



# Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook 21-22



**Validation and Institutional Partnerships 2021-22**  
City, University of London, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB

Management of Collaborative Provision

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Validation Relationships

**Arts Educational Schools London**  
BA (Hons) Musical Theatre  
BA (Hons) Acting  
CertHE Foundation Acting  
CertHE Foundation Musical Theatre  
MA Acting

**ESCP Europe Business School**  
European MSc in Management

**Guildhall School of Music & Drama**  
MPhil/PhD/DMus research degrees

**House of Commons**  
PGDip Parliamentary Reporting (Hansard)  
PGCert Advising MPs on Parliamentary Procedure

**Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance**  
MPhil/PhD research degrees

Institutional Partnerships

**INTO City, University of London**  
International Foundation Certificates  
Graduate Diploma

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This Handbook, and links to its sections, are available on the Student and Academic Services section of the University's website at:

[www.city.ac.uk/about/governance/validation-and-partnerships](http://www.city.ac.uk/about/governance/validation-and-partnerships)

Supplementary documentation referenced in this Handbook can also be found in the City's website at:

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/validation-and-partnerships>

## Introduction

### Validation and Institutional Partnerships

Collaborative activity with other institutions forms an important part of supporting the University's strategic aims. Collaborative provision that leads to an award or credit of the University is complex activity that requires an effective and efficient management and governance framework to oversee City's responsibility for quality and standards as well as the development of the partnership. The University has therefore established three categories for the management and governance of its collaborative provision:

- **Validation:** whereby the partnership enables the University to make an award for provision that is designed and delivered by a validated partner. To enable consistency of approach and efficiency, the quality and standards of validated programmes are managed and governed centrally, drawing upon academic expertise from within the University alongside that from the validated institution and external input. The validation framework also makes provision for a strategic level group where both partners deem this to be of benefit.
- **Institutional Partnerships:** whereby the partnership may contain a mixture of provision that may be designed and delivered by an approved/validated partner and/or one or more Schools of the University. To enable consistency of approach and efficiency, the quality and standards of the provision are managed and governed centrally, drawing upon academic expertise of those involved with the provision and external input. Institutional Partnerships will normally be underpinned by an institutional Strategic Alliance Agreement and a strategic level group. The establishment of the institutional partnerships category has built upon the recognised good practice of the University's validation framework.
- **School-Managed Partnerships:** whereby the University makes an award or award of credit for provision that operates solely at the level of the programme, normally in one School. The activity is managed and governed at local/School level. Any strategic development of the partnership is the responsibility of the School's Executive Committee.

This Handbook provides the operational framework for **Validation** and **Institutional Partnerships** (VIP) elements of collaborative provision.<sup>1</sup> This activity brings a number of benefits to the University and particularly supports its strategic aims in extending the range and excellence of professional education and developing its reputation and effectiveness. Furthermore, the University's Policy on Validation, which can be found in Appendix 1, makes clear the mutual benefits of such activity. Examples of this have included knowledge exchange of teaching and learning practices which have resulted in enhancements to the student experience.

The University aims to involve its VIP colleagues in a range of activities. In addition to scheduled formal meetings, there are various opportunities for other forms of participation. These have included, for example, participation in the University's

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<sup>1</sup> Processes relating to locally/School managed partnerships are covered in the Validation and Partnerships page, and Student policies and Regulations page on City's website.

Research Days, membership on revalidation panels and reviews in other related disciplines and invitations to sessions run by the Learning Enhancement and Development (LEaD). Institutions are also involved in consultations, as appropriate, about the development of new programme-related policies.

All provision that leads to an award of the University is subject to the University's procedures which are guided by the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA's) Codes and Guidance. At the start of each section of the Handbook are contextual references to further University and QAA documentation. All sections of the Handbook are informed by the UK Quality Code and the QAA's guidance on Partnerships which accompanies it. Copies of all contextual documentation can be found on the University's website.

All sections of this Handbook apply to validated provision. Sections 1 and 2 also apply to institutional partnerships; other processes that support the quality and standards of programmes within an institutional partnership are contained in the policies and processes published on the Student and Academic Services website.

We hope that this Handbook continues to be of use to you. Please direct any feedback to me in Student and Academic Services.

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Student and Academic Services  
September 2021

## Section 1

### Management and Governance

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance

#### Contextual University Documentation

Policy on Validation

Validation Agreement

Partnership and Strategic Alliance Agreements

Ordinances and Regulations

### University Oversight and Management of VIP

The University's validation and institutional partnerships (VIP) activity is overseen by the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) and is managed by Student and Academic Services.

#### 1.1 Academic Oversight

The **Academic Director (Collaborative Provision)** is a senior member of academic staff responsible for the academic leadership of validation within the University. The post reports to the Vice-President (Education). Specific functions of the Academic Director include:

- Maintaining an overview of the strategic direction of the University's validation activities;
- Contributing to the development of University policy on validation and associated partnership strategies, ensuring their congruence with the University's direction;
- Chairing the University's Collaborative Provision Committee responsible for all academic, policy and procedural matters relating to the University's validation and institutional partnerships activity;
- Providing academic and professional advice and guidance to senior staff of partner institutions on strategic and policy related matters relating to the partnership;
- Overseeing the work of each of the Course Boards established for each validation and institutional partnership link and supporting the Course Board Chairs as appropriate;
- Representing the University at external events relating to validation including accreditation and QAA visits;

- Undertaking direct academic responsibility as Course Board Chair for a number of specific partnerships within the portfolio;
- In liaison with Schools, considering the appropriateness of any new validation approaches made to the University in the context of the University's strategic aims;
- Chairing the University Partnership and Strategic Review Committee (USPARC) for any new validation or partnership proposals;
- Maintaining an oversight of all other matters related to the University's validation activity.

The Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) is an ex-officio member of all Course Boards and will normally attend one meeting a year per institution.

## 1.2 Administrative Management

Student and Academic Services, reporting to the Vice-President (Education), is responsible for supporting the development and assurance of the quality of education awarded by the University.

The **Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development)**, reporting to the Head of Quality and Academic Development, is a senior member of Student and Academic Services who works in conjunction with the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) and is responsible for the administrative management of validation and institutional partnerships, overseen by the Vice-President (Education). Together they are responsible for:

- Ensuring that validated institutions are supported efficiently and appropriately so as to maintain and develop effective working relationships;
- Managing the business of the University's Collaborative Provision Committee;
- Contributing to the development of University policy on validation and institutional partnerships;
- Working with the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) and members of Student and Academic Services to ensure that the interests and needs of validation and institutional partnerships are reflected in the University's academic policies and regulations;
- Managing the institutional and programme approval process via the University Partnership and Strategic Review Committee (USPARC) for any prospective partners, new validation proposals and the revalidation process for current partners;
- Managing and developing the University's Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook;
- Overseeing the annual production of the Validation Student Guide for students on validated programmes and any other published information relevant to support validated students.

## Specific Partnership Management

Each validation or institutional partnership is overseen and managed by a Course Board Chair and a Student and Academic Services representative, who acts as the Secretary to the Course Board and is the first point of contact at the University for the partner institution.

### 1.3 Academic Partnership Oversight

The **Course Board Chair** is a senior member of academic staff from the University with relevant expertise. In addition to subject expertise, a Course Board Chair will normally at a minimum have experience of chairing an Assessment Board, carrying out the role of Programme Director, and have active experience of quality assurance and standards processes within the University. The University would also need to satisfy itself that there was no conflict of interest between the Chair and the programmes and/or institution under the validation agreement. The Collaborative Provision Committee approves all Course Board Chair appointments. The Chair's role is to:

- Chair the Course Board for the specific partnership and any validation or revalidation events;
- Work in liaison with the Student and Academic Services representative to promote, monitor and ensure compliance with the terms of the Validation/Partnership Agreement, the University's Regulations, policies and procedures and the regulations and procedures for the validated/approved programme/s, as approved by the University;
- Chair the Assessment Board/s for the programmes within the partnership;
- Liaise with the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) on any matters that have institutional implications such as risk or strategic issues;
- Be a member of and attend the Collaborative Provision Committee and report on behalf of the Course Board and/or the Assessment Board as appropriate;
- Liaise with the Student and Academic Services representative on matters such as areas of concern requiring immediate action, the appropriate use of Chair's action, authorisation or endorsement, as necessary, of documents received by the Student and Academic Services representative;
- Work with the partner institution on programme development matters and new initiatives, in liaison with the Student and Academic Services representative.

### 1.4 Administrative Partnership Management

The **Student and Academic Services representative** is a senior member of staff from Student and Academic Services who works in conjunction with the Course Board Chair and the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development). Specific functions include:

- In liaison with the Course Board Chair, providing professional advice and guidance to senior academic and administrative staff at the partner institution with regard to the application of the validation framework;
- Working with the Course Board Chair in promoting, monitoring and ensuring compliance with the terms of the Validation/Partnership Agreement and the University's procedures and regulations;
- Acting as Secretary to the Course Board, validation and revalidation panels, providing guidance on policy and regulations as appropriate;
- Participation in informal meetings at the partner institution with the Course Board Chair in relation to programme development matters and initiatives;
- Working in liaison with the Course Board Chair to ensure that partnership activity pays due regard to the University's responsibility for the academic standards of awards made in its name;
- Assisting in promoting the University's reputation through supporting the specific partnership;
- Providing guidance to Assessment Boards for VIP in accordance with University Policy and Regulations;
- Representing Student and Academic Services at Assessment Boards for the partnership.

## University Governance of VIP

### 1.5 Collaborative Provision Committee

The University's validation and institutional partnerships are governed by the Collaborative Provision Committee. This is a sub-committee of Senate with responsibility for overseeing the effective operation of all aspects of the University's collaborative provision offered through validation and institutional partnerships.

In particular, the Collaborative Provision Committee works to ensure that the quality and standards of collaborative programmes and awards within its remit are commensurate with those offered within the University. The terms of reference of the Committee can be found in Appendix 2. The composition and membership of the Committee can be found on the Student and Academic Services website.

### 1.6 Course Board

Each validation or institutional partnership is governed by a **Course Board** which is a sub-committee of the Collaborative Provision Committee. The Course Board is responsible for overseeing the quality and standards framework for the partnership and also forms the first reporting line with regard to any developmental or strategic matters. The terms of reference for the Course Boards for validation partnerships

(taught programmes), validation partnerships (research degrees) and institutional partnerships can be found in Appendix 3.

The Course Board is chaired by the University's Course Board Chair and supported by the Student and Academic Services representative. It comprises membership from the partner institution, the University and an External Advisor. The membership of each Board is published on the Student and Academic Services website.

### **1.7 University Course Board Members**

There will normally be three to five members of University staff on the Course Board. Members are usually drawn from the original Validatory Panel and will have relevant expertise. The University would also need to satisfy itself that there was no conflict of interest between a proposed member and the programmes and/or institution under the validation/partnership agreement. Following the first successful period of validation, the Course Board Chair may subsequently put forward a recommendation to the Collaborative Provision Committee that University composition and membership be reduced to a minimum core of Chair and two other members of academic staff (including a Deputy Chair) if it is considered that relevant expertise can be covered adequately by a reduced membership. In all cases there will be an External Advisor and a Student and Academic Services representative. The appointment criteria for a Course Board member are normally:

- To have academic or professional knowledge in cognate areas to that of the validated programme/s;
- To have some experience of relevant quality assurance procedures.

The role and responsibility of a University Course Board member is to:

- Attend and participate in Course Board meetings;
- Attend and participate in validation and revalidation events;
- Consider and respond to documentation circulated outside formal meetings;
- Be conversant with relevant documentation including the University's VIP Handbook, the University's Regulations and the validated/partner institution's programme document/s;
- Attend other meetings as appropriate.

A Course Board member will normally be appointed for a three-year period. It is possible to extend the appointment for a further three-year period and, in special circumstances, it is possible for this to be extended further. Course Board attendance will be monitored by the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development). Where attendance is considered unsatisfactory, the Collaborative Provision Committee will consider recommendations for Board members to be removed and replaced where appropriate. The University membership of the Course Board will also normally include a **Deputy Course Board Chair** who is appointed primarily to ensure validation activity can function in any exceptional circumstances where there is an unexpected absence of the Chair (e.g. for one Course Board meeting or one Assessment Board meeting). Deputy Chairs would normally be senior members of the University's academic staff who have some relevant expertise and academic knowledge of the subject area/s of the validated programme/s. Deputy Chairs should be conversant with the University's VIP Handbook and Regulations, as well as the programme scheme/s of the validated programme/s. The Collaborative Provision Committee is responsible for the approval of Deputy Chair appointments.

## 1.8 Validated/Partner Institution Membership of the Course Board

The membership of the Course Board from the validated/partner institution will be negotiated with the University before its first meeting. The Collaborative Provision Committee is responsible for approving composition and membership and any subsequent changes. Membership should include the Programme Director/s of the validated programme/s and representation from senior management of the institution. It is also recommended that a member of senior administrative staff from the validated/partner institution be present at Course Board meetings. Should the validated/partner institution wish to recommend changes to its representation on the Course Board, a proposal should be put forward to the Course Board and this will then be put forward as appropriate to the Collaborative Provision Committee.

## 1.9 External Advisor

The University attaches particular importance to the views of the External Advisor, who is a full member of the Course Board. In specific circumstances, more than one External Advisor will be appointed. The role of the External Advisor normally provides:

- Professional expertise to supplement the University's internal expertise, particularly where the programme for which validation is sought is in a specialist subject area outside those offered by the University, although the University normally only enters into the validation process if the programme proposed is in an area related to its own areas of expertise;
- An additional, independent, input to the programme approval process which forms an important part of the University's quality assurance procedures;
- A knowledge of quality assurance systems and academic standards in UK higher education.

When considering the appointment of an External Advisor, the University will need to assure itself that any nomination is independent of both the University *and* the institution with the validated/partner programme/s. This will include ensuring that the nominee has not normally had any formal links with either body during the last five years. The External Advisor will:

- Attend Course Board meetings (usually three per year, one of which will include a meeting with students on the validated programmes) at which he/she will provide advice on professional and quality assurance requirements and participate in the monitoring and review of the programme/s;
- Participate in revalidation and validation events which will include a visit to the validated/partner institution, consideration of programme documentation, and discussions with the staff and students;
- Liaise with the Student and Academic Services representative outside Course Board meetings and revalidation/validation events as appropriate;

External Advisors will normally be appointed to the Course Board for a three-year period which will be renewable for a further three years. In special circumstances, it will be possible to extend this further. The Collaborative Provision Committee is responsible for approving the appointment of External Advisors with nominations being accompanied by a CV and also reserves the right to review appointments on an annual basis. On appointment, the Student and Academic Services representative will provide the External Advisor with background information on the University and its validation procedures, including an invitation to visit the University in advance of his/her first meeting.

Near the end of the term of appointment of the External Advisor, the University will ask the validated institution to make suggestions as to a new External Advisor, who would meet the criteria as stated above. Any nominations should be discussed informally with the Course Board Chair and Student and Academic Services representative prior to formal submission of the nomination and covering CV to the Secretary to the Collaborative Provision Committee. If approved, the University will write to the External Advisor confirming the appointment.

A fee will be paid to the External Advisor by the University according to the amount of work envisaged. The fee will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **1.10 Course Board Agenda**

The Course Board is responsible for receiving, considering and, where appropriate, acting upon specific documentation relevant to the validated programme/s. Figure 1 (see end of this section) identifies items that will be considered by the Course Board and where on the agenda they will normally be considered. Apart from the standard opening and closing agenda items, the minutes of the Board of Studies/Programme Management Team is likely to be the only item that appears on every agenda. The Student and Academic Services representative is responsible for compiling the agenda in liaison with the Chair and the validated/partner institution.

Documentation to be considered by the Course Board must be received by the Student and Academic Services representative at least 10 working days prior to the meeting for incorporation into the agenda and papers. An absence of Board of Studies minutes in particular could result in the Course Board meeting being rescheduled. The University also maintains an electronic archive of papers and will therefore require electronic copies of documents submitted to the Course Board where these are available.

Where papers are not submitted to the University on time, the Course Board Chair and the Student and Academic Services representative will consider whether specific items can be taken at the meeting.

### **1.11 Chair's Action for Course Boards**

Chair's action is that action which is taken by the Chair on behalf of the Board outside a meeting. Any request from an institution for Chair's action to be considered should be forwarded to the Student and Academic Services representative.

The University's policy states that Chair's action may be used when an item has been discussed at a meeting of the Board and has been referred back for some

defined amendment before final approval. Exceptionally, Chair's action may be taken to approve an item of business which has not been considered by the Board.

Chair's action should be taken under the second heading only when the item of business is urgent and approval cannot wait for the next meeting. In such cases, it is preferable to allow members (particularly the External Advisor to the Course Board) to comment on the item by circulation of the paper before Chair's action is taken. All Chair's action is subject to ratification at the subsequent Course Board meeting.

### **1.12 Course Board Quorum**

- Two members of academic staff from the University, including the Chair, or in the Chair's absence, the Deputy Chair;
- One representative of the validated institution;
- External Advisor (if, in exceptional circumstances he/she cannot attend, his/her views will normally be sought either before, during or after a Course Board meeting);
- Student and Academic Services representative.

Where a quorum is not achieved it should be noted at the start of the meeting. The business of the Board may proceed but will be subject to ratification by the full Board. No decisions may be taken to be final until such ratification is secured.

### **1.13 Assessment Board**

In addition to the Course Board, the University chairs the Assessment Board which is a sub-committee of Senate. This process forms a vital part of the University's responsibility for academic standards and awards made in its name. Further details about the Assessment Board can be found in Section 2.

### **1.14 Strategic Groups**

In some instances, there may be a formal or informal strategic group that works alongside the Course Board in overseeing the strategic development of a partnership. These groups are established by the President's Office where they are deemed to be of mutual benefit to the University and the partner/validated institution – they do not have a remit for matters relating to quality and standards. In any instance, and so as to provide a joined-up approach, the membership of the strategic group will include the Chair of the Course Board and representation from Student and Academic Services.

## Validated or Partner Institution Management and Governance

The University requires specific management and governance functions to be in place for each validated/partner institution. The University acknowledges that terminology will vary between institutions; however, it requires that specific functions be carried out.

### 1.15 Institutional Management

The University requires there to be:

- A **Principal** (or equivalent term) who will have responsibility for the day-to-day management and effective running of the institution and the validated programmes. The Principal will be responsible to the Board of Governors of the institution who will have ultimate responsibility for overseeing the direction and financial stability of the institution. The University would also expect there to be a senior management team that meets on a regular basis.
- A **Programme Director** (or equivalent term) who will have delegated responsibility from the Principal for the day-to-day running of the validated programme/s. This person will normally be responsible to the Principal or a **Head of Department** (where this person is different to the Programme Director) and the institution's Board of Studies for the effective running of the programme in accordance with documentation approved by the University and associated University requirements.
- An **administrative and learning support infrastructure** that supports the quality of the validated programme/s and that services relevant committees such as the Board of Studies and the Assessment Board.

The University must be consulted on any changes to the management structure so as to ensure that it continues to adequately support the terms of the validation agreement.

### 1.16 Institutional Governance

In addition to management positions, the University requires the validated/partner institution to have in place an appropriate and effective governance structure that oversees the operation of the institution and supports the validated programmes. The structure will be dependent on the size and nature of the institution and the number of programmes offered. The University requires institutions to have in place the following forums:

For **validation partnerships**, institutions are required to have in place a **Board of Studies** (or equivalent) that is responsible for overseeing all academic matters relating to the validated programme/s. Dependent on the size of validated provision, cognate programmes may be grouped under one Board of Studies. The forum should be chaired by a senior member of staff from the institution. Membership of the Board will normally comprise representatives of teaching staff, student representatives and representatives from support areas where appropriate e.g. library. Where there is significant provision, Boards of Studies can establish sub-committees. Where a sub-committee is formed, the Board of Studies must receive reports arising from its

business which will then need to be reported to the Course Board. In terms of structure and report, the Board of Studies should:

- Report to the Course Board;
- Report within the institution on matters which have resource or reputation implications;
- Normally meet once per term within a timescale to enable the submission of minutes of the meeting to the University at least 10 days before the Course Board meeting;
- Contain elected student representation from the first meeting of the academic year. Representation should be sufficient to ensure that all years of a programme are covered;
- Contain unreserved and reserved sections, the latter of which will be used to consider any matters relating to individual students without student presence.

Specific terms of reference will vary between institutions; however, the University requires that the following areas are covered:

- All academic matters relating to, or impacting on, the programme of study;
- Issues relating to academic standards including national guidelines (unless these are considered by a higher committee in the institution and subsequently referred down to the Board);
- Detailed consideration of Annual Programme Evaluations, including summaries of student feedback questionnaires, External Examiners' reports and responses to issues arising from these and monitoring the overall rolling action plan;
- Monitoring recruitment and student retention, including the development of recruitment strategies (unless these are considered by a higher committee in the institution);
- External Examiners nominations for recommendation to the Course Board;
- Draft submissions for validation or revalidation and sign-off prior to submission to the University;
- Reports arising from, re/validation and professional accreditation visits and associated action plans;
- Proposed amendments to the programme of study for recommendation to the Course Board;
- Ensuring the accuracy of programme information as approved by the University;
- Development of policies and procedures that support the quality of the validated programmes;

- Items referred from sub-committees of the Board including Staff-Student Liaison Committee;
- Items referred to the Board from senior committees within the institution such as the Academic Board;
- Visiting staff appointments (reserved);
- Reports from activity from staff sabbatical leave (where applicable);
- Other matters relevant to the particular programme of study.

