comments/changes to the draft report proposed by Panel members must also be approved by the Panel Chair prior to inclusion in the confirmed report.

8.14.3 Confirmed Report

The confirmed report, together with the approved modified Programme Specification(s), should be circulated electronically to all members of the Panel, the Head of Department (and Head of Department of partner if collaborative provision) and to the Programme Team members who attended the event and must be:

- discussed at FADC*
- sent to the relevant CASQE officer for consideration by the Head of CASQE
- sent to the Head of Learning and Teaching, so that good practice identified in the report may be included in the Centre for Learning and Teaching's Good Practice Database.

* *submission to FADC and CASQE may be in tandem to avoid any undue delay in the University approval process*

8.15 Fulfilment of Conditions and Recommendations

8.15.1 Conditions of Approval

The Programme Team must submit a written response to any conditions of approval to the Head of Faculty/Campus SAS or nominee (formally the Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator) by the deadline set by the Panel. The response must be accompanied by any relevant supporting documentation required by the Panel (eg updated definitive document). Once the Faculty is satisfied that the response is appropriate, the response and supporting documentation, together with Section C (Response to conditions) of the PARM Report is submitted to the Panel Chair* for approval. If satisfied that the conditions have been fulfilled, the Panel Chair will sign Section C and return it to the Faculty.

On receipt of the Chair's approval, the Head of Faculty/Campus SAS or nominee will submit an electronic copy of the updated PARM Report (ie with completed Section C) and a copy of Section C signed by the Chair.

8.15.2 Recommendations

The Programme Team's response to any recommendations made by the Panel is by demonstrating as part of the annual monitoring exercise that it has given appropriate consideration to, each of those recommendations made.

8.16 University Approval of the Panel's Recommendation

Responsibility for the continued approval of programmes lies with the Academic Board's Academic & Standards Sub-committee, which has delegated authority on behalf of the Academic Board's ADC and which must approve all recommendations for approval by this Sub-committee **prior to their implementation. Retrospective approval may not be granted.** All decisions by the Sub-committee are reported to ADC, and from ADC to the Academic Board.

On receipt of the confirmed report, the Head of CASQE will, if appropriate, make a recommendation to the Academic Standards Sub-committee to confirm the Panel's recommendation of approval.

CASQE maintains a register of PARM events to monitor the submission of reports and the fulfilment of conditions of approval. The Head of CASQE will report to the Academic Quality & Standards Sub-committee on compliance with conditions and on an overview of the conditions, recommendations and good practice identified by University Panels each academic year and the status of the modified programme is then updated on the register of programmes in approval together with the date of the next review

8.17 Action Required following completion of the Review Process

Once a programme has been reviewed, the home Faculty of the programme must notify other faculties affected by any changes(s).

The on-line definitive document is the "authoritative" version, and the only source for all other versions of programme information. It should be updated annually to include any/all modifications.

The on-line Programme Specification should also be updated annually as appropriate prior to the implementation of modifications.

The annual consensus date for all updates to definitive documentation is **31 August**.

A list of modifications approved throughout the year should be included at the front of each on-line definitive document.

The previous version of the definitive document should be archived, electronically, when the updated version is published.

9. REVIEW OF NON-AWARD-BEARING PROVISION

This section has not been updated for September 2011. It will be included within the review of Professional Development Programmes (including Open Professional Programme, Continuing Profession Development Networks etc) during 2011/12 and will be subject to change.

The procedures set out below relate to credit-rated non-award-bearing programmes. Non-award-bearing signifies that successful completion of the programme does not render students eligible for an award of the University or of any other awarding body, nor does it confer any professional status. Successful completion may, however, be recognised through the issuing of a transcript or certificate/diploma of credit. Non-award-bearing programmes shall comply with appropriate University regulations. Non-award-bearing programmes of 120 credits or more shall be subject to normal quality assurance arrangements for taught programmes

All programmes are subject to five-yearly review.

Where non-award-bearing programmes have element of overlap with cognate award-bearing provision periodic review of the linked programmes should be synchronised and conducted jointly under normal programme review arrangements.

Where non-award-bearing programmes are entirely freestanding and require distinct review the following review process shall be invoked:

9.1 For programmes of 40 credits or less:

A SAF R+D must be completed incorporating full and evidenced consultation with service providers and other stakeholders in accordance with SAF R+D guidance notes (see *P&M website*).

