

STAGE 1 PROGRAMME APPROVAL REPORT

Proposal: Actuarial Science Foundation Year/ Accounting and Finance Foundation Year

Board of Studies: Cass Business School

Committee:

Professor David Bolton (DVC and Chair)

Dr Pam Parker (LEaD)

Kate Timms (Marketing and Communications)

Professor Christine McCourt (School of Health Sciences)

Professor Mireia Jofre-Bonet (School of Arts and Social Sciences)

Alison Edridge (Student and Academic Services)

Laura Tull (Student and Academic Services-secretary)

Decision:

Approved with conditions

Date: 20th April 2016

Stage 1 documents:

Stage 1 Forms

Course Costings

Draft Programme Specifications

School ExCo minutes

Proposed implementation date: September 2016

Outcome of discussion:

The proposal was approved with the following conditions:

1. To clarify the implications on teaching and library resources in light of the Actuarial Science Foundation being taught in house, as well as the addition of the new Accounting & Finance route.
2. To liaise with LEaD to further enhance programme specifications.
3. To revise the intention to use Wednesday afternoon slots for teaching as this contradicts the University timetabling policy. Alternatively, a rationale should be provided to take into account that the University is required to avoid scheduling teaching activity on Wednesday afternoons to enable students to participate in team sport without any resulting detriment to their studies.
4. To provide a rationale for the exception to the University Credit Framework.
5. To provide KIS information, which is required for an integrated Foundation that continues on to a Degree.

Summary of discussion:

1. Rationale for the proposal

The Foundation Year in Actuarial Science had previously been provided jointly between Cass Business School and Westminster Kingsway College, with the mathematical modules being taught by staff at City University and the remaining modules being taught by Westminster Kingsway. It was acknowledged that although the Foundation course had been a success in terms of attracting students who would otherwise not have been able to enter the first year of the BSc Actuarial Science degree, the School indicated that students were often not at the expected standard when they commenced on the degree programme.

Cass Business School had proposed to bring the Foundation programme in-house, which would enable the School to have control over the quality of the teaching and the module content. In addition to this, the School proposed the introduction of a Foundation programme for the Accounting and Finance degree which would form a common Foundation year, as the basic skill set would be similar for both degrees. For example, mathematical skills and a knowledge of the financial world.

It was noted within the documentation that the Accounting and Finance degree was still relatively new and student numbers had grown steadily as the programme had become more established. The Committee noted that the convincing rationale for introducing a foundation route for this programme.

2. Market research and marketing

It was noted from the documentation that the undergraduate actuarial science degree market had seen increased competition recently, both in the UK and overseas markets. It was anticipated that it may become more difficult in future to recruit students through Clearing, so the Foundation Year would therefore provide support in maintaining student numbers on the BSc programme.

It was noted that the BSc Accounting and Finance programme was recruiting well, but was operating in a crowded market place which could make the programme vulnerable to shifts caused by what competitors were offering. It was noted that most of the main competitors did not offer Foundation years tailored towards their full accounting and finance programmes. For this reason, the Committee was positive about the introduction of the additional route.

3. Programme content

The common Foundation Year for Actuarial Science and Accounting and Finance would be made up of existing modules. The Committee noted that KIS information would be required, as the programme would constitute an integrated Foundation continuing on to a degree.

It was noted that the programme would be made of modules which were not all multiples of 15

credits. This was an exception to the University Credit Framework and it was agreed that a rationale for this should be provided. The Committee agreed that the programme team should liaise with LEaD to further enhance the programme specifications.

4. Resources

It was noted within the documentation that the programme would consist of material already covered in various modules at City University, meaning that no additional library resources would be needed. The Committee queried this in light of the Actuarial Science Foundation being taught in house, as well as the addition of the new Accounting & Finance route and agreed that the programme team should clarify any implications on teaching and library resources.

It was noted within the documentation that one visiting lecturer would be recruited to deliver part of the Accounting and Finance module and there would be no additional administration staff needed as the new Foundation Year would replace the current Actuarial Foundation Year.

The Committee noted the intention to use Wednesday afternoon slots for teaching. It was agreed that this should be revised as it contradicted University policy which states that scheduling teaching activity on Wednesday afternoons should be avoided to enable students to participate in team sport without any resulting detriment to their studies. A signature or e-mail confirmation from timetabling should also be provided.

Laura Tull
Academic Development Officer
April 2016