Terms of reference and composition of the Board should be circulated on an annual basis to remind members of their responsibilities. Any amendments to composition and terms of reference should be reported to the Course Board for information.

For **institutional partnerships**, or where there is any joint provision within a validation relationship, each programme should have in place a **Programme Management Team** that reports to the Course Board on matters relating to quality and standards. Any resource implications arising from Programme Management Team meetings will report to the School Executive Committee and/or relevant forum within the partner institution. The Programme Management Team will have broad responsibility for:

- Monitoring the operation of the programme;
- Ensuring the effective implementation of joint responsibilities;
- Monitoring applications and admissions to the programme;
- Providing minutes of meetings to the Course Board.

In addition to these respective forums, **all validation and institutional partnerships** should have within their governance structure:

- A Staff-Student Liaison Committee (or equivalent) to consider matters that are not the immediate concern of the Board of Studies and act as a more general forum for staff-student liaison;
- A committee that oversees staff development, teaching and learning issues, dissemination of good practice, learning resources, student support, national guidelines on academic standards, quality assurance issues and professional body requirements (much of this will be within the remit of the Board of Studies);
- where relevant to the nature of study, a forum to consider academic proposals from students (e.g. projects) which have ethical implications. Guidance on the type of activity which might have ethical implications can be obtained from the University (further reference to this is made in the Research Degrees section of this Handbook, however, proposals that contain ethical implications may also apply to taught provision);
- staff meetings to oversee general functioning of the programme/s.

Any proposed changes to the governance and management within a partner institution must be notified in writing to the University before implementation. The

University will wish to consider how any proposed changes will impact on the partnership and how the revised arrangements meet its requirements.

## Figure 1: Sample Course Board Agenda

### PART ONE – PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1. Minutes of meeting no. xx held on xxx
2. Matters arising from the meeting (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)
3. Report on Chair's Action taken since the last meeting

### PART TWO – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Reports and action plans arising from re/validation visits, professional body, QAA, Ofsted etc. inspections/audits
5. Minutes of the Board of Studies/Programme Management Team meeting held on xxx
6. Proposed changes to management/governance of the institution.
7. Annual Programme Evaluations (including External Examiner Reports)<sup>2</sup>
8. Proposed changes to student support mechanisms (including personal tutoring)
9. Proposed changes to any aspect of quality assurance mechanisms
10. Proposals to establish new programmes for validation/approval
11. Proposed relationships with any other organisation or institution.
12. Circulars/reports from bodies such as OfS or QAA that will impact on the validated programmes and/or the relationship with the University.
13. Proposed programme terminations
14. Reports/consultations from the University on local or national developments
15. Plans for validation, revalidation, accreditation, QAA visits
16. Proposed amendments to the recruitment strategy or admissions policy
17. Annual report on appeals, complaints, disciplinary cases including academic misconduct (see Section 2 and Section 4)

### PART THREE – ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

18. Proposed programme amendments (including assessment related matters and tutorial support)
19. Proposed External Examiner re/appointments
20. Proposed students with non-standard entry
21. Proposals for any individual special schemes of study
22. Proposed supervisors for research degrees and reports on student progress and transfers

### PART FOUR – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

23. Reports on staff appointments including staff CVs (see Section 8)
24. A summary of data on each new cohort<sup>3</sup>
25. Reports on any other matters that the Course Board and University should be made aware of e.g. notification of forthcoming accreditation or QAA visits
26. Any other business

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<sup>2</sup> For institutions offering research degrees, this should include the Research Studies Annual Report

<sup>3</sup> For institutions offering research degrees, this should include a report on admissions

## Section 2

### Assessment

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance  
Assessment Advice and Guidance  
External Expertise Advice and Guidance  
Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Advice and Guidance

#### Contextual University Documentation

Senate Regulation 19: Assessment Regulations  
Assessment and Feedback Policy  
Senate Regulation 20b: Student Appeals – Taught Programmes at Validated Institutions  
Senate Regulation 21b: Student Appeals – Research Programmes at Validated Institutions  
Student Appeals Policy  
Validation and Partnerships page on City's website  
Student policies and Regulations page on City's website (includes Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy and Guidance)

### General Principles

The University's Assessment and Feedback Policy sets out its approach to assessment and feedback on assessment for all provision that leads to its award, including that which is validated. The University's Assessment Regulations provide the operational framework for assessment processes and apply to all taught programmes that lead to an award of the University. The Assessment Regulations and the Assessment and Feedback Policy can be found on the University's website. In addition to the Policy and Regulations, further requirements are provided in this section to guide validated institutions in implementing the policy as well as operational matters that support the partnership. These are cross-referenced, where appropriate, to the Regulations or Policy.

#### **2.1 Scheduling and Volume of Assessment** (*see also Assessment and Feedback Policy*)

The validation or approval process will have considered the scheduling and volume of assessment for the programme in relation to the intended learning outcomes. The University expects partner institutions to monitor the volume and scheduling of assessment as the programme develops. Such reflection will be undertaken through the Annual Programme Evaluation process, consideration of comments from External Examiners, liaison with the University and preparation for revalidation.

The scheduling of the assessment process for each validated or partnership programme should be overseen by the Programme Director. Details of the schedule should be provided to students at the start of the academic year through the

Programme Handbook to enable students to plan their workload. Any supplementary information should be provided in writing at the start of a module.

## **2.2 Written Examinations**

Where written examinations form part of the assessment, the module tutor should prepare a draft examination paper that includes reference to the number of questions to be answered, the length of the examination, the marking scheme and the names of the examiners (both internal and external) who will be marking the paper. A senior member of staff should check the draft examination paper for any inaccuracies before it is forwarded to the relevant External Examiner (with any accompanying diagrams etc.) for comment and approval in sufficient time prior to the examination.

The University requires that the tutor teaching the module for which the examination is being set prepares model solutions or an outline of the structure of at least one possible answer to each question, together with a brief comment on the weight attached to each part of the answer.

The University operates a system whereby the student completes a written examination anonymously. Institutions are advised to adopt this policy wherever possible. The student is assigned an examination number prior to the examination. The script is designed so that the student's name is written in the top right-hand corner of the script which is then folded and stuck down firmly, over which the examination number is placed. The identity of the student is not revealed until after the second internal marking of the script.

## **2.3 Attendance** *(see also Section 4.4 of the Assessment Regulations)*

Attendance policies are those policies that specify attendance by a student as a part of the requirements to pass a module/Programme Stage and/or for award. Where attendance is a part of the requirement to pass a module, component or Programme Stage, this is to be specified as appropriate in the assessment scheme for the module/programme. This is also communicated to students through the Programme Handbook and assessment guidelines. Normally, any attendance requirements lead to a pass or fail, and do not contribute to the overall award classification.

In addition to the Regulations, the University suggests a wording that indicates general expectations of students. This should be published in Programme Handbooks unless there is a more specific policy adopted by an institution, particularly where there are professional body requirements. The wording is:

“Attendance at lectures, seminars, tutorials and practical classes is an integral part of a student's programme of study and students are expected to be regular and punctual in their attendance. Attendance will be monitored and any student found to be absent without permission will be required to meet his or her tutor to explain the absence.

Persistent absence without good cause will lead to an interview with the head of department and may lead to a decision that the student has dropped out of the programme and should be withdrawn by the Assessment Board.”

## **2.4 Arrangements for Students with Disabilities** *(see also Assessment and Feedback Policy)*

The institution should have arrangements in place to identify students with disabilities during the application process and should provide appropriate support to such students following registration. It is the responsibility of the Personal Tutor (or another member of staff designated by the institution) to liaise with the student and other staff to ensure appropriate measures are put in place for students who require special arrangements for assessment. **All arrangements particular to the individual must be documented and recorded in the student's file.** Such arrangements should be monitored by the institution and any special scheme of study that needs to be proposed must be submitted to the Course Board for its approval prior to it being undertaken by the student (see Section 5.13 below on Special Scheme of Study ).

Special arrangements for students with disabilities should be made when appropriate and should be requested when the normal assessment arrangements for the programme would disadvantage a student because of any particular condition and/or learning difficulty. The purpose of any special arrangement is to enable the student to demonstrate his/her knowledge and competence in the subject notwithstanding his/her disability. Each case should be considered on an individual basis and the student may be asked to supply supporting evidence.

### **Late Diagnosis of Disability**

Students may declare a disability prior to admission or at any time whilst they are registered as a student. On receipt of formal diagnosis of specific learning difficulties or other disability, partner institutions are expected to implement whatever adjustments are reasonable to support the student. For the avoidance of doubt, Assessment Boards cannot alter a student's marks or reconsider assessment decisions that were made prior to receiving formal notification of a potential disability via an Extenuating Circumstances claim. In exceptional circumstances where soon after assessment(s) a student presents new evidence of a previously unsuspected disability after the deadline for submission of an Extenuating Circumstances claim, and the student could not have reasonably suspected they had the condition, or obtained a diagnosis at an earlier time, the student may request consideration under the Extenuating Circumstances Regulation and Policy. On the basis of subsequent diagnosis of disability, an Assessment Board may offer an additional attempt at the relevant assessment(s) in the student's current programme stage with reasonable adjustments in place, or uncap the marks for relevant assessment(s) if a re-sit has already taken place. Students awaiting formal diagnosis of disability should submit an application to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for consideration with supporting evidence to follow.

### **2.5 Extensions to Submission Deadlines**

The University requires that partner institutions have in place a formal mechanism for considering requests from students for extensions to submission deadlines and this process must be stated clearly in Programme Handbooks. A member of staff is normally designated responsibility for overseeing extensions for all students on a programme so as to ensure consistency across cohorts. Any amendment to the process for considering and approving extensions is subject to the approval of the Course Board.

Extensions should normally only be granted where extenuating circumstances are presented. Examples of extenuating circumstances include sickness of the student or personal circumstances such as the death of a close relative. For all cases of sickness, a medical certificate must be submitted.

Except in cases where events such as sickness prevent a student from attendance, a request for an extension should always be submitted prior to the submission deadline. **In all cases where an extension is granted a date for the submission of work must be given to the student and recorded in writing by the institution.**

Examples of circumstances which would **not** normally warrant extensions include problems with IT such as hardware or software failure or printing problems. Students should be advised to back-up all work on a separate drive and ensure that they have access to printing facilities in sufficient time before the submission deadline. Another example that would not normally warrant an extension is poor time management on the part of the student.

In an extraordinary instance where it is evident that a specific problem has caused significant problems to **all** students, e.g. a problem with the institution's IT facilities, the institution should consider whether an extended deadline is applicable. Where this occurs, the decision needs to be published and students contacted as a matter of urgency so as to ensure all students are treated fairly and consistently. The University should also be consulted on any such instances.

Records of all extensions granted (and the associated deadlines) must be available at the meeting of the Assessment Board in case such information is required. In any event where a student's circumstances indicate that a particularly long extension may be required, the University should be contacted for advice on the matter, so as to ensure that a student's programme of study can continue smoothly and subsequent work patterns are not significantly affected.

## **2.6 Penalties for Late or Non-Submission of Work** (*see also Assessment Regulations*)

Where extenuating circumstances have not been submitted, the University expects institutions to have procedures in place for penalising students who do not submit work by the stated deadline or who submit work late. It is necessary for such procedures to be in place so as not to disadvantage students who do submit work by the given deadline and not to allow students who submit work late to be advantaged through extra time.

There are no 'standard' penalties suggested by the University, but it is recommended that institutions have in place a scale whereby marks are deducted from the assessment mark awarded across a set period of time until a mark of 0% will be recorded. A typical scale might be:

- One day late – 5% deducted
- Two days late – 10% deducted
- Three days late – 15% deducted
- Four days late – 20% deducted
- Five or more days late – 0% recorded and the assessment is failed

The scale should make it clear how penalties will be applied to ensure the consistent application of the scale. Using the typical scale above, penalties could be applied as a deduction of marks from the original assessment mark that a student has achieved. For a piece of work handed in three days late, this would mean the student would receive the same mark penalty of 15 percentage marks regardless of the original mark that they achieved (e.g. if the original mark was 70%, the mark after penalty would be 55%, and if the original mark was 60%, the mark after penalty would be 45%). Alternatively, the penalty could be applied as a deduction of a percentage of the original assessment mark. This would result in a student receiving a greater penalty, the higher that their original assessment mark was but the actual number of marks deducted would be lower than if the first method was used (e.g. if the original mark was 70%, the penalty of 15% applied to 70% would result in a mark after penalty of 59.5% and if the original mark was 60%, the mark after penalty would be 51%). Work should only be deducted to a minimum of the pass mark, if the work is of a pass standard.

The Programme Handbook should document the type of penalties that an institution will apply so that students are fully aware of this action. Any penalties that are applied should be highlighted on the grids presented to the Assessment Board.

## Marking and Grading of Work

### 2.7 Marking and Moderation *(see also Assessment and Feedback Policy)*

The University has the following definitions in relation to marking and moderation:

**Marking** is the process used to assess a student's achievement of learning outcomes and the academic standards in a given assessment component.

**Anonymous marking** is a process where an assessment component is marked without the student's name/identity being made known to the marker (this is also known as **blind marking**).

**Double marking** is a process where an assessment is independently assessed by more than one marker and the marks from the first marker are not made known to the second marker.

**Double anonymous marking** is double marking where the student's name is not made known to the markers.

**Second marking** is a process where an assessment is independently assessed by more than one marker and the marks from the first marker are known to the second marker.

**Panel marking** is marking where a number of assessors, normally more than two, consider practical aspects of performance in assessment. This approach is most commonly found in arts performance.

**Automated marking** is a process of computer assisted assessment whereby a candidate's assessed work is marked electronically, according to a standard algorithm for that assessment. This process is most commonly used for multiple choice or numeric answers.

**Moderation** is a process intended to assure that an assessment outcome is fair and reliable and that assessment criteria have been applied consistently. Forms of moderation include:

- sampling, either by an internal or external examiner;
- additional marking, for example of borderlines, firsts and fails, or where there is significant difference between the marks of different markers that cannot be resolved without the opinion of another marker;
- review of marks: where there is a significant difference between several assessment marks, within or between parts of a programme, which indicate the marks may need to be reconsidered.

## **2.8 Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria** (see also *Assessment and Feedback Policy*)

Assessment criteria and grade-related criteria form part of the set of assessment guidelines provided to students for each assessment task. Together they provide mechanisms by which the quality of a student's performance in an assessment can be measured. **In all cases, assessment criteria and grade-related criteria are made available to students to ensure that they have clear information about the assessment.**

Assessment criteria and grade-related criteria are essential for justifying marks and ensuring fairness and consistency so that all parties can interpret the marks awarded and relate these to the work completed. Assessment criteria and grade-related criteria act as a basis for communication between the student, markers and examiners. The institution should establish criteria that cover the whole marking range and the percentage bands covered by each of these grades (e.g. B+ = 67-69%). It is normal that there will be different descriptors for different types of work (e.g. the assessment/grade-related criteria for technical work would demonstrate different skills and attributes to written work). Criteria should be concise and coherent, yet provide the reader with sufficient information so as to be aware of the level achieved and areas that could be improved. Assessment criteria should be aligned to the learning outcomes of the module.

Marking guidelines given to markers should include the same assessment and grade-related criteria as those given to students.

The assessment of **all** work (other than examination scripts) must be based on the criteria as published for each programme module in the Programme Handbook. The Course Board is responsible for approving assessment criteria and grade-related criteria and any subsequent proposed amendments. The assessment of examination scripts should be informed by model answers or solutions (see Section 2.2).

## **Feedback to Students on Performance**

### **2.9 Context of Feedback** (see also *Assessment and Feedback Policy*)

The University requires that students are given constructive and timely feedback on assessed work (either formative or summative) including examinations to support them in their learning. Feedback is the marker's comments on a student's performance in the assessment and the grade awarded (whether provisional or approved). The feedback needs to be sufficient in its nature to provide a student with an understanding of the way in which the mark was derived, his/her success in

meeting the learning outcomes that were assessed and an indication of areas for improvement in the future. Feedback should be based on assessment criteria and grade-related criteria (see above) and should include:

- Annotations commenting on the student's ideas;
- Annotations indicating unsatisfactory use of language, grammar and syntax;
- A separate report sheet which evaluates the work and, as appropriate, an indication of the standard of the work (e.g. an alphabetical grade).

For other forms of work, e.g. a presentation or, in the case of a performing arts programme, a performance or composition, students should be provided with feedback in line with that indicated above, with amendments made to accommodate the nature of the work.

Students **must** be advised in the Programme Handbook that the grades they may receive during the academic year, as part of their feedback, are provisional, and subject to the approval of the Assessment Board at the end of the academic session.

Results, in the form of marks or percentages, should not be released to students until they have been agreed by the Assessment Board and the report arising has been signed by the University. Marks of individual assessments within Modules that are given to a candidate before the approval of the Report of the Assessment Board shall be accompanied by a statement that they are provisional subject to the approval of the Assessment Board and Senate.

## **2.10 Staff Development and Training for Undertaking Assessment**

It is essential that any new or visiting member of academic staff who is involved in the assessment process has a full understanding about the application and implementation of assessment criteria and grade-related criteria. This may require the institution to provide training or development opportunities and may involve the new member of staff working closely with a more experienced member of staff in the first instance. The University may be able to support activities where requested by an institution.

In addition, administrative staff must also be provided with support in managing the assessment process with regard to receipt and storage of work, administering the marking process, understanding the assessment regulations, preparing assessment grids, release of results and the appeals process.

## Assessment Boards and Panels

### 2.11 Assessment Board *(see also Assessment Regulations)*

The Assessment Board for each programme or group of programmes is a sub-committee of the University's Senate and will be chaired by the University Course Board Chair. The full composition of the Assessment Board is set out in the University's Assessment Regulations. The composition for the specific programme should also be set out in the Programme Specification. The duties of the Assessment Board are published in the University's Assessment Regulations. The agenda for the Assessment Board follows the University's standard format which is published on the Student and Academic Services website.

**All decisions of the Board must be based on the University and programme regulations** as agreed at validation or revalidation (with any amendments to the programme regulations having been approved by the Course Board and published in a subsequent programme specification and student Programme Handbook).

The Assessment Board has the right to communicate directly with the Collaborative Provision Committee regarding any breach of the Validation Agreement or other matters of concern, and also to report any procedural concerns to the University for further consideration and/or investigation prior to pass lists being approved on behalf of Senate.

### 2.12 Conduct of the Assessment Board

The consideration of students' achievement, progression and the recommendation for awards takes place in accordance with the University Assessment Regulations.

**It is the responsibility of the partner institution to make arrangements for the scheduling of the Assessment Board and for ascertaining the availability of University representatives and External Examiner/s before the start of the academic year.**

### 2.13 Preparation for the Assessment Board

The partner institution has responsibility for making preparations for the Assessment Board including the production of all paperwork. The University has published guidance for Assessment Boards, which is available on the Student and Academic Services website, to assist academic and administrative staff in preparing for Assessment Board meetings. The Secretary of the Assessment Board will be a member of staff from the partner institution. Preparation of documentation will include:

- The production of the **standard University Assessment Board agenda**. The agenda should be circulated to Board members in advance of the meeting.
- **Mark sheets or grids** should be circulated at the meeting to all members. Mark grids should contain all assessment components completed by students so as to provide the Board with an overall profile. The mark sheets should also state the pass marks for each module and/or module component of the programme.

In addition, the average mark for the module should be included on the mark sheet so as to consider consistency of marking across the programme. Where possible, mark grids should be submitted to the University, via the Student and Academic Services representative, prior to the Assessment Board meeting so that any problematic cases can be identified. **All students registered on the programme should be included on the mark grid so that the Assessment Board can take an overview of the progress of each student (including deferred students).**

- The **regulations for the programme and the requirements to pass** must be tabled at the meeting. This should be the relevant extract from the Programme Specification as approved by the University.
- Reports from the Academic Misconduct Panel and Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

In addition, the Secretary to the Board should be in possession of, or have access to:

- Any medical certificates or other evidence of mitigating circumstances (noting as appropriate, confidentiality);
- Details of any extensions granted during the year and deadlines for submission;
- A record of any Chair's Action taken since the last meeting;
- Information on debtors (if appropriate to the institution's policy);
- Re-sit procedures for the programme;
- Mark sheets/grids from previous meetings detailing students' records on previous parts of the programme;
- A master copy of the mark sheet/grid for signing by Board members at the end of the meeting to confirm the decisions made.

The University expects institutions to hold a preliminary internal meeting prior to the Assessment Board meeting so as to confirm the marks it wishes to put forward for consideration and to discuss any difficult cases and associated proposed courses of action to recommend to the Board. External Examiners are not required at preliminary internal meetings.

#### **2.14 Academic Integrity & Misconduct** (see also *Assessment Regulations, Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy and Guidance, Assessment and Feedback Policy*)

Academic misconduct is any action that produces an improper advantage for the student in relation to his/her assessment or deliberately or unnecessarily disadvantages other students. It can be committed intentionally or accidentally. It includes, but is not limited to, such offences as plagiarism, impersonation, collusion and disruption.

