Guidance for Programme Approval:

Programme Amendments

Scope

All taught programmes leading to an award of City University London

To be read in conjunction with


Updated

Minor amendment October 2012
Guidance notes for amendments to a programme

Significant amendments to a programme
Any amendment that makes significant change to the market, viability or educational purpose of a programme should be considered at University level as well as School level. This is to enable appropriate University oversight of, and dialogue with, Schools about educational direction and alignment with University Strategy. This would include, for example, where there is significant revised educational content and learning outcomes or changes to mode of delivery. Such scale of amendment would be considered through the principles of the process for Stage 1 as stated in the Programme Approval Policy (followed by Stage 2).

Board of Studies amendments
All other types of amendment will be considered, approved and minuted at School level, normally at a meeting of the Programme Approval and Review Committee (PARC). An example of this type of amendment is where a programme is making changes to satisfy PSRB requirements but where there is no significant impact on market and resources. The University would continue to have oversight of the changes to programmes through reports to Education Committee, as well as Academic Services’ relationships with Schools and attendance at PARC and BoS meetings.

In borderline cases, the emphasis will be on the judgement and expertise of the programme director, the Associate Dean (Education) and Academic Services in agreeing whether changes require University-level approval.

Editorial Amendment
Editorial amendments are those amendments to programmes that are necessary to bring programmes up-to-date but do not affect assessment, content, structure, learning outcomes, mode of delivery etc and do not require any update to the student record system. Examples might include updates to reading lists. These changes do not require approval either at School or University level.

Amendments to partnership programmes
The specific arrangements for amendments to partnership provision will be set out in the Memorandum of Agreement for the partnership.

Communicating with students about amendments to programmes
The Programme Amendment policy provides details on communicating with current students regarding significant and minor amendments to programmes.

Where proposed amendments are significant, programme teams should engage actively with current students and use student comments to inform the final proposal put forward for approval. Active engagement could include, for example, a consultation or a discussion with students. Student dissatisfaction with the proposals would not necessarily prevent them either being put forward or being approved, but gaining student buy-in in advance provides evidence in support of a proposal and reduces the likelihood of student complaints and poor student satisfaction scores in the future. Engaging with students also provides a programme team with the opportunity to amend a proposal based on student feedback.

Where proposed amendments are minor, programme teams are asked to notify current students of the changes either before or after the changes have been approved. Where possible,
advance or early notification is considered to be good practice and a way of facilitating positive student engagement with the changes.

As a principle, all communications with students about amendments proposed or made to a programme should focus on the way in which the changes are designed to enhance the student learning experience. The details of individual communications will depend on the specifics of the amendment (e.g. whether there is any change to programme title, programme content, student choice, professional accreditation, programme size or structure etc).

The Programme Handbook Template includes the following standard University disclaimer on amendments to programmes which should be included in all Programme Handbooks:

“The information in this Handbook is correct at the time of going to press in [July 2011]. The University reserves the right to make amendments to:

a) The contents of the Programme Handbook and in particular to the timetable, location and methods of delivery or the content, syllabus and assessment of any of its programmes as set out in the programme and module specification in this Handbook and/or on the University’s website; and

b) Its statutes, ordinances, regulations, policies, procedures and fee structures, provided that such amendments are (i) as a result of student demand (or lack thereof), (ii) as a result of unforeseen events of circumstances beyond the University’s control or (iii) are deemed reasonably necessary by the University.

In the event that amendments are made, the University shall take reasonable steps to notify you as soon as is reasonably possible.”

Academic Services can provide further advice and support on this process.