The signed SAF-R-R, together with a draft updated PS1, unit specifications and recent student evaluation should be considered and approved by FEG.

Notification of FEG approval should be sent to CASQE as per minor faculty modifications and with updated PS1 appended.

9.2 For programmes of more than 40 credits (and less than 120):

A SAF R+D must be completed incorporating full and evidenced consultation with service providers and other internal and external stakeholders.

The signed SAF-R-R, together with a draft updated PS1, unit specifications, recent monitoring information and student evaluation, must be considered at a Faculty Event.

The Faculty panel should comprise internal staff (including FADC representative(s)) not involved in the delivery of the programme and should normally include appropriate representation from another faculty. The Panel should be chaired by the Dean or nominee. Additional independent members, including external assessors, may be appointed as appropriate at the discretion of the Dean of Faculty

A report of Faculty event making recommendation of continued approval, if appropriate, considered by FADC.

Notification of FADC approval should be sent to CASQE as per minor faculty modifications but with updated PS1 appended.

10. REVIEW OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

The procedures and arrangements for the review of postgraduate research programmes are, essentially, the same as those for the University's taught provision. However, responsibility for discharging the Academic Division functions for these processes lie with the Research, Enterprise and Development (RED) Office rather than CASQE.

The following provides a brief guide to where responsibility lies within the Student and Academic Services for research proposals as resolved by the Academic Board in June 2003:

STAGE/ACTIVITY	TAUGHT ACADEMIC PROVISION	TAUGHT RESEARCH PROVISION
Initial consideration of SAF-R+D	Faculty Executive Group	Faculty Executive Group
Submission to SAS following Faculty approval	Submit to Head of Planning & Development	Submit to RED Office. RED submits SAF R+D to Head of Planning & Development
Consideration for "Strategic Approval by the Deputy Vice Chancellors"	Planning & Development submits recommendations to DVC (Strategic Planning)	Planning & Development submits recommendations to DVC (Strategic Planning)
Faculty and CASQE notified of outcome of DVC consideration	Planning & Development notify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • CASQE 	Planning & Development notify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • RED • CASQE <i>(Copied to CASQE to ensure all new proposals are captured for the academic database, conferment etc)</i>
Where proposals to Standing Panel	PARM Standing Panel	University Research Degrees Committee
Arrangements for event	Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator	Faculty Research Office or Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator as appropriate
Checking documentation prior to submission to the Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator • CASQE Officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator • RED Officers
Approval of External Assessors for Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of CASQE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of RED
Approval of, & membership of Event Panel :	Panel must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Academic Board rep <i>From Standing Pool of Chairs held by CASQE</i> • Faculty/Campus Quality Administrator 	Panel must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Director of RED (or nominee) <i>(requests for chair to be made to RED)</i> • RED Representative
Confirmed Event Report submitted to:	CASQE	RED <i>(with copy to CASQE to ensure all new proposals are captured for the academic database, conferment etc)</i>
Report & response to conditions	Approved by Academic Standards Sub-committee	Approved by University Research Degrees Committee
Final approval notified to Faculty	Notification from CASQE	Notification from RED

For further information about taught research programmes see the ARPH Section on Quality Assurance Processes for Research Programmes

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ADC	Academic Development Committee
AME	Annual Monitoring Exercise
APD	Academic Practice Development
ASSc	Academic Standards sub-committee
ARPH	Academic Regulations and Procedures Handbook
CASQE	Centre for Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement
CeLT	Centre for Learning and Teaching
CPO	Collaborative Partnerships Office
DAF	Document Approval Form
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EQAL	Enhancing Quality and Learning
FADC	Faculty Academic Development Committee
FEG	Faculty Executive Group
FHEQ	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
HPC	Health Professions Council
ICP	Institutional Code of Practice
ICTS	Information and Communication Technology Services
NSS	National Student Survey
PARM	Programme Approval, Review and Modification
PDP	Personal Development Planning
P&MI	Planning and Management Information
PRES	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
PSRB	Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
QAP	Quality Action Plan (at programme level)
QLS	The University's student and course management system
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
RDC	Research Degrees Committee
RED	Research Enterprise and Development
SAF N	Strategic Approval Form (New programmes)
SAF R+D	Strategic Approval Form (Review, Modification and Discontinuation)
SAS	Student and Academic Services

PROGRAMME REVIEW

Stage 1 – Strategic Review