The University expects institutions to have procedures in place for detecting and addressing cases of academic misconduct in accordance with the Assessment Regulations, the Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy and Guidance and the Assessment and Feedback Policy. Students **must** be made aware via Programme Handbooks regarding the seriousness of academic misconduct including plagiarism. The University statement for inclusion in Programme Handbooks is available on the University's website.

Essay Mills will often disguise themselves as 'proofreading', 'tutorial' and 'academic support' services. They may target students via email, text, pop-up ads and social media. Significantly students may be at the risk of being blackmailed by essay mills. Essay Mills demand payment and have been known to blackmail people who use the service or who start to use the service but change their mind.

Members of staff may identify suspicious assignments due to a variety of reasons. Some of the most common are listed below, although this is not exhaustive:

- Similarity to another student's assignment;
- Incoherent structure;
- Recognition of text from elsewhere;
- False data provided;
- Dissertation handed in on different topic or without supervision;
- Shifts in language style / grammar / vocabulary throughout the work;
- Submission not aligned to assignment set;
- Odd changes in font or layout;
- Presence of characteristics typical in a web-published document (URLs, formatting in html, hyperlinks, etc.);
- Bibliographies which are exclusively:
  - Non-UK material (unless appropriate to specific assignment);
  - References over three years old, especially where assignment is on a topical issue;
- Highly specific professional jargon used by a student who is new to the discipline.<sup>4</sup>

The Assessment Regulations and the Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy and Guidance allow the initial consideration of cases of alleged academic misconduct via a Preliminary Investigation prior to the establishment of an Academic Misconduct Panel. The purpose of the Preliminary Investigation is to:

- establish the facts of the allegation of academic misconduct and the evidence to support it;
- determine whether there is a case to answer;
- determine whether the case relates to Poor Academic Practice or Academic Misconduct;
- resolve the matter, determine the action to be taken or refer the case to an Academic Misconduct Panel where appropriate.

If the case is not resolved through the Preliminary Investigation, including if the student disputes the charge, it should be referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel.

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<sup>4</sup> Some of these indicators are drawn from L. Hinchcliffe (1998), 'Cut and paste plagiarism: preventing, detecting and tracking online plagiarism', quoted in J Carroll (2013) *A Handbook for Deterring Plagiarism in Higher Education*, 2nd ed, OCSLD, Oxford at p. 80.

Institutions may wish to appoint a member of staff to act as a gatekeeper and expert source of knowledge for cases.

Cases of Academic Misconduct should be recorded and an anonymised report with outcomes should be provided to the Course Board on an annual basis which will subsequently be reported to Senate.

### **2.15 Academic Misconduct Panels** *(See also Assessment Regulations, Academic Misconduct Policy and Guidance, Assessment and Feedback Policy)*

The student will be invited to attend the Panel hearing and may choose to be accompanied but is expected to speak on their own behalf. The student may present their case to the Panel in writing and may also respond to any evidence used by the Panel.

If a student decides to attend in person but does not show up at the meeting and has not given adequate reasons for this in advance, the Panel may continue in the student's absence.

A representative should be available as necessary to explain reasons for the suspicion of academic misconduct. The representative may be part of the Panel but if not should withdraw while the Panel considers its decision. The student's personal tutor may also attend but shall not be a member of the panel.

If the Panel determines that academic misconduct has not taken place, no further action is taken, the marking process is resumed in the normal way and the results are considered by the Assessment Board. If the Panel determines that poor academic practice has taken place, this should be taken into account during the marking process as detailed below.

If academic misconduct is deemed to have taken place, the Panel must decide on appropriate sanctions to recommend to the Assessment Board as detailed in the Assessment Regulations.

### **2.16 Poor Academic Practice** *(See also Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy and Guidance, Assessment and Feedback Policy)*

Poor academic practice can be defined as inappropriate use of a referencing system which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Unattributed quotations;
- Inappropriate paraphrasing;
- Reproducing an existing concept or idea unintentionally;
- Some missing, incorrect or incomplete citations;
- Several sentences of direct copying without acknowledging the source;
- Unacknowledged proof-reading by another person;
- Unacknowledged help with English language accuracy.

Poor academic practice is different from academic misconduct and can be dealt with within the assessment criteria. If poor academic practice has been identified, the Institution is expected to meet with the student to give them the opportunity to discuss the matter. The Institution will make reasonable attempts to contact the

student to arrange this discussion, but the investigation will continue if the student fails to respond to these requests or does not attend an arranged meeting. The purpose of the meeting should be to support the student to understand the allegation and the importance of good academic practice.

A written summary of the conversation should be drawn up and, wherever possible, signed by the students as a true record. If it turns out the case is more serious or complex, the case will be referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel. This will ensure that such cases are always considered by a group of experienced staff and not by one of two individuals.

If the matter is the student's first instance of poor academic practice:

- The work can be marked accordingly in line with the assessment criteria (as outlined in the Assessment and Feedback Policy and Guidance);
- Support will be provided to promote the student's understanding and development of good academic practice;
- The student will receive a written warning that further breaches would be referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel and/or a more serious penalty applied.

Where a student commits poor academic practice the personal tutor should be informed. In this way, if a student commits poor academic practice more than once the personal tutor can ensure the student undertakes training in good academic practice.

Institutions are encouraged to build up case histories of instances of poor academic practice to help in the ongoing identification and treatment of poor academic practice.

### **2.17 Interim Assessment Panels** (*See also Assessment Regulations*)

While the Assessment Board meets at each progression point within a programme, an interim assessment panel can be established at designated points during the year. Interim Assessment Panels make provisional recommendations in relation to students' achievement in modules completed up to a specified but non-progression point. They can exercise discretion in deciding whether and how a student can re-sit failed assessments while continuing with their studies so long as the Panel explains the implication for the student's progression and/or final award in the event of re-sit failure. An Interim Assessment Panel must be held where a programme allows such re-sits.

Since the Interim Assessment Panel does not have the authority to consider student progression it does not make any recommendations to the University's Senate and therefore no formal pass lists are generated. As such, there is no University representation at these meetings, unless specifically requested by the institution. The University delegates authority to the Principal of the validated institution to chair the Interim Assessment Panel.

Students must be informed via the Programme Handbook that provisional grades they receive during the programme, including those provided following an Interim Assessment Panel, are provisional and subject to the approval of the formal Assessment Board later in the year. This is because marks could still be adjusted by moderation by the External Examiner.

## 2.18 Action Following the Assessment Board Meeting

The institution is responsible for preparing the Pass List (Assessment Board Report) and minutes of the Assessment Board meeting in the approved University format which should be drawn up immediately after the meeting in accordance with the recommendations of the Assessment Board. The format of Pass Lists is available on the University's website.

The Pass List should be signed by the appropriate institutional representative (normally the Programme Director or the Principal of the institution). The Pass List will also need to be signed by the Chair of the Assessment Board. This can be carried out at the institution after the meeting if the Pass List is ready or sent to the University for signing (via the Student and Academic Services representative).

The Pass List also needs to be signed on behalf of the University for approval and this will be facilitated by the Student and Academic Services representative. **The Pass List can only be passed for signing on behalf of the University if it is accompanied by a copy of the relevant signed mark sheets.**

## 2.19 Release of Results to Students *(See also Assessment Regulations)*

The institution is responsible for release of approved results. Students may not be informed of their results until such time as the signed Pass List has been returned to the institution - normally within three working days of receipt by the University subject to there being no queries in regard to any recommendations from the Assessment Board. Institutions are asked not to indicate to students that results will be available in advance of this timescale.

Students should be provided with a breakdown of their marks relating to each assessment that forms part of the programme. A final overall aggregate is only relevant to the final overall award.

## External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed to all provision that leads to an award of the University and award of credit of the University for which an Assessment Board is convened. Sufficient numbers of External Examiners must be appointed to areas with large provision to ensure that there is adequate consideration of achievement, progression and awards. External Examiners appointed must have appropriate expertise to enable them to comment upon the academic standards achieved by students and the appropriateness of assessment.

Guidance on External Examiners (including appointment/reappointment forms) is available here:

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/external-examinations>

## 2.20 Appointment Criteria for External Examiners

Appointment criteria for External Examiners are the requirements against which the University determines the suitability of a potential External Examiner. Candidates for the appointment of External Examiners should meet the following criteria:

- Seniority and the ability to command authority;
- Appropriate levels of academic and, where appropriate, other professional expertise and experience in relation to the relevant subject area and assessment;
- In order to provide sufficient time for the proper performance of their functions, individuals are normally expected not to hold more than two external examinerships;
- Reciprocation should be avoided – the proposed Examiner should not be appointed from a department in an institution where a member of the inviting department is serving as an Examiner;
- A former member of staff cannot normally be invited to become an External Examiner before a period of five years since completion of his/her appointment at the University or the validated institution;
- Candidates should not have a close relationship with the University or one of its collaborative partners;
- The Examiner is not normally appointed from the same institution as the predecessor External Examiner. Exceptions may be considered where there is a very small pool of potential examiners from which to draw;
- The University permits the appointment of those from outside higher education, for example from industry or the professions. In such circumstances the ability of the proposed Examiner to comment on the appropriateness of assessment tasks and academic standards achieved by students needs to be confirmed by the Course Board.

All nominations are supported by the appropriate documentary evidence including a CV. Appointments are made by Senate following nomination by the Course Board, which will receive proposals from the institution's Board of Studies or, in the case of institutional partnerships, the Programme Management Team.

External Examiners are appointed for an initial period not exceeding four years which may be exceptionally be extended for one year to ensure continuity. The maximum initial appointment period and exceptional additional year will apply even in cases where an Examiner moves from one programme to another.

Following approval, the External Examiner's appointment will be confirmed in writing by Student and Academic Services and details of period of appointment, fee and by whom he/she will be briefed will be included. A copy of this letter will be sent to the validated institution. All Examiners are provided with a copy of the University's External Examiners' Guide. Following receipt of the appointment letter, the partner institution should send the External Examiner the following:

- Background information on the programme and institution;
- A copy of the Programme and Module Specifications (or the Programme Handbook), as approved by the University and the most recent Annual Programme Evaluation;

- Confirmation of the role and function of the External Examiner(s) for the particular programme, including the sample size of assessments, number of visits to the institution per year, notification of any other External Examiners appointed for the programme;
- Proposed timetable for the year including when the institution will send work to the Examiner and when they will require it to be returned;
- Dates and times of Assessment Board meetings.

External Examiners are required to make a report at the end of each academic year. Further details on this, and how it should be considered, can be found in Section 5.19.

### **2.21 Right to Work in the UK**

Where an External Examiner will be undertaking work in the UK, in line with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, City requires a copy of a document confirming the External Examiner's right to work in the UK. The copy document should be provided at the same time as the appointment form or, if this is not possible, when the Examiner attends the Assessment Board. Payments to External Examiners cannot be made without this documentation. More information on the consideration of documentation and a list of acceptable documents is provided on the External Examiner Appointment Form, which is available via the Assistant Registrar (Quality).

### **2.22 Resignation, Interruption and Premature Termination of Appointment (See also *Assessment Regulations*)**

Where an External Examiner wishes to terminate his/her appointment, the Examiner is encouraged to give as much notice as possible. In the case of interruption for a defined period of time, e.g. due to sabbatical leave, it may be possible to make a temporary appointment or arrange methods by which the Examiner is able to carry out his/her duties.

Where the University wishes to terminate the appointment of an External Examiner, this recommendation is made by the Course Board and approved by Senate (or its delegated authority). Termination by the University should, if possible, occur at a natural point in the assessment cycle, e.g. following re-sit Boards at the end of the academic year.

The following circumstances are grounds for termination of an appointment by the University:

- Discontinuation of the provision for which the External Examiner was appointed;
- Irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between the External Examiner and the validated institution;
- Persistent unavailability/inability to perform duties (e.g. non-submission of reports within a reasonable timescale and/or failure to attend an Assessment Board without good reason);
- New conflict of interest due to a change in role of the Examiner.

Other grounds for the termination of an appointment may be applicable. In such situations, a case is made by the Course Board for the termination of the appointment.

## Appeals

In some instances, students may wish to appeal against the decision of the Assessment Board. This process is separate to the complaints process (see Section 4).

### 2.23 Appeals

All students on the University's validated programmes are subject to its appeal regulations as studying on a programme leading to an award of the University. The grounds for appeal for taught programmes and for research programmes are documented in the University's Senate Regulations. The University procedure should be published in full in Programme Handbooks. The University has a student appeals policy to support understanding and implementation of the appeals regulations.

An appeal may be lodged only after the decision of an Assessment Board has been issued, and should be sent directly to Student and Academic Services. The appeal will be scrutinised by two members of University staff. The possible outcomes of the initial scrutiny are set out in the appeal regulations and include referral to an appeal panel convened by the institution. A student may request a University-level review of the decision of a validated institution appeal hearing on the grounds set out in the appeal regulations.

The Course Board will receive an annual report on appeals that have been received during the year and the outcome of each appeal, which will subsequently be reported to Senate.

### 2.24 Office of the Independent Adjudicator

Guidance on the framework in which students have the opportunity to write to the nationally established Office of the Independent Adjudicator can be found in Section 4.17.

## Section 3

### Validation: Student Recruitment, Admissions and Publicity

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance  
Admissions, recruitment and Widening Access Advice and Guidance

#### Contextual University documentation (via City's website):

Validation and Partnerships page  
Student policies and Regulations page  
City, University of London brand guidelines

### Context

The pattern of recruitment and admissions to a validated programme is likely to change over time and will be influenced by a number of factors. The validation process is designed to oversee the development of these matters and to ensure coherence between the admission of students and demands of the programme. This section details processes relating to recruitment and admissions along with important procedures relating to publicity.

### Recruitment, Selection and Admissions

#### 3.1 Student Recruitment Strategy

All institutions must have in place an appropriate recruitment strategy for each validated programme. This will be documented fully in the most recent validation/revalidation submission. It is likely that the strategy will develop during a period of validation due to factors such as changes in the focus of a programme and market forces. Any proposed changes must be reported to the Course Board.

#### 3.2 Selection and Admissions

The University requires institutions to have an appropriate selection and admissions policy and selection process for its validated programmes and this will be documented in the most recent validation/revalidation submission. The policy must include reference to English Language requirements. The University's requirements are published on its website.

The policy should include reference to mature students, non-traditional entrants, overseas students, and admissions with advanced standing and with credit for previous study. The Course Board is responsible for approving any amendment the institution might wish to make to its admissions policy.

Entry criteria for the programme should be clearly publicised in promotional material as should the selection process. The University requires that the selection process operates within the institution's equal opportunities policy.

### 3.3 Age of Entry to Undergraduate Programmes

The University should be consulted before an applicant who will be under the age of eighteen by the end of the first term of study is accepted for entry to a programme of study. Where such applicants are accepted onto a programme, their welfare and support needs must be fully and carefully considered, taking into account the institution's duty of care and the support and welfare needs of the individual. Any proposal to accept an applicant under the age of eighteen at the end of their first term will require approval by the University and should be considered by the Course Board in the first instance.

**Any cases will require the University's approval prior to the student commencing the programme.**

Further guidance can be sought from the Student and Academic Services representative.

### 3.4 Declaration of Criminal Convictions

In general, a criminal record is not regarded as an obstacle to studying on programmes validated by the University. The University expects that institutions will generally not take into account criminal convictions which are deemed 'spent' under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 when selecting applicants for admission or dealing with existing students.

Institutions offering the University's validated programmes should have in place a procedure to establish whether an applicant is holding an 'unspent criminal conviction. **The University must be consulted on any instance where the institution is considering making an offer to a student who may hold an unspent criminal conviction. An offer may not be made until the University has been consulted and the nature of the conviction investigated.**

Full details of the University's expectations are set out in the University Admissions Policy and Procedure: Criminal Convictions available on the University's website.

### 3.5 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Applicants who have pursued appropriate studies in the validated institution or another institution or who possess appropriate qualifications or experience may be exempted from some of the learning for the programme where this is permitted in the approved Programme Specification. This falls into two categories:

- Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL), a process by which credit is awarded for learning derived from study at this or another institution which has previously been assessed and/or awarded credit;
- Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), a process by which credit is awarded for learning derived from a candidate's life experience which has not previously been assessed and/or awarded credit.

Regulations on RPL can be found in Section 4.9 of the University's Assessment Regulations and further guidance on RPL can be found on the University's website.

### 3.6 Advice on Overseas Qualifications

The University is able to provide advice on the standing of various overseas qualifications. Where such advice is required, the Student and Academic Services representative should be contacted in the first instance who will subsequently seek advice from the Course Board Chair.

### 3.7 Oversight of Entry Qualifications

Through the approval of the validation and revalidation documentation, the University delegates day-to-day responsibility to the institution for recruitment and admissions to the validated programmes other than in those instances referred to above. **This includes the validated institution ensuring that it receives documented confirmation that previous qualifications have been obtained (for example, a copy of the undergraduate degree certificate where a student is applying for a postgraduate programme).**

The University monitors the entry profile of students via receipt of qualification details at the Course Board and via data provided in the Annual Programme Evaluation.

## Publicity

### 3.8 Use of the University's Name

The University requires institutions to have appropriate up to date and accurate publicity materials which include at least a brochure/prospectus and a website which provides specific details about the programme/s.

The University is responsible for the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to the programmes and awards for which it has responsibility. In discharging this responsibility for programmes that it validates, the University requires institutions with validated programmes to:

- Acknowledge the University as the validating body (i.e. the institution which awards the degree/diploma) in a prominent position in all promotional material (electronic and hard copy) for validated programmes. **This includes advertisements for staff vacancies where the programme name is mentioned or in any press release that refers to the programme.**
- **It is essential that the appropriate terminology is used.** The following phrase should be used after reference to the programme title:

**‘Validated by City, University of London.’**

- It is not correct to suggest that an institution is validated by the University or to suggest that the University accredits the programme.
- Ensure that there is no ambiguity in any materials that refer to the programme with regard to the respective roles of the institution and the University. The

programme is delivered, owned and managed by the institution – the award is made by the University.

- Seek the University's approval for use of its name in an institution's prospectus, any form of electronic publishing such as the web, advertisement, press release or any other publicity material where the wording has not been approved previously.
- Provide copies of key promotional material to the Student and Academic Services representative on an annual basis.

The use of the University's logo is welcomed but its use must conform to the University's visual identity. This will require the approval of the University's Marketing Department. Copies of the logo (available in electronic format), photographs (colour transparencies or black and white prints) and text can be provided on request.

Should the University wish to use an institution's logo in any publicity, permission would be sought from the institution concerned prior to the logo being published.

The University will carry out regular checks on the institution's use of the University's name (particularly electronic material) to ensure it conforms with the University requirements.

### **3.9 Publicity for Programmes which have yet to Complete the Validation Process**

Where an institution has put forward a new programme proposal to the University to be considered for validation (see Section 5), the institution cannot normally publicise the programme until the validation process is complete (this concludes with approval from Collaborative Provision Committee).

In exceptional circumstances, it might be possible for a programme to be publicised with the clause 'subject to validation' prior to receipt of the panel's report by Collaborative Provision Committee. This will, however, be exceptional and will be dependent on the recommendation arising from the validation visit and permission **must** be sought from the University. The Student and Academic Services representative will liaise with the Head of Quality and Academic Development as to whether provisional advertising is possible.

No mention of the University's name can be made prior to the completion of the validation process.

### **3.10 Student Recruitment by the University**

The University welcomes co-operation in the promotion of programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate recruitment fairs in the UK and is happy to exhibit literature on validated programmes on its stands at overseas recruitment exhibitions.

Any matters relating to additional promotion should be discussed in the first instance with the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development).

## Section 4

### Validation: Student and Learning Support

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance  
Enabling Student Achievement Advice and Guidance  
Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Advice and Guidance  
Learning and Teaching Advice and Guidance

#### Contextual University documentation:

Senate Regulation 26: Student Complaints  
Student Complaints Policy  
Senate Regulation 13: Student Discipline  
Student Disciplinary Policy  
Student Policies and Regulations  
Placements Policy

### Context

Learning support is a critical mechanism through which the quality of the student experience can be supported and enhanced. The University expects institutions to provide students on its validated programmes with a level of support that is appropriate to their focus. This will normally be commensurate with the level of support provided to students within the University.

All validated institutions must ensure that a record is maintained for each student while they are registered for a programme. Student files should be used to store application forms and references obtained on admission, copies of communications with the student, details of performance in assessment, notes of modules taken, notes of tutorial meetings and any reference written at the student's request.

### Induction

#### 4.1 Induction at the Institution

The University requires validated institutions to provide an effective and comprehensive induction programme for students on validated programmes. In advance of joining the institution, students should be provided with a joining pack which includes information about the induction programme.

The induction programme should include sessions that provide students with information on facilities and services available at the institution, such as library and computing resources, study skills, counselling and language support. Students should be provided with a timetable, the name of their personal tutor, the Programme Handbook and any other relevant information.

Students should also be informed about the institution's relationship with City, University of London and the facilities and services it provides. The institution should

provide students with the Validation Student Guide that is produced on an annual basis by the University. This Guide provides information on the University and its surrounding area and University facilities available for use by students on validated programmes.

Institutions should also have a policy in place for additional support that might need to be provided to students from overseas.

## **4.2 Visits to the University**

In addition to the Validation Student Guide, groups of students from validated institutions can visit the University to find out more about the relationship. Should any institution wish for their students to have such a tour, the Student and Academic Services representative should be contacted. Arrangements for such a visit should be made well in advance of the start of the academic year.

Following receipt of the University ID Card (see Section 7) students will be able to visit the University on an individual basis and use the facilities available to validated students.

## **Study-Related Documentation**

### **4.3 Programme Handbook**

It is essential that accurate, clear and timely information is provided to students about their programmes, department, institution and validation arrangement with the University. The Programme Handbook is usually produced by the Programme Director prior to each new intake to the programme. The Handbook must be updated annually and should incorporate any changes made during the previous year. The handbook should incorporate details of each External Examiner's name, position and institution. It should also incorporate any suggestions made by students regarding its format and content. Institutions should ensure that the Handbook is available to students by the start of induction. The required content of Handbooks can be found on the Student and Academic Services website.

An electronic copy of the Handbook for each validated programme should be submitted to the Student and Academic Services representative on an annual basis by the start of each academic year. The Student and Academic Services representative will circulate copies to the Course Board Chair and the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision).

### **4.4 Institutional Documentation**

In some instances, institutions may provide students with documentation to supplement the Programme Handbook. This may include, for example, an institutional study guide or a placement handbook. Copies of these documents should also be submitted to the University on an annual basis.

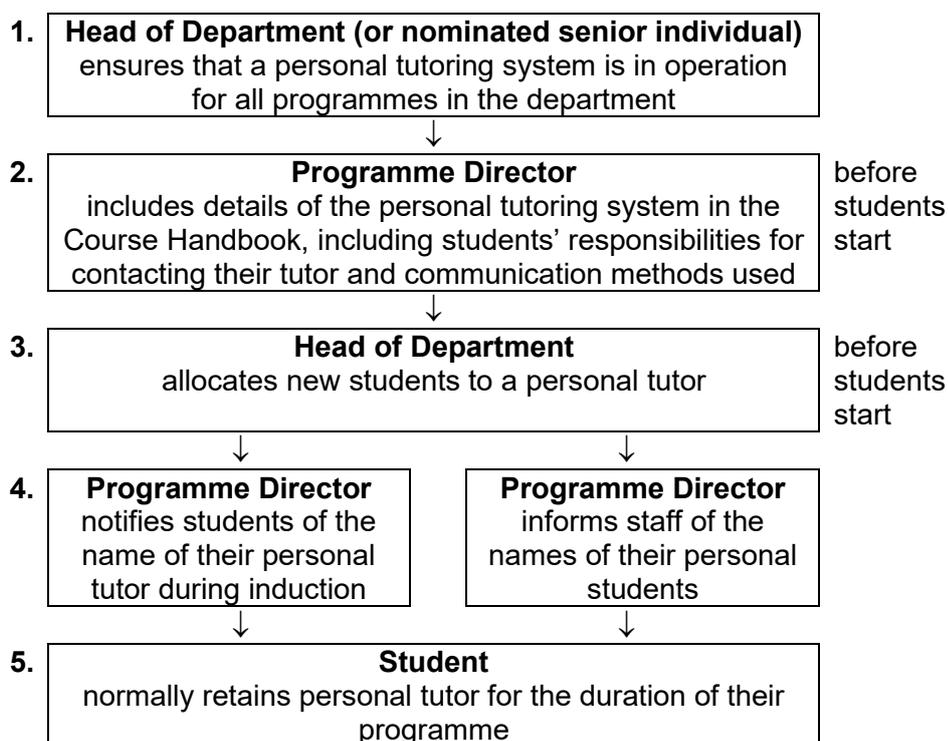
## Student Support

### 4.5 Personal Tutoring

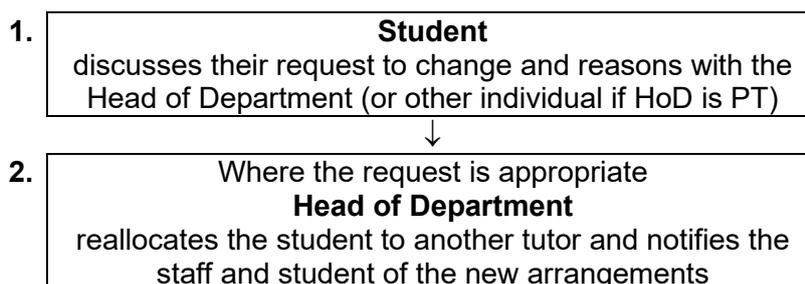
The University requires that all students have access to an effective system that covers the remit of personal tutoring. Students should be clearly advised of procedures in the Programme Handbook and the system should be explained at induction. Students should also be informed as to the name of their Personal Tutor at induction. Institutions should have an effective system of allocation of personal tutors. The allocation process should also take account of the likely additional support needs of international students, students with disabilities and mature students.

A member of staff within the department/institution must be designated as being responsible for overseeing the personal tutorial system throughout the year. Any proposed changes to the personal tutorial system should be put forward to the Course Board for approval.

Institutions should ensure that their procedure encompasses the following University procedure:



#### Where a student wishes to change their personal tutor:



Personal tutors are responsible for initiating contact with their students and making themselves available for further appointments. Details of how to contact personal tutors and how to arrange meetings should be stated clearly in Programme Handbooks.

#### 4.6 Academic or Module-Related Tutorials

The University requires that students are provided with adequate module-related tutorial support. Details of the module-related tutorial support that will be provided should be defined in the Programme Handbook. This should include information on the frequency of tutorials, the mechanisms for the arrangement of tutorials and where information about the tutorial schedule will be located. Any significant proposed changes to the nature of module-related tutorial support should be submitted to the Course Board for its approval.

#### 4.7 Mentors

For certain programmes, institutions may decide that it is valuable for students to be allocated a mentor. This is **not** a requirement of the University but is something that is a choice of an institution in relation to supporting a particular programme. However, where it is decided that a mentor scheme will be implemented, a number of issues will need to be addressed to meet the requirements of the University in relation to ensuring the quality of the student and learning support infrastructure.

In general, the role of a mentor may fall between that of a personal tutor and a supervisor and may be provided to enable the student to have access to a wider network of professionals. Where a mentoring scheme is proposed, this will require the approval of the Course Board prior to implementation, as an amendment to the student support infrastructure.

In light of the fact that the role of mentor may differ from programme to programme, it is essential in each case to provide clarity about its purpose. This will be required for any proposal made to the University. In addition, clarity must be provided in the student's Programme Handbook so as to ensure an understanding of the purpose of the role and how it fits within the overall student and learning support mechanisms. Furthermore, mentors will require a clear brief from the institution and staff development may be required to support their role.

Issues that need to be considered include:

- The role and responsibilities of the mentor;

- The type of support that will be provided to the student and clarification of the boundaries of the relationship between the mentor and mentee;
- The likely professional background of the mentor and whether they are external or internal to the institution;
- The frequency of meetings with the mentor, what the student should expect and how contact should be made;
- Responsibility for establishing meetings with the mentor;
- The relationship between the mentor and the Programme Director, Personal Tutor or other relevant staff including the frequency of formal meetings and any formal reporting requirements;
- What a student should do in any instances of a breakdown in the relationship with the mentor;
- How mentors are selected and trained by the institution;
- How mentors are allocated to students;
- The location of meetings between mentors and students (i.e. inside or outside the institution);
- How the institution ensures appropriate parity of experience for students;
- Mechanisms for students providing feedback on their experience of mentors;
- Formal contractual issues that underpin the role of the mentor to assist in securing the quality of the student experience. This is particularly relevant where the mentor is external to the institution.

#### **4.8 Support Services**

The University expects institutions to have procedures in place for referring students on to other support services either within the institution (where provision exists) or to outside organisations with which there is an arrangement. Such support mechanisms include counselling, learning support, medical service, financial advice, accommodation and students with disabilities (e.g. dyslexia) or other support mechanisms that may be specific to the discipline being studied.

Where an institution does not think it is equipped to deal with specific matters either within its own institution or where it is difficult for arrangements to be made with other organisations, the University should be consulted for advice. Where the institution wishes to enquire as to whether the University could provide support, the Principal of the institution should contact the Head of Quality and Academic Development to initiate discussions, which would include consideration of the University's ability to provide additional support, the number of students concerned and additional fees the University might need to charge with regard to its costs.

## Wider Learning Support

### 4.9 Provision for Advice on Careers or Further Study

All institutions should ensure that students are provided with adequate opportunities to gain support or advice with regard to their future following completion of their studies. For some larger institutions, a careers centre may form part of its facilities and students should be referred accordingly. In smaller institutions, it may be more appropriate to provide sessions for students with people from associated professions, which could include alumni. Tutorial support could also assist students in considering their futures with referrals being made to other staff or associated services as appropriate.

### 4.10 Library Facilities

The University requires institutions to have library facilities that are appropriate and adequate to support students on the validated programme. This may include agreements to enable access to other libraries to support that provided by the institution. Library provision will be considered at validation, subsequent revalidations and via minutes of Board of Studies meetings. Checks will also be carried out by the Course Board via its annual meeting with students which will cover the students' experiences of the adequacy of, and accessibility to, library facilities.

Students studying on validated programmes have access to the University's Library, both in person and online. Due to licensing requirements, remote access to some online resources may be restricted; the Library can provide details of these.

### 4.11 IT Facilities

The University requires institutions to have appropriate and adequate IT facilities for students on its validated programmes. The IT facilities provided by an institution will be partly dependent on the number of students on its programmes and the level to which IT is used within a programme. It is therefore accepted that there may be some variations in levels of provision. However, IT ability is a transferable skill and the University expects students to complete a programme with an adequate level of proficiency. The University also expects students to have an appropriate induction to IT.

IT provision will be considered at validation, subsequent revalidations and via minutes of Board of Studies meetings. Checks will also be carried out by the Course Board via its annual meeting with students which will cover the students' experiences of the adequacy and availability of IT facilities.

Students on validated programmes also have access to the University's Computing Services.

## External Learning Opportunities

### 4.12 Placements or External Settings (see also *Student Placements Policy*)

Where a validated programme involves placements or opportunities to undertake part of the programme away from the institution in an external setting, the University requires the institution to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place including those relating to student support. In some instances, particularly where students will be working with young people, it will be necessary for students to undergo police checks prior to starting their work; where this applies, institutions must have in place mechanisms for managing this process.

The University would expect the institution to have a formal written agreement with a placement or external setting provider that underpins the agreement to undertake the activity during a certain time period and that documents respective responsibilities. Where any staff from the placement provider are to be involved in the assessment of the student and where this contributes to the marks for the degree, the validated institution will need to put in place appropriate mechanisms to support this activity so as to safeguard academic standards. Any such mechanisms will be subject to the approval of the Course Board.

Students on placement or on activities outside of the institution that form part of the validated programme should be given a pre-placement briefing (see the *Student Placement Policy*) and provided with clear guidelines by the institution on:

- Any academic requirements for the placement (a reminder of formal learning outcomes, assessment requirements etc.);
- Support that will be provided to the student before and during the activity from both staff at the placement or organisation and from staff of the institution;
- Who a student should contact at the institution in case of any questions, difficulties or problems arising;
- The role of the external mentors or supervisors (including training by the institution) which includes information on the support arrangements for students;
- The student's role and responsibilities;
- Arrangements for liaison between staff at the placement or external setting and staff from the institution;
- The selection and approval process of an appropriate placement or external setting and the extent to which students are involved in initial contact;
- Health and safety requirements;
- How institutions ensure consistency of experience and assessments between placements or external settings;
- Formal feedback mechanisms for the student regarding experiences on placements or external settings;
- The institution's responsibility for its students.

## Complaints and Student Discipline

### 4.13 Validated Institution's Complaints Procedure

Institutions are required to have in place a procedure for considering student complaints. Information on the procedure should be provided to students in their Programme Handbook.

There are a number of areas outside academic matters on which a student could complain. These include equal opportunities, sexual or racial harassment, and complaints against individual members of staff. Complaints are different to appeals against a decision of the Assessment Board and further details about this can be found in Section 2.

The University has a policy on student complaints which includes details of the information that should be provided to students on complaints, the way in which consideration of complaints should be approached, individuals who might be deemed to have a conflict of interest in a case and the difference between complaints and appeals.

The University advises that, wherever possible, complaints should be dealt with at a local level (e.g. with the individual, department or service concerned), and that ideally complaints should be investigated and responded to by the institution within a 28-day time-scale.

It is advised that a member of staff be allocated responsibility for overseeing the complaints procedure. All communication between the student complaining and other parties involved must be recorded in writing. For each complaint, a record should be kept on the nature of the complaint, how the matter was dealt with, the time taken for each stage, the outcome of the complaint and the ethnic origin and gender of complainants (for equal opportunities monitoring purposes).

Institutions are required to report on complaints cases to the Course Board on an annual basis. The report should provide details of the number and outcome of cases and highlight any lessons learned. Areas where the University might need to consider enhancements to regulation, policy or process as a result of cases should also be provided.

### 4.14 Pursuing the Complaint with the University

A student may request a University-level review of the outcome of a complaint which has been considered through the institution's own complaints policy and procedures where the complaint relates to the academic programme.

A student who wishes to make a complaint about one of the University's services should pursue this through the University's Complaints Regulation.

Full details of the circumstances under which a student on a validated programme can pursue a complaint with the University and the procedure for doing so are provided in the appendix to the University Complaints Regulation.

#### **4.15 Validated Institution's Student Discipline Procedures**

Institutions are required to have procedures in place for dealing with matters of student discipline that are not related to academic misconduct. The University Assessment Regulations cover the treatment of academic misconduct cases (see Section 2) and alleged cases of academic misconduct will be considered under the academic misconduct policies and procedures established by the institution in accordance with the University's Assessment Regulations in the first instance.

The University's policy on student discipline provides information on the types of activities that can constitute non-academic misconduct, the information that should be provided to students on disciplinary matters, the approach to the consideration of cases and individuals who might be deemed to have a conflict of interest in a case.

It is advised that a member of staff be allocated responsibility for overseeing the discipline procedure. All communication with the student regarding the disciplinary matter should be recorded in writing. For each case, a record should be kept on the nature of the discipline case, how the matter was dealt with, the time taken for each stage and the outcome.

Institutions are required to provide an annual report to the Course Board on discipline cases concerned with conduct relating to the programme of study. The report should detail the number and outcome of cases, highlight any lessons learned and any areas where the University might need to consider enhancements to regulation, policy or process as a result of cases.

#### **4.16 Consideration of Discipline Cases by the University**

The University may, in certain circumstances, consider cases of misconduct by a student on a validated programme through the University Student Discipline Regulation. Provision is made in the regulations for a student to appeal against the final decision of an institution's disciplinary procedure if the conduct relates to the validated programme of study or occurred on University premises. In addition, an Academic Misconduct Panel may also refer a case of alleged academic misconduct to a University Disciplinary Panel in certain circumstances. Full details including the procedure for consideration of discipline cases by the University are provided in an appendix to the University Student Discipline Regulation.

#### **4.17 Pursuing the Complaint Externally (OIA)**

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) offers an independent scheme for the review of student complaints and appeals.

City notifies students when it is satisfied that all internal procedures for an appeal, complaint or disciplinary matter have been completed. The OIA normally considers an application only after this point has been reached, and all applications must satisfy the OIA's eligibility criteria. In order to consider a complaint, the OIA must receive a completed complaint form within 12 months of the date of City's correspondence confirming its internal procedure has been completed. A review by the OIA may take six months or more to complete.

Further information about the OIA and how to make an application is available from the OIA website [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk).

Students who are following a programme of study which is validated by City may apply to the OIA if they have received a formal “Completion of Procedures” letter from City. This would normally occur only in the following circumstances:

- The validated institution is not itself registered with the OIA
- It has been determined that the matter falls within City’s purview, and therefore appeal procedures have been conducted through City

Liaison with the OIA will be undertaken by City’s Student and Academic Services.

## Section 5

### Validation: Programme Development and Review

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance  
Course Design and Development Advice and Guidance  
Monitoring and Evaluation Advice and Guidance

Other QAA Advice and Guidance will apply to the development of a new programme.

#### Other relevant documentation:

QAA Frameworks for HE Qualifications (FHEQ) of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies  
QAA Higher Education Credit Framework for England

#### Contextual University documentation:

Good Practice Policy  
Student policies and Regulations  
Programme Development, Approval and Amendment  
Student Voice  
Assessment  
Programme Evaluation and Review

## Context

The implementation of appropriate mechanisms for programme development and review underpin the quality and standards framework. This section considers the processes for validation of programmes where a validation partnership currently exists and the mechanisms for review and development.

## Development of a New Programme

### 5.1 Proposal in Principle

Where an institution that already has validation links with City wishes to put forward a request for a new programme to be considered for validation, the proposal in principle will be received initially by the Course Board for note, and will subsequently be referred to Collaborative Provision Committee. Any new proposal will be considered in relation to:

- The University's Policy on Validation;
- The views of the relevant School/s Board of Studies;
- The complementarity of the proposal in relation to other provision leading to an award of the University, or that which is planned, including that at other validated institutions. The University will not normally validate a programme

which will be competitive in relation to its own market. This is in accordance with the Validation Policy.

This process will be coordinated by the Student and Academic Services representative.

## **5.2 Contents of Proposal in Principle**

The proposal in principle for the new programme will need to contain the following information:

- Proposed programme title and award;
- Proposed starting date;
- Student numbers for first five years;
- Market research on demand for the programme and any competitor programmes;
- Any professional accreditation that may be sought and timescale for this;
- Outline of programme structure and content;
- Indicative aims and learning outcomes;
- Confirmation that the proposal has been endorsed within the institution with regard to academic direction and resource allocation;
- Allocation of resources and any impact on current resources allocated to existing validated programmes (e.g. staff time, library, IT, teaching space);
- Plans for recruitment;
- Proposed Programme Director;
- Membership of programme development team;
- Proposed schedule for preparing for validation.

Note that there are additional considerations for research degree programmes which are stated in Section 6.

Institutions will be informed of the outcome of consideration of the proposal as soon as the internal process has been completed. Institutions are asked to submit proposals in principle to the University at least eighteen months in advance of when they would intend a new programme to commence.

The University will make every effort to assist the institution with its proposed timescale (i.e. when it envisages the registration of the first cohort), however, there are a number of quality assurance (and, in some cases, strategic) procedures that need to be fulfilled for a programme to be given validated status. Chair's Action on behalf of Collaborative Provision Committee will not normally be taken to approve validation reports for new programmes. It is therefore essential that an appropriate and realistic timescale is agreed and approved by the Student and Academic Services representative.

### 5.3 Transfer of Validation

Where the University is asked by a current partner institution to consider the transfer of validation of a programme from another awarding body to City, this is likely to be more complex and therefore take a longer period of time. In addition to consideration of the actual programme proposal, liaison will need to take place between the University and the institution that currently validates a programme, particularly to consider the arrangements for students currently registered on the programme should validation by the University be successful.

### 5.4 Proceeding with the Validation Process

Where the University agrees to proceed with the validation process, the Student and Academic Services representative is responsible for liaising with the institution with regard to establishing an appropriate timetable for the next steps. This will include dates for the submission of documentation, the validation visit and a report being presented to Collaborative Provision Committee. In addition, any lead up meetings proposed by the institution for University representatives to consider draft (hard copy) documentation **must** be scheduled at this time. The timetable will also need to consider the schedule for recruitment to the programme. Responsibilities for the validation process are provided in the appendices.

### 5.5 Validatory Panel

University Course Board members and the External Advisor will normally act as the validatory panel. The panel will also have the power of co-option, with any proposed additional members requiring Collaborative Provision Committee approval. With regards to staff development opportunities and broadening subject expertise, the University will often co-opt a colleague from another validated institution. The institution putting forward the proposal will be consulted in relation to any proposed nominees from other institutions.

Documentation for a new programme should be presented in the required University format as published on the Student and Academic Services website. Any queries about this should be directed to the Student and Academic Services representative.

### 5.6 Validation Visit

The validation visit will consider the detail of the proposed programme, building on the proposal in principle that will have been signed-off by the University at an earlier stage (see section 5.2). Drawing upon consideration of the submission, views of panel members and issues arising in meetings with staff, the Panel will consider the following areas at the validation visit:

- The programme:
  - The overall offer of the educational experience in relation to the market;
  - The overall quality of the educational experience;
  - The commensurability of the programme with HE requirements including the level/s at which it is offered within the national Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications and any relevant QAA Subject Benchmarks;
  - The proposed award title and its fit with the content and learning outcomes of the programme;

- The clarity of the proposed admissions policy, its fit with University requirements and reference to any additional support that may be needed;
  - The overall structure of the programme, credit distribution and proposed exit points;
  - How the structure and design of the programme will support and enable students' progression;
  - To confirm the institution's commitment to resources required for the successful management and delivery of the programme, following statements provided in the proposal in principle;
  - To review the market interest and potential recruitment to the programme along with future marketing plans;
  - Confirmation that the detailed validation submission has been considered and signed-off within the institution.
- Aims and learning outcomes:
    - The coherency and clarity of learning outcomes;
    - How the level/s of the learning outcomes complement the national Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications and any professional body requirements.
- Programme Content:
    - The appropriateness of the content in relation to the HE level/s, aims and learning outcomes and any professional body requirements;
    - The overall breadth and depth of the curriculum, taking into consideration the academic level at which the programme is positioned within the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications; and the intended graduate profile and likely destinations;
    - The currency and relevance of the curriculum as well as supporting reading and resources lists.
- Learning, teaching and assessment:
    - That learning and teaching strategies are appropriate to the HE level/s of the programme and the nature of the discipline;
    - The way in which learning, teaching and assessment methods support achievement of learning outcomes;
    - The range of teaching, learning and assessment methods including how these have been considered in relation to the student entry profile;
    - Arrangements for the management of placements or any other forms of external learning opportunities where these form part of the programme;

- Arrangements for induction, tutorial support and any other forms of student support including that for students with disabilities;
- The resources available to support students in their learning;
- The assessment load within each module and the programme overall;
- The alignment of assessment regulations and policies with those of the University.
- Maintenance and enhancement of quality and securing of academic standards:
  - Arrangements for programme management including Programme Director and administrative support;
  - Ensuring that programme staff are experienced to deliver and assess at the HE level/s of the programme;
  - Where the programme will fit within the institution's governance structure including arrangements for student representation;
  - Mechanisms for internal review and development of the programme including obtaining, considering and responding to feedback from students;
  - Arrangements for external examining and alignment with University policy;
  - Arrangements for peer observation of teaching;
  - Opportunities for staff development and how these may inform the development of the programme.

### **5.7 Process Arising from the Panel Visit**

At the end of the visit, the Panel will provide feedback to staff at the institution. This feedback will be in the form of an overall recommendation that the Panel will make to Collaborative Provision Committee.

Where the Panel proposes that a period of validation be recommended, it will state the proposed length of time (up to a maximum of five years). The feedback will also contain any proposed conditions associated with the period of validation. Conditions are made where the Panel considers that further enhancements are required to fully support the quality and standards of the programme and will normally need to be addressed prior to the start of the programme. A condition may also be set where documentation will need to be resubmitted following correction of any inaccuracies, necessary elaboration, or amendments required as a result of meeting other conditions. It is necessary for the University to receive such a revised document as this will form an appendix to the formal validation agreement; normally only two amended submissions will need to be provided. The institution will be required to respond to any conditions by a date provided by the Panel.

Arising from the visit, the Panel may also make recommendations. These will either be contained within the verbal feedback or after the event through the formal report. Recommendations are made where the Panel considers that further enhancements may benefit the development of the programme but are not required to be

implemented to support the core quality and standards of the programme. The University will expect an institution to consider recommendations within its own internal governance structures and will monitor this through evidence provided in minutes.

Following verbal feedback, the Panel Secretary will be responsible for producing a written report from the visit. This will be drafted, signed-off by the Panel Chair and subsequently sent to the institution to check for factual accuracy. Following this, the final report will be provided to Collaborative Provision Committee for its consideration. The Panel Secretary will advise the institution of the outcome of discussion from this meeting.

In the first instance, the Course Board will take responsibility for receiving responses to conditions. Where responses to deadlines fall outside the schedule of Course Board meetings, the Panel Chair may take Chair's action and will subsequently make recommendations to Collaborative Provision Committee.

## Good Practice

The University has a policy on good practice, full details of which are available on the website. This policy was developed to support Schools and validated institutions in identifying good practice within its programmes. In addition, it supports the University in sharing practice where appropriate.

### 5.8 Definition of Good Practice

The University defines good practice as:

- Effective practice that goes beyond basic policy or regulation;
- Innovation that enhances the learning, teaching or student experience;
- Practice that has been developed to meet a particular identified need.

The University recognises that good practice is identified formally through reflection or review of the delivery and management of provision. The core University processes through which such formal identification of good practice takes place are Annual Programme Evaluation, External Examiners' reports and revalidation.

### 5.9 Dissemination of Good Practice

Good practice may be shared within a programme, a Department, a School, across the University, and partner institutions. The University recognises, however, that not every example of good practice is relevant for dissemination; an illustration in one discipline may not be relevant to another. Equally, emergent good practice in one School may already be happening elsewhere in the University. This should not mean, however, that such practice should not be acknowledged within its own context.

The University recognises that there are a variety of formal and informal ways in which practice can be disseminated where this is appropriate. Validated institutions will have access to these mechanisms and may also develop their own processes. The University recognises that dissemination of examples of good practice should be supported by contextual background to support the communication process and clarification as to why such activities have been identified for dissemination.

## Programme Amendments

Programme amendments form an important part of the programme development process. Amendments to programmes are carried out to enhance the programme content or structure; address issues raised by parties such as students, External Examiners, the University or professional bodies; draw upon staff development and research; and ensure that the programme is current and relevant to its learning outcomes and associated professions.

### 5.10 Levels of Approval

#### Editorial Change

Editorial changes are amendments that do not change the outcomes or nature of the module or programme. These are noted by the validated institution's Board of Studies (or equivalent); the Course Board would expect to see minuted reference to editorial change amendments within Board of Studies (or equivalent) minutes.

Examples of editorial change are:

- Variation to the content of individual lectures, seminars or discipline-specific activity within a module that does not diverge from the overall approved specification;
- Updating of reading lists to include newer editions of existing entries, removal of reference to texts and resources which are out of date or are no longer relevant, and additions of new texts and resource not currently included that relate to the existing aims and learning outcomes of the module;
- Amending typographical errors.

#### Minor Change

The Course Board has delegated authority from Collaborative Provision Committee for approving minor changes which are amendments that go beyond editorial change but do not amount to major change. Examples include:

- Change to a module title;
- Changes to the credit value or credit level of a module where this affects up to one third of the total number of programme credits;
- Changes to the weighting of assessment items (e.g. from 50% coursework, 50% exam to 30% coursework, 70% exam) within a module;
- Changes to the syllabus which alter the programme learning outcomes;
- Changes to pre-requisites or co-requisites;
- Discontinuation of a module (whether permanent or temporary) and reinstatement of a module;
- Changes to learning outcomes of a modules;
- Change to the weighting of modules or assessments in the overall degree mark;
- Changes to the module diet of a programme (e.g. changing a module from being core to elective, or adding new electives);
- Approval of a new module (which is then incorporated into a programme, therefore triggering an amendment to the module diet);
- Amending entry requirements to the programme.

Proposals for minor change(s) must be submitted to the University on the programme amendment proposal form which is published on the University's website.

This should be supported by a list of all amendments made since the validation, last interim review or last revalidation, available from Student and Academic Services. This will enable the Course Board to maintain effective oversight of the ongoing educational purpose and coherence of a programme.

The Collaborative Provision Committee will receive notification at the first meeting of the academic year as to amendments that have been approved by the Course Board during that year. This provides the Committee with a monitoring role as the scale of amendments being made in relation to programme enhancement and notification of any innovations that could be shared more widely.

### Major Change

Major changes are amendments that change the outcomes or nature of a large part of an entire programme. These require approval by the Collaborative Provision Committee following a recommendation from a Revalidation Panel.

Examples of major change include:

- Change to the title of a programme of study
- Change to the educational purpose of a programme which results in substantial change to the programme aims, learning outcomes, teaching and learning and/or assessment strategy as set out in the Programme Specification e.g. addition of a mode of study, curriculum redesign, increase or decreases in the total number of credits for the programme.
- Substantive change to a number of modules which would impact on the overall programme learning outcomes.
- Any change that will fundamentally alter the outcomes of a programme, the way a student would experience a programme, or reasonably change the students' expectations of a programme. Such as systematic change of the assessment strategy which impacts on a number of modules across the programme. For example moving from predominantly coursework based assessment to examination.
- Changes to entrance requirements.

The introduction of new entrance/exit points for the programme.

Where major changes are proposed, particularly where they would have a significant effect on the type of nature of the degree that students will receive, active engagement with current students on the proposed changes should be undertaken in advance of an approval and their comments used to inform the final proposal put forward for approval.

### Consultation and communication with students and applicants

The University and institutions offering validated programmes have a legal responsibility to provide clear and accurate information to students and applicants on their programme of study, as well as any material changes which may occur before commencement of, or during their studies.

The University's Programme Amendment Policy and Guidance provide details of what the University considers to be a material change to a programme. Guidance is provided on what consultation and communication should take place with current and prospective students according to the nature of the change proposed to ensure

obligations under consumer law are met. The policy and guidance on programme amendment can be found in the Student policies and Regulations page on City's website.

## Cumulative Change

The University monitors and takes oversight of cumulative change within its programmes of study to ensure that the educational purpose and coherence remain appropriate. All approved changes to programme and modules are reported to the Collaborative Provision Committee.

Proposals for minor change, considered by a validated institution's Board of Studies, will include details of all amendments made since either the programme's validation or its most recent revalidation or interim review. This enables the Course Board to take an overview of the level of change within a programme.

Student and Academic Services will maintain a record of all programme amendments in order to provide the information to validated institutions and the Collaborative Provision Committee to support consideration of amendments. Where a Course Board agrees that the volume of cumulative change for a programme has been too great, a programme will be required to seek revalidation through the usual processes. The interim review process can be used for this purpose if it is considered to be appropriate.

### **5.11 Timing of Programme Amendment Proposals**

The Programme Handbook provides students with a current description of the programme and modules that they will study during a specific year. While there might be a specific reason for amendments to be made during an academic year (for example, due to staff changes) these will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Validation partners are advised to consult the University prior to formally proposing a mid-year amendment so that implications regarding the coherency of the programme and realistic student expectations can be discussed before a formal proposal is made.

### **5.12 Programme Amendment Classification**

The table below classifies the types of amendments which are divided between module level and programme level. A second column is provided to consider the possible impact of making a programme amendment and ensuring coherency within the programme. The classification of amendment types reflects the categories within the programme and module specification templates.

	<b><i>Amendment type</i></b>	<b><i>Possible impact and checks to be made for coherency</i></b>
	<b>Module level</b>	
1.	Module content	Check effect on programme content
2.	Addition of a new module	Check effect on programme content and overall allocation of learning hours/credit
3.	Assessment components within a module	Ensure reflection of module level learning outcomes and level of assessment within module and programme

	<b><i>Amendment type</i></b>	<b><i>Possible impact and checks to be made for coherency</i></b>
4.	Assessment weighting within a module	Check effect on programme regulations and any compensation provision
5.	Allocation of learning hours within a module	Check effect on overall programme learning hours and credit allocation
6.	Module aims or learning outcomes	Check effect on programme level aims and learning outcomes and compatibility with other modules
7.	Teaching and learning methods of a module	Check impact on teaching and learning strategy for the programme
8.	Indicative reading/resources	Check how this relates to any programme level indicative reading or that for other modules
	<b>Programme level</b>	
1.	Programme aims or learning outcomes	Check impact on module aims and learning outcomes to ensure compatibility.
2.	Programme title and/or award title	Check how this relates to programme aims, learning outcomes and content
3.	Assessment, progression award regulations	Check compatibility with University Assessment Regulations and module level requirements.
4.	Exit points within the programme	Ensure integrity of any additional exit points with regard to programme aims, learning outcomes and content, along with University Assessment Regulations for award classification.
5.	Teaching, learning or assessment strategy	Check how this relates to teaching, learning and assessment methods at module level
6.	Use of distance/distributed learning	Ensure coherence with University's guidance on distance/distributed learning and the UK Quality Code
7.	Use of placements or partnership activity	Ensure coherence with University's partnership procedures and the UK Quality Code.
8.	Arrangements for external examining	Check the University's Assessment Regulations, Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook
9.	Overall learning hours and credit allocation	Check with University Credit Framework and Assessment Regulations
10.	Professional body requirements	Liaise with the University
11.	Programme management and QA arrangements	Check with Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook and Validation Agreement requirements

### 5.13 Special Scheme of Study

A special scheme of study might be proposed to accommodate occasional students, to enable transfers into later stages of a programme scheme or to meet the needs of students for whom the approved programme of study is inappropriate due to exceptional personal or medical circumstances.

Any special scheme of study should be drawn up in the same way as a programme amendment (see above) and will require Course Board approval. Any proposal will need to consider the particular needs of the individual student and the need to ensure comparability of treatment with other students following the programme of study.

### Annual Programme Evaluation (APE)

The University has a policy which is available on the website that sets out its approach to Annual Programme Evaluation (APE). The purpose of the APE is to consider the effectiveness of a programme during the previous year with regard to its overall aims and purpose and also to consider the success of students in achieving the learning outcomes and the appropriate academic standards for progression and award. The APE is also a means through which the quality of the student learning experience can be considered, leading to enhancements as appropriate. It is designed to act as the single action plan for programme planning and development during the academic year and students' views play a core part in its development. All validated programmes undertake the University's APE process<sup>5</sup>.

### 5.14 Contents of the APE

The template for the APE is available on the University's website – the version for validated programmes is tailored to meet the needs of the provision. The evaluation will be informed by a number of factors including:

- Feedback from the External Examiner/s via their formal reports or comments made at the Assessment Board (see Section 2);
- Discussion during the year at meetings that oversee the programme including teaching and learning committees, student support and learning resource committees, Boards of Studies, staff-student liaison meetings, programme management meetings;
- Statistical data on entry profile, student progression/retention/achievement and subsequent employment destinations;
- Student evaluations/feedback gained via formal questionnaires as well as comments made at forums at which there was student representation e.g. staff-student liaison meetings (see Section 1);
- Professional bodies or other external influences or reports.

Appended to the APE should be:

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<sup>5</sup> Where a programme is due for revalidation during an academic year, it is possible to subsume the requirements of APE into the fuller Evaluation Report required for revalidation. The Student and Academic Services representative will be able to advise further on this.

- Report from the External Examiner/s and letter of response addressing issues arising;
- A brief analysis of the main issues arising from student feedback (via questionnaire or via student representatives) and the response that has been or will be made by the institution to these issues;
- A summary of staff development activities undertaken during the year by teaching staff for the programme.

### **5.15 Responsibilities and Timings for the APE**

The Programme Director is normally responsible for preparing the APE in conjunction with the programme team. The report should be prepared as soon as possible after the end of the academic year to which the review relates. All APEs should be presented to the institution's Board of Studies during the Autumn Term.

The Board of Studies has a key responsibility for the APE. Its role is to consider the document, discuss any matters arising, endorse the action plan and approve the report as appropriate. The Board of Studies should also take note of any common issues arising from annual monitoring reports within its remit and address these holistically where appropriate.

The APE and appendices should be presented to the Course Board which will consider the report and note action to be taken. The Board of Studies will be responsible for overseeing the action plan during the year and reporting to the Course Board on progress. Any action required relating to University services will be followed up by the Student and Academic Services representative and a report will be made back to the institution and Course Board. Significant issues arising from the APE, including good practice, will be considered by Collaborative Provision Committee.

It is recommended that following approval of the APE by the Course Board the Programme Director should provide the External Examiner/s with a copy of the report. This is suggested so as to provide External Examiners with contextual information on the operation of the programme which in turn should assist the Examiner/s in his/her role and the provision of fuller reports.

### **Student Feedback and Representation**

Formal opportunities for students to provide feedback on their experiences form a key part of enhancing the student experience and developing the programme. Student input will occur through various mechanisms including elected student representation on committees and through the completion of student feedback questionnaires.

## 5.16 Student Representation

The University requires institutions to have in place mechanisms for elected student representation on institutional committees. This will include representation on the Staff-Student Liaison Committee, Board of Studies and other committees in place that impact on the programme such as learning and teaching committee. It is also usual for there to be student representation on the committee with the highest academic authority within the institution.

The University has developed a handbook that provides its student representatives with guidance on undertaking the role. A copy of this is available on the University's website.

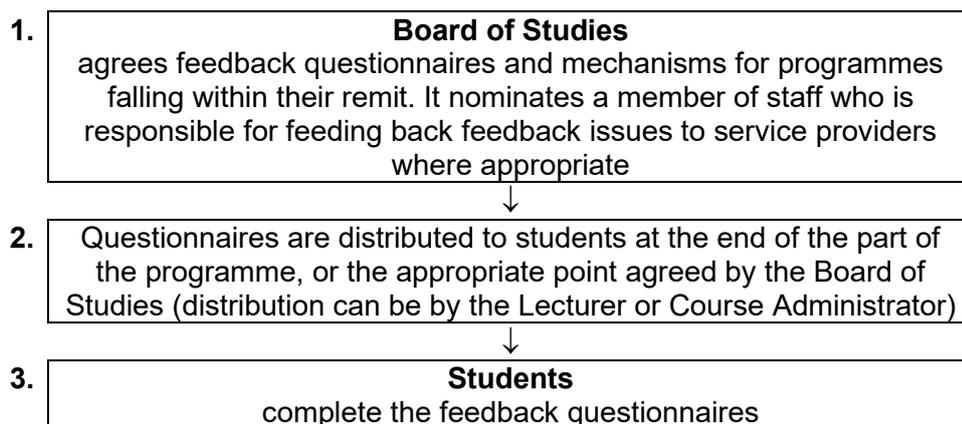
## 5.17 Student Feedback/Evaluation Questionnaires

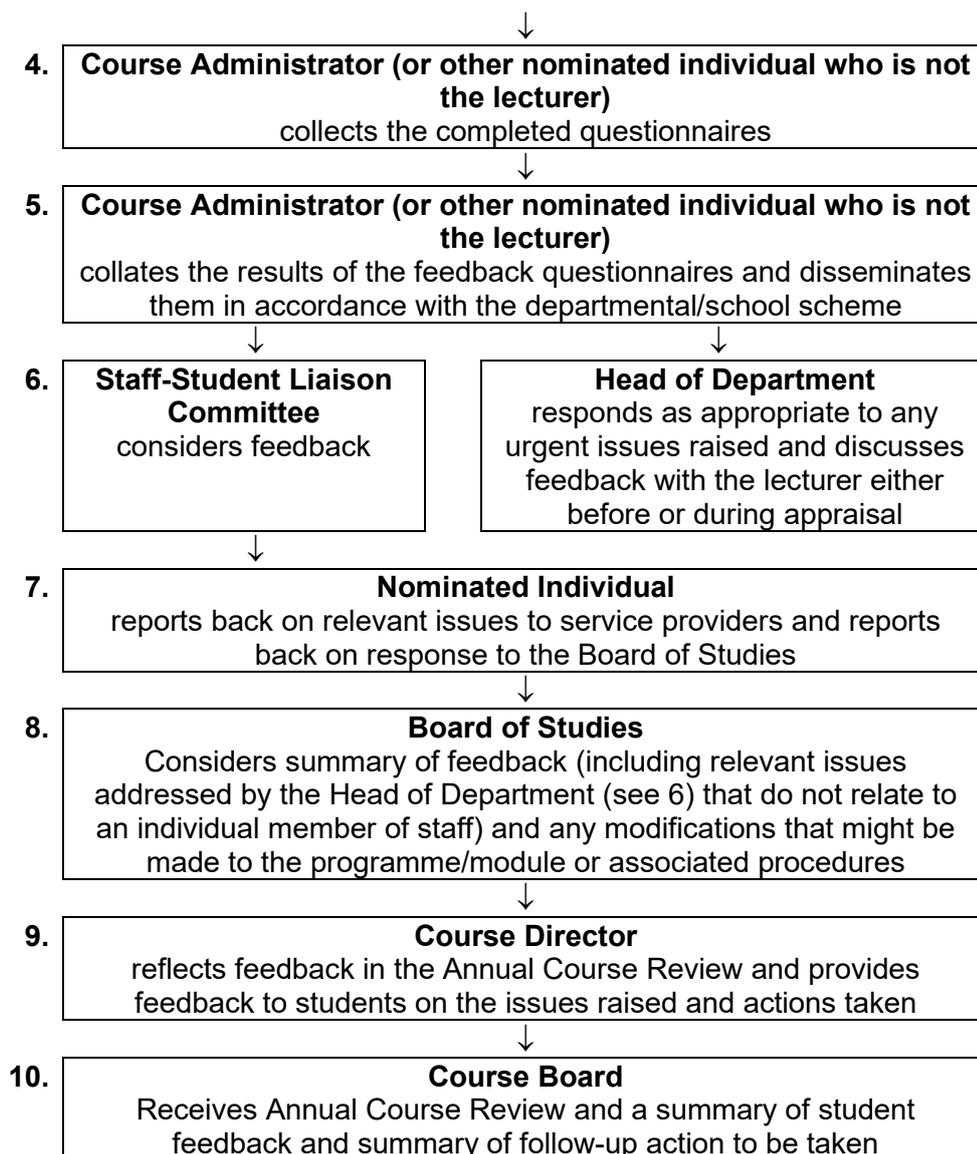
Student feedback questionnaires are an essential component of the programme development and review process in providing all students with an opportunity to formally evaluate their experience, for feedback to be considered by the Board of Studies and for enhancements to be made accordingly.

It is a requirement that all programmes leading to an award of the University (including validated programmes) obtain formal student feedback on each part of the programme on an annual basis. Feedback questionnaires usually comprise quantitative and qualitative sections. The Board of Studies is responsible for determining the content and design of the questionnaire in which it is good practice for students to be involved.

The Board of Studies should review the effectiveness of the content and design of the questionnaire on a regular basis. A copy of the proposed questionnaire should be provided to the Course Board where significant change is proposed.

Feedback questionnaires should **not** be collected and analysed by the lecturer concerned. Questionnaires should be completed anonymously. The procedure for collecting and considering evaluation questionnaires is as follows:





*(Note that within this procedure, validated institutions can nominate another member of senior staff to take the role of the Head of Department if appropriate).*

Good practice within the feedback process includes providing each module tutor with a copy of the anonymised collated feedback so that s/he can respond in writing to issues raised and for this to be considered in conjunction with the summary of students' feedback at the relevant committee. This procedure is useful for obtaining an overall view which can also be fed into the Annual Programme Evaluation. Institutions are encouraged to adopt this good practice.

### **5.18 Interaction Between Students and the University**

There is no student representation on the Course Board, however, there are several ways in which liaison takes place between students and University staff.

Firstly, University members of the Course Board and normally the External Advisor will meet with students from the validated programme/s on an annual basis before or after the Course Board meeting that is held once a year at the validated institution. This will be an opportunity for students to bring to the Course Board's attention any

matters relating to the programme, or the relationship with the University and this will assist in the continuing development and review process.

Issues covered in the meeting between University representatives and students may include:

- General experiences of the programme;
- Why they chose the programme;
- What was covered in their induction and its usefulness;
- How they receive feedback on their progress;
- Arrangements for tutorial support (both module-related and personal);
- Accessibility of staff;
- Design of the programme, workload, assessment schedule;
- Usefulness of the Programme Handbook;
- How they interact with other students or activities within the institution;
- Arrangements for student representation on committees;
- Opportunities to provide feedback on the programme and evidence of action arising;
- How student opinion is valued within the institution;
- Advice on careers or further study;
- If the programme has lived up to their expectations;
- Would they recommend the programme to others;
- Any other comments (positive or negative) they wish to add.

A report arising from this meeting is prepared by the Student and Academic Services representative and this will be considered at the subsequent Course Board meeting along with a response from the institution to issues raised. The institution will also provide feedback to the students as to how any matters arising will be addressed.

In addition to the annual meeting, students will also meet with University representatives at any revalidation or interim review process. Students will be asked a range of questions related to issues arising from the submission made for the revalidation or review process and from those areas listed above.

In addition to these formal opportunities, students on validated programmes also have the right to contact the University at any point during their studies. University contact details are provided in the Validation Student Guide.

## External Examiners' Reports

As part of the contractual process, External Examiners are asked by the University to submit a written report at the end of each academic year of their appointment after the main Assessment Board meeting. Reminders about the report are sent to the Examiners by the University's Student and Academic Services.

### 5.19 Process for Consideration of Report

External Examiners' reports are sent directly to the University, and a representative from Student and Academic Services reviews the report and identifies issues that require a response from the validated institution's Board of Studies. Strengths and areas of good practice are also identified. A copy of the report is sent to the designated contact at the institution and the report is considered by the Board of Studies. Following this consideration, the institution sends a letter of response to the Examiner acknowledging the report and where issues have been raised, responding to them accordingly. The Course Board subsequently receives a copy of the report and letter of response as part of the Annual Programme Evaluation.

External Examiners are permitted to write an additional report directly to the University's President on any matters of significance and/or sensitivity. The University will follow up instances where External Examiners have failed to submit their reports.

Should there be any instance where an External Examiner's report gives cause for concern about the maintenance of academic standards of a validated programme, appropriate action will be considered. The Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) will have responsibility for overseeing this process taking advice as appropriate from Student and Academic Services, the Course Board Chair and Collaborative Provision Committee.

## Interim Review

The University will undertake an interim review of a validated programme in instances where the validation or revalidation panel sets such a condition.

### 5.20 Purpose of Interim Review

The purpose of interim review is to facilitate an early opportunity to consider the development of a programme and to ensure its effective operation. An alternative to interim review would be to shorten the period of validation; however, in some instances such action would not be desirable in that it would not enable a sufficient number of cohorts of students to complete the programme for a full review to be undertaken.

Where an interim review is set, this will normally apply where there are elements of a programme which are new to the institution. This could include, for example, a new discipline or where a programme is being delivered at a level within the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of which the institution has limited experience.

The interim review panel will comprise University members of the Course Board (or a sub-set) and external input. The process will involve a meeting with students on the

programme followed by a further session with teaching staff. In some instances, it may also be appropriate for the panel to meet with representatives from senior management.

### **5.21 Documentation for Interim Review**

In advance of the review visit, the validated institution will be required to prepare an evaluative report that reflects on the operation of the programme since the start of the current existing validation period. This report may cover a variety of issues and will be dependent largely on issues that arose at the previous validation visit and any matters arising since that time in relation to the operation of the programme. General areas that should be reflected upon (not necessarily in this order) include:

- Background to the establishment of the programme (which could include internal and external factors) and its overall aims;
- The market for the programme, general backgrounds of students and student numbers since validation;
- How the programme has operated since the validation, including any amendments that have been made, feedback or evaluations from students, comments from External Examiners, discussion with teaching staff, any staff development issues, institutional developments;
- How the recommendations and conditions arising from validation have been considered and any impact these have had with regard to enhancement;
- Developments in the profession to which the programme relates;
- Proposals for programme amendments (see section on documentation required for amendments);
- Any other matters agreed between the institution and the University in preparation for the review or any matters that the institution thinks would be helpful to bring forward.

In addition to the evaluative report, the Programme Handbook will also need to be submitted as the document that provides the validated programme of study. There may be other documentation that either the University or the institution would consider helpful in the review process. This should be discussed in the lead up to the process and agreed well in advance of submission. The number of copies of the documentation required can be discussed with the University. Documentation should normally be submitted to the University at least two weeks in advance of the review visit.

### **5.22 Remit of the Review**

The function of the review will be to assess the effective operation of the programme. It will consider areas of strength and will also make recommendations where this is appropriate. Three categories of recommendation may be used as follows:

- Essential – where immediate action needs to be taken by the institution to address the quality of learning opportunities and/or to safeguard academic standards. As a matter of priority, the University would require the institution to

report formally to the subsequent meeting of the Course Board for onward transmission to Collaborative Provision Committee. Essential recommendations may also result in a formal meeting between the University and the institution prior to a meeting of the Course Board where this was deemed to be necessary.

- Advisable – where action needs to be taken by the institution to enhance the quality of learning opportunities and/or the maintenance of academic standards and where the University would expect the institution to report formally to the Course Board on action taken.
- Desirable – where action may be taken to enhance the quality of learning opportunities and/or the maintenance of academic standards. This should be monitored by the institution's Board of Studies or equivalent.

In all cases, the University would expect to see a full reflection as to how the institution had responded to recommendations at the next formal review process which may be Annual Programme Evaluation, a subsequent interim review or revalidation.

### **5.23 Reporting**

As with validation and revalidation, a report will be compiled by the University that reflects on the findings of the visit. This will be provided to the institution to check for factual accuracy. The report will then be submitted to Collaborative Provision Committee which may accept the report and its recommendations or is at liberty to suggest further actions or endorsements. Feedback from this meeting will be provided to the institution. The report should also be received at the next meeting of the Course Board at which a response from the institution should also be submitted.

## **Audits and Reviews by External Bodies**

### **5.24 External Reviews of Institutions**

Institutions are required to inform the University on notification of any academic audit or review that will be carried out on them by an external body that includes consideration of programmes which are validated by the University. This includes reviews by professional accrediting bodies.

For many external reviews, particularly those carried out by the QAA, it will normally be necessary for there to be University representation at one or more meetings with the auditors. The nature of this representation will be agreed by the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) and the Head of Quality and Academic Development. It is important that the University is involved in, and consulted on, preparations for audits, as validated programmes lead to awards of the University and therefore the outcome of an audit can impact on the University as well as the institution. The University can provide guidance to institutions on preparations based on its own experiences.

Reports on how preparations for audit are progressing should be made formally to the Course Board by the institution, and the Student and Academic Services representative should be updated between meetings. Collaborative Provision Committee should also receive reports from the Course Board.

The University should be informed of the outcome of the review or audit as soon as it is known. The institution must also provide the University with a copy of the audit report as soon as it is available. The University will also expect the report to be accompanied by an action plan from the institution on matters arising. The Course Board should receive this in the first instance with a subsequent report being made to Collaborative Provision Committee. The Course Board will also require to see any follow-up communication between the validated institution and auditors.

Where City is subject to external institutional review by an external body, validation relationships will form part of that review. In such cases, City would ask that validated institutions provide any documentation requested and make every effort to attend any review meetings as requested by the external body.

### **5.25 Requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)**

Institutions should bring to the attention of the University any requirements of professional accrediting bodies, especially in relation to programme content. These issues will normally be discussed at the Course Board, however, if the matter is urgent, the Student and Academic Services representative should be contacted. Reports arising from PSRB events will be received by the Course Board which will then report to Collaborative Provision Committee.

## **Programme Termination**

### **5.26 Process for Notification of Termination**

Where an institution wishes to terminate a validated programme, a report must be submitted to the Course Board in the first instance and this will subsequently be referred to Collaborative Provision Committee. Consideration will need to be given to the full implications of this including the institution's and University's obligation to students. As the validating body, the University will advise the institution on these matters.

### **5.27 Exit Agreements**

Where an institution wishes to terminate a programme or where the University and/or an institution wishes to discontinue a validation partnership, the two parties will enter into an exit agreement. This will detail the responsibilities of each party, will be drafted by the University and will be based upon the University's principles of exit agreements which can be found in Appendix 4. The University will also expect to be involved in signing exit agreements where validation is being transferred to it from another validating body.

## Section 6

### Validation of Research Degrees

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance  
Research Degrees Advice and Guidance

Other sections of the Code will apply to the development of a new programme

#### Other relevant documentation:

QAA Frameworks for HE Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies  
City, University of London Format and Guidance Notes for Research Degree  
Validation Submissions  
Student policies and Regulations page on City's website  
Senate Regulation 23: Masters Degree by Research  
Senate Regulation 24: Doctoral Programmes

### Context

Research programmes are different to taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with regard to their purpose and approach, the specific processes that oversee their quality and standards and the resources that an institution will need to have in place to manage their implementation.

The University has a Research Degree Typology which defines the features of the provision currently awarded by City. This document, which forms part of the University's Framework for Research Degree Provision, should be consulted with regard to the development of any new research degree programme. Where new provision is proposed and may not fit with the existing typology, further discussion will be held between the institution and the University. Any amendments to the Typology will require the approval of the University.

### New Research Study Programmes

#### 6.1 Development of a Research Study Programme

Where an institution wishes to put forward a proposal for the validation of a research study programme, the process for a new programme of study as outlined in Section 5 will need to be followed. In addition to those criteria, additional information will need to be provided in relation to the partner institution's ability to support a research study programme. Prior to making a formal proposal, institutions are advised to consult informally with the University and also to refer to the University's Framework for Research Degree Provision which provides information on expectations and requirements.

## 6.2 Validation Process

Where the University agrees to proceed with consideration of the validation of a new programme, the Student and Academic Services representative is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate timetable is established in liaison with the validated institution.

The validation process will be in accordance with that stated in Section 5 except that additional member(s) of University staff may be co-opted onto the Validatory Panel where additional research degrees expertise is required. Any co-opted member will be noted by Collaborative Provision Committee. Documentation will be submitted in the format for validation of research degree proposals published on the University's validation website.

The University recommends that pre-meetings are held with the Course Board Chair and Student and Academic Services representative to discuss draft proposals prior to formal validation submission. It is highly recommended that a pre-meeting takes place early for research study programmes so as to ensure University Regulations for Research Degrees are incorporated appropriately. Where a pre-meeting takes place, the institution will be required to submit draft documentation (hard copy) in advance. Four copies of draft documentation will normally be required to be submitted to the Student and Academic Services representative. This will be circulated to the Course Board Chair, the Student and Academic Services representative, the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) and the Assistant Registrar (Research Degrees) who is responsible for research degrees. The Student and Academic Services representative will coordinate feedback in advance of any meeting.

Following a pre-meeting and the incorporation of comments into the documentation by the institution, final documentation should be submitted to the University. Sets of documentation (hard bound copies) must be provided to the Student and Academic Services representative normally three weeks in advance of the visit. The Student and Academic Services representative is responsible for circulating documentation to Panel members, accompanied by a confirmed timetable for the day of the visit.

The format for the visit will be similar to that stated in Section 5 for new taught programmes. In addition to addressing generic programme approval matters referred to in Section 5, the Validatory Panel will also give consideration to:

- Clear evidence of the institution's ability to provide and support adequately a research study programme;
- The proposal to provide a research study programme in relation to the institution's strategy and research policy;
- Provision for research methodology and seminars;
- The existence of a research culture within the institution;
- The institution's staff development policy, particularly with regard to research;
- The ability of the institution to provide sufficient supervision of an appropriate standard and a succession plan to this;

- The resources available within the institution to provide appropriate facilities to research students;
- Arrangements for providing appropriate student support and training including the provision of a level of financial support, for example for attendance at conferences;
- Capacity to support quality assurance mechanisms and requirements.

Procedures following the validation visit will be in accordance with those set out in Section 5.

## Oversight Arrangements

### 6.3 Monitoring of a Validated Research Study Programme

All research study programmes are subject to the procedures in the University's Framework for Research Degree Provision.

As part of the validation arrangement, an institution must have a Board of Studies or Research Committee in place which oversees the academic functioning of the programme. This can be part of another similar committee but should have student representation from the research study programme. There must be a Senior Tutor/Director of Research at the institution who will be responsible for the management of the programme on a day-to-day basis. The role of the Senior Tutor/Director of Research is stated in the University's Framework for Research Degree Provision.

At University level, the Course Board will take responsibility for oversight of the programme. The Course Board will receive:

- An annual report on admissions (including entry qualifications) and proposed area of research (to the Autumn term Course Board meeting);
- Proposed appointment of supervisors (to be submitted to the Course Board as appropriate);
- Reports on student progress including transfer from MPhil to PhD, submissions and awards (to be submitted to the Course Board as appropriate);
- A copy of the Annual Programme Evaluation for Research Programmes (first Course Board meeting of the academic year);
- The minutes from each meeting of the Board of Studies or equivalent that has local oversight for the operation of the programme (each Course Board meeting).

## Research Students

### 6.4 Research Student Status

As with taught programmes, students registered on research programmes of study validated by the University, register with the University as well as the institution at which they are studying, and have access to University facilities as laid out in the Validation Agreement.

### 6.5 Induction and Liaison

New students are invited to the Research Student Induction Day which is held twice a year. This event is open to all research students across the University and to those studying for a research degree at a validated institution. This event offers an opportunity for research students to meet each other and to be provided with information about University facilities and support available to research students. Ongoing liaison with the University is facilitated by Student and Academic Services.

### 6.6 Research Students Who Teach

If research students are contributing to teaching activity, the University requires them to have received adequate and appropriate preparation before undertaking any teaching activity within the institution and that they are fully equipped with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience in the subject area being taught. Validated institutions are required to monitor the preparedness and performance of their research students who teach, and to ensure that the engagement of a research student in teaching activity does not jeopardise the progress and completion of their research studies.

Any teaching-related activity must have the approval of the first supervisor and Senior Tutor for Research (or equivalent) where the student's research is based. The University recommends that students undertake no more than 6 hours per week of teaching (including preparation time), and no more than 180 hours in a calendar year, in accordance with Research Councils' guidance.

Students should complete initial training on teaching or marking, as appropriate, prior to their engagement in teaching activity; where possible this should align with the institution's teaching staff development framework to allow a student to pursue Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA). Mandatory training should not be included in the recommended annual hours limit. A student should not be engaged for a second year unless there is evidence that mandatory training and peer review has been successfully completed in their first year.

Research students should receive regular and constructive feedback on their performance by the module leader, through the module evaluation process or from another member of academic staff, and should be allocated a mentor with the institution who shall provide further guidance and advice. Students should be formally peer reviewed at least annually.

Boards of Studies, or equivalent, are responsible for overseeing the quality and standards of taught provision, including consideration of the contribution of research students to any teaching activity, through regular analysis of the outcome of the module evaluation exercise and any other appropriate measures. Validated institutions should report to the Course Board on contracted hours, training and peer

review undertaken by research students contributing to teaching activity through the annual programme evaluation process.

## Ethical Issues Arising from Research Proposals

### 6.7 Consideration and Approval of Ethical Matters

Institutions must ensure that mechanisms are in place for consideration of the ethical implications of students' research. Where there are likely to be many cases where ethical issues will need consideration, an ethical committee should be established, which reports to the institution's highest academic authority (e.g. Academic Board). Where it is unlikely that many cases will arise, institutions should ensure that there is the capacity within a committee structure for matters to be considered as appropriate.

As students will ultimately be working towards an award of City, University of London, institutions should refer on to the University any research proposals that have serious ethical implications. If an institution is in any doubt about this, the Secretary to the University Research Ethics Committee should be contacted for further advice, via the Student and Academic Services representative.

## Revalidation of Research Degrees

### 6.8 Process for Revalidation

As with taught programmes, research study programmes are subject to revalidation in the final year of the validation period. Guidelines on how the revalidation should be scheduled can be found in Section 9.

As with the validation of a research study programme, advice will be sought from the University academic and administrative leads for research degrees with regard to representation on the revalidation panel where appropriate and any other advice required on the process.

It is advised that the institution establishes a pre-meeting with the Course Board Chair and Secretary to consider draft documentation well in advance of the revalidation visit. Further information on this can be found in Section 9.

### 6.9 Documentation Required for Revalidation

Revalidation submissions for research degrees should include:

- The programme document in the format published on the University's website;
- An evaluative report reflecting on the previous period of validation which should reflect upon the following areas. In considering these matters, institutions may wish to refer to Advice and Guidance on Research Degrees that accompanies the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The Panel will also expect to see evidence of how student feedback, comments from External Examiners and other parties have informed the development of the programme.

#### **(a) Institutional Research Environment**

The Panel will wish to see evidence that the programme continues to be relevant to the institution's strategy, how the research culture has developed

over the period of validation and the ways in which research students form part of this environment.

The Panel will also wish to see how the institution has provided opportunities for research students to develop their personal and professional development skills within and outside the institution and the outcome of these both for the students and for the institution. In addition, comment should be made on the effectiveness of the research methodology and seminar series using evidence from student and staff feedback and noting any developments that have occurred during the last period of validation.

**(b) Selection, Admission and Induction**

The panel will wish to see how the institution has managed the selection and admissions process and any developments that have occurred during the period of validation. This section should also include reference to how the programme is marketed by the institution and any developments in this area since validation.

Data on research student numbers during the last period of validation should be included and commented on, with a breakdown of applications, registered students, full-time or part-time status, registration status, completion.

The process for induction will be included in the main submission, however, the evaluation report should reflect upon the success of the induction process, any enhancements that have been made during the period of validation and any changes proposed for the future.

**(c) Supervision**

The Panel will wish to see how the supervisory process has developed during the last period of validation, reflecting on any issues that have arisen during this time and how they have been resolved.

In addition, the evaluation report should include reference to the effectiveness of mechanisms for overall student support which will be based partly on feedback that has been gained from research students during the period of validation.

**(d) Monitoring and Review**

The Panel will wish to see the institution reflecting upon the arrangements for monitoring and review of the progress of its research students. In particular, the evaluation should reflect upon completion rates (including provision of actual data), how these are monitored by the institution and any issues for future development.

**(e) Assessment**

The Panel will wish to consider how the institution continues to ensure that the programme remains commensurate with the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). In particular, comment should be made by the institution on the application and development of assessment criteria during the last period of validation and any proposals that will be brought forward in the future. This section of the evaluation report should also reflect on how the assessment

process has operated with regard to transfer from MPhil to PhD (or equivalent), the viva-voce and liaison with the External Examiners.

**(f) Staff Development**

The development of a research programme of study will be dependent partly on the staff expertise available within the institution. The evaluation report should reflect on any issues regarding staff development. This could include, for example, how staff are enabled to remain active within the research environment or the mechanisms in place to enable staff to become research degree supervisors.

**(g) University Framework**

Any validated research degree programme is subject to the University's Framework for Research Degree Provision. The Panel will wish to see an evaluation of how the institution has implemented the framework and any areas that it considers could benefit from enhancement.

**(h) Programme Management**

The Panel will wish to see an evaluation of the arrangements in place for programme management (academic and administrative) for the last period of validation, including any enhancements that have been made or are planned for the future.

**6.10 Outcome of Revalidation**

Details of the feedback, reporting mechanisms and submission of amended documentation can be found in Section 9.

## Section 7

### Validation: Student Records

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance

#### Other relevant documentation:

Validation Agreement

University Student Notification of Transfer and Withdrawal (NTW) Form

*All matters relating to student registration and status should be referred direct to the University's Student Records team. Contact details can be found at the front of this book.*

### Context

All students registered with their institution on a programme of study validated by the University are also registered with City. The student record is an important part of ensuring that students can obtain access to the University, have their degree results recorded formally and be issued with a degree certificate. The University's Student Records team manages all of these processes.

#### 7.1 Registration Process

The University's Student Records team provides each institution with a spreadsheet on which to provide new student information to the University during the summer. Receipt of the registration form enables the University to finalise the student record, arising from which, a University ID badge will be created. This badge will enable access to the University and the services available under the terms of the formal Validation Agreement. The University will provide the University ID cards within 28 days (as stated in the Validation Agreement). Where there is more than one intake per year for a programme or where there are several validated programmes that have significantly different commencement dates that will result in information being sent on different dates, a schedule of submission dates should be provided.

Where the Student Records team has been provided with a date within the timescale in which it was requested and where registration forms are submitted in accordance with this, student ID badges will be returned to the institution contact within the 28-day timescale. Where information is returned beyond the agreed timescale or if information is sent in separate batches the University will endeavour to produce ID badges within the 28-day timescale but will not be able to guarantee this.

It is important that the spreadsheet is completed in full and accurately so that the University is provided with correct information. It is particularly important that the title of the programme is correct.

It remains the responsibility of the validated institution to keep a full record of the programme of study for each student including data that might be required for a transcript.

## **7.2 ID Cards**

The ID badge will allow a student entry to the University and to the facilities available under the validation arrangement. In the event of a student misplacing an ID badge, the University's Student Records team should be contacted for arrangements to be made for a new badge to be issued.

In the majority of cases, a validated student's picture does not appear on the ID badge. Validated student ID cards are a different colour to other University ID cards to identify students as being on a validated programme. Should there be any event where a student experiences difficulty in accessing the University when they are in possession of their ID badge, the institution should contact the Student and Academic Services representative in Student and Academic Services.

## **7.3 Student Withdrawals and Deferrals**

For management information purposes it is important that the University is notified as soon as possible about any student withdrawals or deferrals. Institutions should provide full details to the Student Records Administrator (contact details at the front of this book).

Student withdrawals and deferrals must also be recorded on the Report of the Assessment Board at the end of the year (see Section 2).

## **7.4 Change of Address or Details**

It is important that the University is informed of any changes in address or details of students registered on validated programmes. Changes in name, for example, will be important for any subsequent degree certificate. Any changes in details should be provided to the University's Student Records team with reference to the programme on which the student is studying.

## **7.5 Data Verification**

During each year a data verification exercise will normally be undertaken to ensure the accuracy of information that the University holds on students on validated programmes. The University's Student Records team will provide each institution with lists of students and ask them to verify the data and return it to the University within the requested timescale.

## **7.6 Transcripts**

As the awarding body, the University holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring that students studying on validated programmes are provided with a transcript of their results following completion of their programme or at the relevant exit point. The University authorises the marks and credits to be provided on the transcript through its responsibility for chairing the Assessment Board.

The operational responsibility for producing and issuing the transcript is devolved to the validated institution as the body that holds the detailed student record and manages the overall assessment process.

The format of the transcript should conform to the headings used by the University which have been informed by national guidance. Adjustments may be needed to suit the nature and type of validated institution. Any such adjustments to the format must be agreed with the University. In producing the transcripts, the validated institution will:

- Have in place a mechanism that minimises the risk of forged documents through, for example, use of watermarked paper;
- Have responsibility for ensuring the security of blank documents to safeguard theft or forgery attempts;
- Ensure that the transcript holds the signature of a nominated senior member of staff of the validated institution who will have ultimate responsibility for ensuring the accuracy of the data.

The University will support validated institutions in the implementation of the transcript policy where guidance is needed.

### **7.7 Degree Certificates**

Following the University's approval of the Assessment Board Report and Pass Lists, information will be transferred to the Student Records team for input onto degree certificates. The validated institution should ensure that the full names of the students as they should appear on the certificate are provided on the Report of the Assessment Board.

The initial printing of the certificate will be carried out in consultation with the validated institution regarding the use of the institution's logo or crest and the appropriate institutional representative who will sign the certificates.

Institutions should normally allow six weeks between the approval of Pass Lists and the production of certificates (including the time taken for postage). If there is a particular need for an institution to receive degree certificates in a shorter time-scale, this should be negotiated between the University's Student Records team and the validated institution. At times when the University is preparing for its own graduation ceremonies (held in January, April and July) it will be difficult for this time-scale to be reduced.

Duplicate certificates can be provided on request for a charge specified by the Student Records team. A charge will not be made for replacement certificates due to misspellings.

### **7.8 Graduation Ceremonies**

The Student and Academic Services representative should be informed well in advance of the date of the institution's graduation ceremony.

The University's President or a nominated Deputy President or the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) will normally be responsible for awarding the degrees. The Course Board Chair and Student and Academic Services representative should also be invited to the ceremony. The validated institution will be responsible for making arrangements for the graduation ceremony, but will agree with the University in advance the manner of involvement of the University's representatives.

Students receiving University awards at a graduation ceremony will be expected to wear academic dress as appropriate for the award. The University's Student Records team can provide contact information for the company which supplies its gowns for hire at ceremonies on request.

### **7.9 Alumni Database**

Following the award of a degree or diploma, the University will normally transfer the student's record to its alumni database. Students will receive alumni information on the same basis as other graduates of the University.

## Section 8

### Validation: Staff

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance

#### Other relevant documentation:

Validation Agreement

Learning Enhancement and Development (LEaD)

### Context

The University has an interest and responsibility in the quality of staff involved in the delivery and assessment of a validated programme as a key component of its overall responsibility for quality and standards.

#### 8.1 Framework for Staff Appointments

The University expects validated institutions to have appropriate procedures in place for the selection and appointment of teaching staff which operates under the institution's equal opportunities policy. **Where staff vacancies for a validated programme are advertised, the Validation Agreement requires that the University is acknowledged as the validating body if the name of the programme is mentioned (see Section 3).** Following appointment, the University expects the institution to provide an appropriate induction to a new member of staff.

#### 8.2 University Involvement in Process

Where the institution is holding interviews for the appointment of a senior member of staff or any other position that involves a major contribution to the delivery of a validated programme, the University should be notified at least twenty-one days in advance, and reserves the right to nominate a representative to attend the selection committee. The Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) should be provided with this information and will make arrangements for an appropriate member of University staff to attend.

Where a post does not involve a major contribution to a validated programme, it is sufficient for details of the appointment (including a CV) to be submitted to the University for receipt at the subsequent Course Board meeting.

#### 8.3 University ID Cards for Staff

Staff teaching on validated programmes are entitled to access to all University libraries, borrowing membership (5 loans) and walk-in access to electronic resources. For access to the University libraries staff will need a University ID card. Where new ID cards are requested, the Assistant Registrar will make the necessary arrangements with the University's Security Services.

#### **8.4 Staff Development**

The University expects validated institutions to have a staff development policy and to provide appropriate development opportunities for staff teaching on and supporting the programmes which it validates.

The University recognises that it has a role to play in the development of staff in institutions offering validated programmes. Accordingly, they will be invited to attend workshops and other development activities on quality assurance and teaching and learning issues as appropriate.

Staff from validated institutions may also attend programmes offered by the University's Staff Development Unit and Learning Enhancement and Development (LEaD), subject to availability of places. In some cases, a programme fee may be payable. Copies of the University's In-House Training Programme are available from the University.

#### **8.5 Peer Observation**

As part of the staff development policy, the University expects all institutions to have an appropriate peer observation scheme in place for staff that teach on its validated programmes. Advice on what might be appropriate can be sought from the University. Peer review should also include the review of visiting staff.

#### **8.6 Appraisal**

As part of its staff development policy, the University also expects all institutions to have an appropriate appraisal scheme in place for all academic staff that teach on its validated programmes. It is expected that appraisals will be carried out on an annual basis and will include discussion of any matters arising from peer review.

## Section 9

### Revalidation

#### Relevant UK Quality Code for Higher Education reference documents

Partnerships Advice and Guidance  
Course Design and Development Advice and Guidance  
Monitoring and Evaluation Advice and Guidance

#### Other relevant documentation:

Validation Agreement  
QAA Frameworks for HE Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies  
City, University of London Format and Guidance Notes for Validation and Revalidation Submissions

### Context

Revalidation provides the University with an opportunity to fully review the validated programme and to decide whether it wishes to continue with the validation arrangements, modify them or terminate the agreement. In addition, it provides the institution with an opportunity to carry out a full internal review of its provision prior to the revalidation visit and to consider whether it wishes to make any significant changes to the content or direction of the programme.

The nature of the revalidation process means that it is a crucial part of the validation relationship. A summary of processes and responsibilities for the revalidation process is provided in Appendix 5. Where the University is concerned that the institution has not made appropriate arrangements to maintain the integrity of the revalidation process, it will not be possible to proceed with the visit. Where it is not possible to proceed, the institution will not be able to recruit any new students to the programme.

#### 9.1 Scheduling of Revalidation

Revalidation of a programme takes place during the final year of the Validation Agreement and a visit will be scheduled so that a report and recommendation can be made to Collaborative Provision Committee prior to the expiry of the current agreement.

Chair's Action on behalf of Collaborative Provision Committee will **not** normally be taken to approve revalidation reports. It is therefore essential that events are scheduled within the appropriate timescale. The following is the timescale for the lead up to revalidation if a validation agreement is due to terminate at the end of an academic year:

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Activity</b>
-12/18 months	Institution reviews programme in advance of revalidation
- 9 months (normally start of academic year)	Agreement of date for visit. The institution must ensure at this point that relevant staff, senior management and students are available to meet the panel on the day of the visit.
- 4/5 months	Draft submission of revalidation submission to the University
- 3/4 months	Pre-meeting with Course Board Chair and Secretary for feedback
- 2/3 months	Institution to complete final documentation
- 3 weeks	Submission of sets of documentation to the University
0 weeks	Revalidation visit
+ 2 weeks	Draft report to Course Board Chair for approval
+ 2 weeks	Draft report to institution
+ 3 weeks	Institution to respond on any factual inaccuracy
Mid-June	Report considered by Collaborative Provision Committee
Mid-June	Institution notified of outcome

Holiday periods at either the institution or the University should be taken into account when devising the timetable. With regard to the exact date for the revalidation visit, the proposed Panel members (particularly the External Advisor) must be consulted by the Student and Academic Services representative with regard to their availability. The Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) should also be notified of any agreed dates.

## **9.2 Revalidation Panel**

The Revalidation Panel will normally comprise the University members of the Course Board and the External Advisor. The Student and Academic Services representative will act as Secretary to the Panel. A revalidation panel has the powers of co-option from either inside or outside the University. Any proposals will require the approval of Collaborative Provision Committee. In many cases, the University will co-opt a member of staff onto the panel from another validated institution as a strand of staff development opportunities. The institution will be consulted on any proposals.

## **9.3 Revalidation Preparation**

As part of preparations, it is possible for there to be a pre-meeting between the Programme Director and other relevant colleagues with the Course Board Chair and Student and Academic Services representative to discuss draft documentation. Should a validated institution consider a pre-meeting to be useful, this should be highlighted when considering the overall timetable with the University. An electronic copy of the draft documentation should be submitted to the Student and Academic Services representative at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

The meeting provides an opportunity for the Course Board Chair and Student and Academic Services representative to provide feedback on the draft submission,

discuss any matters arising and to answer any questions the validated institution may have. The Student and Academic Services representative will seek comments from the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) and Academic Director (Collaborative Provision), where appropriate, prior to the meeting. Where draft documentation is submitted for the purposes of the pre-meeting, the institution will still be required to resubmit the required number of full sets of documentation for the final submission.

#### **9.4 Revalidation Submission**

The final revalidation submission will comprise:

**a) The main revalidation submission in the required University format**

The main submission must follow the University format for validated programmes which will provide an up to date version of the programme scheme and associated processes. Where any programme amendments are proposed as part of the revalidation process, these should be included and highlighted for the Panel's attention as an appendix to the Evaluative Report (see below).

The submission (and any subsequent amendments arising from the revalidation visit) will form part of the legal agreement between the University and institution should revalidation be successful. It is therefore essential that the document is complete, accurate and coherent.

**b) Self-Evaluation Report**

The evaluation report is a key component of the revalidation process which demonstrates how the institution has reflected on the development of the programme during the previous period of validation. It is important that the report is evaluative as opposed to descriptive, providing context for any changes that have occurred or that are envisaged.

The report will be informed by Annual Programme Evaluations, how issues have been addressed arising from previous validations/revalidations, the market for the programme, changes in staffing or senior management at the institution, development of the institution's strategy, national developments in HE, professional accrediting body requirements etc.

When a programme is due for revalidation, it is possible to subsume the requirements for Annual Programme Evaluation for that year (see Section 5) into the overall evaluation report for revalidation. Further advice on this can be sought from the Student and Academic Services representative.

The evaluation report will cover the areas below and should always refer to anything within the programme that is unique or innovative. In addition, any areas of good practice that could or have been shared across programmes within the institution and/or with the University should also be highlighted.

**Context:** An overview of the background to the programme to include the following:

- when the programme was first established;
- when it was first validated;
- how it fits with the institution's strategy;
- fit with the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ);

- market for the programme;
  - overall developments that have occurred since the last validation/revalidation;
  - issues arising from any external review such as QAA or PSRB.
- **Innovation and/or Good Practice:** any generic examples, drawing on the guidance provided in the University Policy on Good Practice.

**Educational aims and learning outcomes:** An evaluation of their continuing relevance and how they have developed during the last period of validation. This will be informed by sources (which should be referenced) including:

- comments from External Examiners
  - feedback from Professional Bodies
  - discussions at Programme Management Teams or other committees
  - feedback from students
  - national developments such as Subject Benchmarks
  - developments within the associated profession
- **Innovation and/or Good Practice:** any particular features of the educational aims and learning outcomes that have been identified as innovative.
  - **Proposed Action:** Any proposed action or developments should be highlighted. Where an institution wishes to propose programme amendments to programme aims and learning outcomes as part of revalidation these should also be highlighted here with reference to where these can be found in the main revalidation submission.

**Curriculum:** An evaluation of how the programme content has developed during the last period of validation and how such changes have been relevant to the achievement of the learning outcomes and the level of the award. Sources of evidence should be provided. The evaluation should include how the institution has considered and acted upon:

- developments within the associated profession and their influence on programme enhancements
  - the ways in which the curriculum retains its currency
  - staff expertise (for example, new staff)
  - discussion at programme management teams or other committees
  - how staff development and research may inform curriculum development
  - comments that have been received from External Examiners and associated action
  - feedback and evaluation that has been received from students and associated action
- **Innovation and/or Good Practice:** Reference should be made to any particular features of the curriculum content that are innovative.
  - **Proposed Action:** Any proposed action or developments should be highlighted. Where an institution wishes to propose programme amendments to the curriculum as part of revalidation, these should also be highlighted here with reference to where these can be found in the main revalidation submission.

**Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies:** An evaluation of the effectiveness of the teaching, learning and assessment strategies used within the programme and a reflection on any developments that have occurred during the last period of validation. Evidence that may support this evaluation (which should be referenced) could include:

- comments from External Examiners
  - data on student progression and achievement
  - feedback from students
  - comments from any external reviews such as Professional Bodies or QAA
  - enhancements arising from staff development activities
- **Innovation and/or Good Practice:** Teaching, learning and assessment strategies and methods are a particular area for consideration of instances of innovation and development of good practice. In particular, reference should be made to any instances of enhancement which have drawn upon practice or developments within the institution, from the University or externally, or where practice within the programme has informed enhancement within the institution, the University or used as examples nationally.
  - **Proposed Action:** Any proposed action or developments should be highlighted. Where an institution wishes to propose programme amendments to teaching and learning strategies as part of revalidation, these should also be highlighted here with reference to where these can be found in the main revalidation submission.

**Quality of the Learning Experience:** An evaluation of the quality of the learning experience and any developments that have occurred during the last period of validation. Areas that need to be considered include:

**i) Learning Resources**

This will reflect upon any developments of learning resources such as:

- the adequacy of the teaching and learning space including library and IT provision.
- the adequacy of any learning resources that are particular to the nature of the programme (e.g. studio, performance space etc.)
- where students have access to facilities outside of the institution, comment should also be made as to the use that students make of these and how they support the overall learning environment.
- where a programme makes use of a virtual learning environment, this should also be considered within the evaluation.

This part of the evaluation is likely to be informed heavily (with appropriate references to sources) by:

- feedback from students that has been considered during the last period of validation through staff-student liaison committees and written feedback through questionnaires
- comments from external bodies
- institutional strategy

## ii) Student Support

This will reflect upon how the various mechanisms for student support underpin the quality of the learning experience and enable the students to achieve the learning outcomes. Any developments that have occurred during the last period of validation should be considered and reference should be made to the effectiveness of:

- module-related study support
- personal tutorial support
- implementation of PDP
- counselling
- support for students with a disability
- English language support
- careers
- placements or external settings where these form part of the programme (with particular reference to student support mechanisms)
- any other relevant support mechanisms

Evidence for supporting the evaluation may derive from:

- feedback from students
- data on progression and award
- programme management team meetings or any other relevant committees
- reports from Professional Bodies
- institutional strategy

## iii) Staff Development

This will consider how staff development activities subsequently inform the quality of the learning experience. It will reflect upon the opportunities that have been available to staff associated with the programme during the last period of validation and the ways in which these impacted on the students' learning experience.

## iv) Data on Student Admission, Progression, Award, Employment

This will consider data on student admission, progression, award and employment destinations during the last period of validation and will reflect on how that has provided indicators as to the quality of the learning experience. Full data should be provided, consolidating that which has been used for Annual Programme Evaluations during the last period of validation. Feedback from graduates and employers would provide supplementary indicators on the quality of the learning experience. Mechanisms for collecting data should also be evaluated.

- **Innovation and/or Good Practice:** Mechanisms that support the quality of the learning experience is a particular area for consideration of instances of innovation and development of good practice. In particular, reference should be made to any instances of enhancement which have drawn upon practice or developments within the institution, from the University or externally, or where practice within the programme has informed enhancement within the institution, the University or used as examples nationally.

- **Proposed Action:** Any proposed action or developments should be highlighted. Where an institution wishes to propose programme amendments to learning support mechanisms as part of revalidation, this should also be highlighted here with reference to where these can be found in the main revalidation submission.

**Management of Quality and Standards:** An evaluation as to the mechanisms in place for the management and enhancement of quality and standards and the ways in which the institution has used these to support and develop the programme during the last period of validation. This will include a reflection on the frameworks for implementing, managing and acting upon:

- feedback from students
  - student representation
  - national guidance in HE and professional bodies
  - staff development
  - Annual Programme Evaluations
  - committee roles and responsibilities
  - overall programme management
  - working relationships with External Examiners
  - the working relationship with the University as the validating body
  - dissemination of good practice
- **Innovation and/or Good Practice:** Reference should be made to any innovative mechanisms that have been implemented to support the framework for the management of quality and standards and which have been demonstrated to be effective. In particular, reference should be made to any instances of enhancement which have drawn upon practice or developments within the institution, from the University or externally, or where practice within the programme has informed enhancement within the institution, the University or used as examples nationally.
  - **Proposed Action:** Any proposed action or developments should be highlighted. Where an institution wishes to propose amendments to the mechanisms for the management of quality and standards as part of revalidation, this should also be highlighted here with reference to where these can be found in the main revalidation submission.

**Conclusions:** A conclusion should be provided that draws together issues raised within the report and a summary of proposed action for the future, documenting timescales and responsibilities.

### c) Additional documentation

In addition to the main submission and evaluation report, the following supplementary documentation is required:

- Current Programme Handbook for students
- Programme brochure/prospectus used for publicity

- A copy of the previous validation or revalidation report by the University
- Any external reports (e.g. QAA, Ofsted, professional body) received during the last period of validation and responses from the institution
- Any other relevant supporting documentation e.g. institutional quality manual
- Any other documentation requested by the University

Advice on documentation to be submitted for revalidation can be sought from the Student and Academic Services representative. Where a revalidation submission is late, incomplete or presentation is unsatisfactory, the University reserves the right to postpone the revalidation visit.

Sets of documentation must be provided to the Student and Academic Services representative by the institution for distribution to each Panel member and the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision).

Complete documentation should be submitted to the Student and Academic Services representative normally three weeks in advance of the visit.

### **9.5 University Preparation for the Visit**

The Student and Academic Services representative will be responsible for collating potential areas of questioning from panel members in advance of the meeting. All panel members are expected to read all areas of the submission. The collation of issues may also include comments from the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) and the Head of Quality and Academic Development and any other staff members who have been consulted on particular issues. The compilation of issues should be discussed with the Chair of the Panel in advance of the meeting with regard to preparing for the visit. The Panel will then discuss the areas for consideration at the first meeting of the visit at which point the allocation of questioning will be agreed.

## 9.6 The Revalidation visit

One day should be set-aside for the revalidation visit. The day will normally comprise:

Meeting	Approx Time Allocation <sup>6</sup>	Purpose	Additional Points
Private Panel meeting	Between 45-60 minutes	To discuss submission, confirm areas of questioning and allocation.	
Meeting with students and alumni <sup>7</sup>	Between 60-90 minutes	To assess the student experience of the programme. Further details about areas of questioning are provided below.	A cross-section of students and alumni should be identified by the institution to meet with the Panel. The University will expect the institution to have provided the students with an objective briefing as to the purpose of the revalidation process.
Break		The Panel may wish to meet briefly during the break to confirm any issues arising from the student meeting that need to be fed into subsequent meetings with staff or senior management.	
Meeting with staff responsible for programme delivery (this will include teaching staff, staff responsible for library and IT resources and appropriate administrative staff).	Between 90-120 minutes	To consider the operation of the programme and programme content covering the broad areas set out below.	The institution should liaise with the University well in advance as to the staff who should attend this meeting.

<sup>6</sup> Timing will be variable depending on the size of the programme, the number of programmes being considered for revalidation and the issues that the Panel wishes to discuss. The schedule will be agreed with the institution once the submission has been made. It may be necessary to make adjustments to timing nearer the visit although this will be avoided wherever possible.

<sup>7</sup> The number of students required will be dependent on size of the programme. Liaison with the University should take place well in advance with regard to the approximate number and range of students that will be needed.

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Approx Time Allocation<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Additional Points</b>
Break and Panel meeting		The Panel may wish to meet briefly during the break to confirm any issues arising from the previous meetings that need to be fed into the meeting with senior management	
Tour of facilities	20-30 minutes	To assess the facilities that support the programme	If a tour of facilities has been undertaken recently as part of another visit or exercise, a tour may not be needed if the panel considers it has sufficient knowledge and supporting evidence.
Meeting with senior management	Between 30-60 minutes	To consider any issues relating to resource, staff development, positioning of the programme, quality management and other issues arising from previous meetings	The University will expect the Principal of the institution or equivalent to be present at the meeting along with other relevant members of senior management.
Panel meeting	30 minutes	To agree the outcome of the process that will be recommended to Collaborative Provision Committee	Note that broad conditions of revalidation should be agreed here along with an indication of any recommendations. These can be finalised after the meeting and panels should not feel obliged to confirm exact wordings as part of the verbal feedback.

Meeting	Approx Time Allocation <sup>6</sup>	Purpose	Additional Points
Feedback	Between 10-15 minutes	To confirm the recommendation that will be made to Collaborative Provision Committee, to clarify the subsequent process and to address any questions.	

Supplementary documentation that might be useful to the Panel e.g. examples of students' work containing written feedback from staff may also be made available via an online resource.

### 9.7 Areas for Consideration at Revalidation

In conjunction with any specific issues arising from the overall revalidation submission and meetings with staff and students, the Panel will consider the following areas during its visit to the institution:

- **The programme**

The Panel will wish to satisfy itself that the programme seeking revalidation offers a high-quality educational experience to students and is commensurate with HE requirements including the level at which it is offered within the National Qualifications Framework.

It will wish to see evidence that any innovations such as programme changes, developments in teaching, learning and assessment, changes outside of the programme (including the associated profession/s), new technology, research findings and new aspects of professional practice have been incorporated into the programme and are working well. It will also be seeking to identify any particular areas of good practice that are relevant to the programme and/or that can be disseminated more widely.

- **Aims and learning outcomes**

The Panel will wish to see evidence that programme aims and learning outcomes remain clear (to staff, students and the Panel) and relevant to HE requirements and those of any associated professional body.

- **Content and assessment**

The Panel will wish to see evidence that the content of the programme is appropriate to the HE level, aims and learning outcomes. It will also wish to see that assessment methods are appropriate to learning outcomes and that regulations are aligned to those of the University. It will also seek to identify any particular areas of good practice in relation to assessment that are either relevant to the discipline or for wider dissemination.

- **Learning and teaching**

The Panel will wish to see that learning and teaching strategies are appropriate to the HE level of the programme and the nature of the discipline. The Panel will wish to assure itself as to the appropriate level of learning resources available to students to assist them in achieving the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

The Panel will wish to assure itself that adequate student support mechanisms are in place. This will include consideration of the personal tutorial system, academic tutorial support, student induction, support for students with disabilities, procedures for students to be referred to other support services as appropriate, provision of careers guidance and the Programme Handbook.

The Panel will also seek to identify any particular areas of good practice in relation to learning and teaching that are either relevant to the discipline or for wider dissemination.

- **Maintenance and enhancement of quality and securing of academic standards**

The Panel will consider the procedures in place for the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience and for the securing of academic standards and how the institution has implemented these. The Panel will wish to consider any identifiable outcomes that have resulted from enhancements made and will also review how the institution has complied with University procedures during the current period of the validation agreement.

The Panel will also wish to see and consider statistical data relating to student progression and achievement so as to ensure that this aligns to norms appropriate to HE and to the discipline.

Consideration of the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures will also focus on evidence that appropriate action has been taken on feedback given by students and that there is appropriate and effective student representation on committees.

- **The institution offering the validated programme**

The Panel will consider any institutional changes that may affect the validated programme and should assure itself that no conflict exists between the aims and objectives of the University and of the validated institution. It may be appropriate for the revalidation process to review matters relating to the institution itself.

- **Staff development**

The Panel will wish to see evidence of training and development for those staff involved in the teaching of the validated programme. This will include consideration of the institution's staff development policy, the appraisal process, peer observation, and other opportunities for training and development. The Panel may seek to identify evidence of any staff development that has enhanced the content and delivery of the programme.

- **Equal opportunities**

The Panel will wish to see evidence that the institution continues to operate an appropriate equal opportunities policy for staff, students and applicants.

- **Response to issues and problems**

The Panel will wish to see evidence that consideration has been given and appropriate action has been taken on any problems or issues raised during the period of the Validation Agreement. These could be issues raised by the University or by external agencies including professional accrediting bodies or government agencies.

## **9.8 Outcome of the revalidation**

Following a discussion by the Panel at the end of the revalidation visit, the institution will normally receive brief verbal feedback from the Chair. It is usual for there to be representation from the senior management at this meeting, along with the Programme Director and any other staff the institution wishes to be present.

The feedback will outline the main findings of the Panel (arising from the documentation and the visit) noting positive points and areas to be addressed. The institution will normally be informed of the overall recommendation that the Panel will make to Collaborative Provision Committee with regard to a further period of revalidation. Where the Panel proposes that a period of revalidation be recommended, it will state the proposed length of time (up to a maximum of five years). The feedback will also contain any proposed conditions associated with the period of revalidation.

Conditions are made where the Panel considers that further enhancements are required to fully support the quality and standards of the programme and will normally need to be addressed by a stipulated date prior to the commencement of the new cohort. A condition may also be set where documentation will need to be resubmitted following correction of any inaccuracies, elaborations, or amendments as a result of meeting other conditions. It is necessary for the University to receive such a revised document as this will form an appendix to the formal validation agreement; normally only two amended submissions will need to be provided. Where it is proposed that a specific condition be met over a longer period of time, the Panel will need to consider whether the validation period should be reduced so as to review the outcome or to consider the implementation of an interim review (see Section 5).

Arising from the visit, the Panel may also make recommendations. These will either be contained within the verbal feedback or provided after the event through the formal report. Recommendations are made where the Panel considers that further enhancements may benefit the development of the programme but are not required to be implemented to support the core quality and standards of the programme.

Following verbal feedback, the Panel Secretary will be responsible for producing a written report from the visit. This will be drafted, signed-off by the Panel Chair and subsequently sent to the institution to check for factual accuracy. Following this, the final report will be provided to Collaborative Provision Committee for its consideration. The Committee is at liberty to accept or reject a recommendation from the Panel. The University will advise the institution of the outcome from the Committee.

## **9.9 Addressing Conditions**

The full report will be received at the Course Board meeting subsequent to the meeting of Collaborative Provision Committee. The Course Board will discuss the findings and an action plan (with a timescale) submitted by the institution detailing how conditions will be addressed and how recommendations may be considered. Collaborative Provision Committee will take an overview of the conditions set by panels.

**Where there are conditions that need to be met between the meeting of the Course Board and the start of the academic year or by a date beyond this point, the institution has a responsibility for ensuring that these are addressed and signed-off by the University by the due date. Where the institution has not addressed the requirements, the University reserves the right to consider this as a breach of the institutional Validation Agreement.**

## **9.10 Addressing Recommendations**

The University will expect an institution to consider recommendations within its own internal governance structures and will monitor this through evidence provided in minutes.

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Policy on Validation**

#### **Introduction**

Validation is the process by which the University recognises as equivalent to its own the quality and standards of programmes designed, delivered and managed by another institution. Successful students receive an award from City, University of London in accordance with the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications. Through validation, the University takes ultimate responsibility for the quality and standards of the validated programmes. The University will wish to satisfy itself that the approach being applied is no less rigorous than that applied to programmes offered internally so as to meet national and international Higher Education requirements.

#### **Purpose of Validation**

The University's prime objective in forming validation relationships is to enable the development of academic links with a range of institutions which do not have Degree-Awarding Powers, thereby furthering our academic base and the awards made in our name. Through undertaking validation, the University also aims to widen its reputation and to enter into other forms of collaboration. The University only enters into a validation relationship where there is evidence that it will be of strategic benefit.

#### **Approach to Validation**

Our approach to validation is underpinned by the following principles:

- Partner institutions will be high-profile in their discipline/s and will reflect the University's focus on academic excellence and professional education.
- Programmes proposed for validation will normally be complementary to those offered within the University, thereby broadening our academic base and providing greater potential for wider educational collaborations.
- A validation relationship will only be formed whereby the University will be, or will become the sole validating body, so as to support the development of the relationship.
- The University will focus not only on our ultimate responsibility for quality and standards of the awards, but will also make provision for mutual dialogue, debate and engagement in programme design and pedagogy.
- We undertake validation only where we have the appropriate expertise and resource to enable us to undertake our responsibilities for quality, standards and wider educational dialogue; this is always supplemented by external input in accordance with our Quality Assurance Framework.
- Validation is managed at University-level, this being the most appropriate mechanism to ensure consistency of approach both with regard to discharging our responsibility for quality and standards as well as allocating resource to overseeing the activity. This approach also rationalises

bureaucracy for validation partners and enables an increased focus on developmental work.

- Validation partners will be primarily London-based to enable us to fulfil the principles of our approach.

### **Criteria for Considering Validation Requests**

In addition to satisfying these principles, the University will also take into account when considering requests for validation:

- the compatibility and complementarity of the mission and strategic plan of the University, including current and planned academic activities and those of the prospective partner;
- the compatibility and complementarity of the proposed link with the University's existing validation links and other commitments;
- the legal status of the prospective partner and its capacity to contract with the University, along with the commitment and support of its governing body (or equivalent) for the arrangement;
- whether the ethos and environment for teaching and learning offered by the prospective partner are appropriate to the University's approach to validation and more generally to UK Higher Education;
- the financial stability of the prospective partner and its ability and commitment to provide the resources appropriate to support the proposed Higher Education programme/s and a validation relationship with the University;
- the critical mass that would comprise the partnership, both with regard to the academic viability of the proposed programme/s and the resource required by both parties to maintain a successful validation partnership. The University will normally enter into validation arrangements only where there is substantial activity;
- whether appropriate governance, resources and systems are in place for the effective management of the partner institution and, in particular, to underpin academic standards, quality assurance and enhancement. This will include the expertise of staff to teach the proposed programmes both in terms of discipline and level;
- the University's ability to provide for the foreseeable future both a senior member of academic staff with relevant expertise to lead the activity and other appropriate staff members to contribute to academic developments.

### **Process for Considering Requests and Establishing Validation Relationships**

Any approach for validation received by the Assistant Registrar is directed to the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision), who will consult with the Dean of the cognate School/s of the University to consider the academic fit of the proposal and potential academic leadership for the activity. Where it is agreed that the approach should be pursued in principle, the Vice-President (Education) is responsible for

considering the proposal which will be prepared by Student and Academic Services in conjunction with the Academic Director (Collaborative Provision). Where this proposal is approved, the process will progress to a review of institutional infrastructure. Where this is successful, the process will then proceed to consideration of programmes. The full process is published in the Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook. In undertaking this process, the University will consider existing or previous links that the prospective validation partner may have and reserves the right to seek views directly from such bodies.

Programmes are validated for a fixed period of time. The University will undertake a full review of the validated programme/s through a revalidation process with a view to making a recommendation for a further period of validation where this is appropriate. From time to time, the University will review from the arrangements it has with its validation partners, taking into account the City, University of London Vision & Strategy and any other relevant developments.

### **Status of the Validation Partner**

Following completion of the initial validation process, a Memorandum of Agreement (known as the Validation Agreement) will be issued by the University that will document respective roles and responsibilities.

In forming a validation relationship, the validation partner, as an organisation, remains legally independent from the University. The validation partner is responsible for the organisational governance and management of the institution, including matters relating to finance. The University will expect validated programmes to be managed and delivered in accordance with University academic policies and practices. In some instances, the overall governance and management of the validation partner will have a bearing on the delivery of the validated programmes and the University will need to be consulted accordingly. Where the University considers such matters could threaten the quality and standards of validated provision, it will consider whether or not to continue with the relationship.

### **Status of Students on Programmes Validated by the University**

Students on programmes validated by City, University of London are registered with the validation partner which is responsible for the delivery and management of the provision. Students register with the University to enable access to the designated services available under the Validation Agreement, and for records to be established and maintained on their overall academic progress and potential award. On successful completion of the award, students become alumni of City, University of London as well as of the institution at which they studied their programme.

### **Termination of Validation**

The Validation Agreement sets out provision for termination of a validation arrangement. The University's Principles for Exit Arrangements for Validation will be followed in any such instance.

## Appendix 2:

### Collaborative Provision Committee

#### Terms of reference

##### Purpose

The Collaborative Provision Committee is responsible to Senate for overseeing the effective operation of City's credit- and award-bearing collaborative provision. In particular, it works to ensure that the quality and standards of collaborative provision and awards are commensurate with provision solely delivered by City.

Its remit encompasses:

- **Validation and institutional partnership provision** managed through City's quality and standards framework for validation and institutional partnerships
- The quality and standards framework for **School-managed partnership provision** and institutional-level oversight of the quality and standards of this provision managed by Boards of Studies

Collectively, these types of provision are referred to by City as **collaborative provision**. The Collaborative Provision Committee will also oversee developments to the quality and standards framework for the management of other types of learning opportunities which involve other organisations (e.g. placements, student mobility).

#### Terms of Reference

##### All Collaboration Provision

1. Oversee the review and development of City's quality and standards frameworks for collaborative provision.
2. Oversee the implementation of the quality and standards frameworks and compliance with Memoranda of Agreement for collaborative provision.
3. Review and develop Senate policies on collaborative provision to make recommendations to Senate.
4. Identify institution-wide themes, good practice for dissemination and areas for action arising from reports relating to partnership provision including Annual Programme Evaluation, Programme Approval/Validation, Periodic Review/Revalidation and External Examiner reports.
5. Monitor areas for action arising from external compliance requirements for collaborative provision.
6. Support the development and communication of information to partner institutions on quality and standards framework matters.
7. Contribute to the development of the wider institutional infrastructure for collaborative provision.

8. Oversee developments to the quality and standards framework for the management of other types of learning opportunities which involve other organisations (e.g. placements, student mobility).
9. Contribute to strategic reviews of collaborative provision, making recommendations to Senate and the Executive as appropriate.

### **Validation and Institutional Partnerships**

10. Operate City's framework for programme validation and revalidation, approving recommendations on behalf of Senate where further periods are proposed, or making recommendations to Senate where termination or suspension is proposed.
11. Approve proposed amendments to programmes offered through validation and institutional partnership arrangements.
12. Establishing a sub-committee ('Course Board') including composition, membership and terms of reference for each validation/institutional partnership relationship.

### **Composition**

#### **Ex-Officio**

- Academic Director (Collaborative Provision) (Chair)
- Chairs of Course Boards for Validation and Institutional Partnerships
- Students' Union Vice-President (Education)
- Deputy President and Provost
- Vice-President (International)

#### **Non Ex-Officio**

- The Lead Partnership Coordinator from each School
- Up to two members of academic staff appointed annually by Senate and not represented elsewhere in the membership

#### **In attendance:**

- Secretary – a representative from Student and Academic Services
- Head of Quality and Academic Development, of Student and Academic Services
- Head of International Relations

#### **Operational Details:**

- Reporting line: Senate
- Quorum: 30% rounded up to the next whole number of the total actual membership
- Frequency: As required, at least once a year, and normally three times a year
- A Deputy Chair will be appointed by Senate from the non-ex-officio membership

## **Appendix 3:**

### **Course Board Terms of Reference**

#### **Validation Relationships (Taught Programmes)**

1. To maintain and enhance academic quality and standards of the programmes that lead to an award of the University ensuring commensurability with University and national requirements and compliance with the Validation Agreement.
2. To consider local, University or national policies and developments that will impact upon validated programmes and, where appropriate, for recommendations to be reported to the relevant University body.
3. To receive from Boards of Studies proposed programme amendments and special schemes of study for subsequent recommendation to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
4. To consider nominations for External Examiners for subsequent recommendation to the University's Senate.
5. To take an overview of recruitment and, in particular, to monitor entry profiles.
6. To consider and approve any RPL/RPEL recommendations for entry to the programmes.
7. To receive details of staff changes and accompanying CVs with regard to those who contribute to the delivery and assessment of the programmes.
8. To receive and consider Annual Programme Evaluations for subsequent report to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
9. To receive and consider minutes of Boards of Studies meetings.
10. To receive and respond to the University's annual report on its meeting with student representatives.
11. To receive new validation proposal outlines for subsequent recommendation to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
12. To receive reports arising from validation and revalidation visits and to oversee the implementation of action/s arising for subsequent report to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
13. To receive reports from the institution with validated programmes on any institutional developments that may impact upon the validation relationship including changes in governance and management, relationships with any other institutions and external quality or accreditation review, for subsequent report to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.

## **Institutional Partnerships**

1. To maintain and enhance academic quality and standards of the programmes that lead to an award or credit of the University ensuring commensurability with University and national requirements and compliance with the Memorandum of Agreement.
2. To consider local, University, national, and international policies and developments that will impact upon validated programmes and, where appropriate, for recommendations to be reported to the relevant University body.
3. To receive from the Programme Management Team proposed programme amendments and special schemes of study for subsequent recommendation to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
4. To consider nominations for external examiners for subsequent recommendation to the University's Senate.
5. To take an overview of recruitment.
6. To consider and approve any RPL/ RPEL recommendations for entry to the programmes.
7. To receive details of staff changes and accompanying CVs with regard to those who contribute to the delivery and assessment of the programmes.
8. To receive and consider Annual Programme Evaluations for subsequent report to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
9. To receive and consider minutes of Programme Management Team meetings.
10. To receive and respond to the University's annual report on its meeting with student representatives.
11. To receive new validation proposal outlines for subsequent recommendation to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
12. To receive reports arising from validation and revalidation visits and to oversee the implementation of action/s arising for subsequent report to the University's Collaborative Provision Committee.
13. To receive reports from the Joint Venture Board on any institutional developments that may impact upon the validation relationship including changes in governance and management, relationships with any other institutions and external quality or accreditation review, for subsequent report to Collaborative Provision Committee.

### **Validation Relationships (Research Degree Provision Only)**

1. To oversee the quality and standards of the validated research degree provision.
2. To ensure compliance with the City's requirements for the validation of research degrees.
3. To receive from the institution's Board of Studies (or equivalent) proposed programme amendments for subsequent recommendation to the City's Collaborative Provision Committee.
4. To consider nominations for External Examiners for subsequent recommendation to the University's Senate.
5. To take an overview of research degree recruitment and, in particular, to monitor entry profiles.
6. To receive details of staff changes and accompanying CVs with regard to supervisors for the research degrees.
7. To receive and consider the Annual Programme Evaluation for subsequent report to the City's Collaborative Provision Committee.
8. To receive and consider minutes of the validated institution's Board of Studies (or equivalent) in relation to research degree provision.
9. To receive reports arising from any revalidation visit and to oversee the implementation of action/s arising for subsequent report to the City's Collaborative Provision Committee.
10. To receive reports on any institutional developments that may impact upon the validation relationship including changes in governance and management, relationships with any other institutions and external quality or accreditation review, for subsequent report to City's Collaborative Provision Committee.

## Appendix 4

### Principles for Exit Agreements for Validation

#### Introduction

This outlines the procedures that should be included in the University's involvement in any exit agreement for the termination or transfer of a validation arrangement. While each case will be unique it is envisaged that the majority of procedures will apply. Any situation in which it is considered that a particular procedure documented below does not apply must be referred to Collaborative Provision Committee.

#### Principles of Exit Agreements

The University's principles in forming exit agreements for its validated programmes are:

- To minimise the impact of exit agreements and any subsequent transitional arrangements for students currently registered on the validated programmes. This includes a need for:
  - (i) The current validating body to ensure that where a transfer of validation is proposed, commensurability will be retained in course content and associated support arrangements for those students registered under the current validation arrangements.
  - (ii) Clear, helpful and timely mechanisms for, and in, communications with students affected, with opportunities for questions and answers.
  - (iii) The current validating body and validated institution to ensure that all students who will be affected by an exit arrangement are accounted for within the wind-down or transfer process.
- That the implications of forming an exit agreement are realised by all parties concerned at an early stage including the time required to complete an exit process that addresses adequately all relevant arrangements. Specific details of the exit agreement and any accompanying transitional arrangements should be drawn up as soon as possible following an in-principle decision to exit particularly so as to avoid any unexpected difficulties at later stages of the exit process.
- For communication between the current validating body, validated institution and any proposed new validating body to be open, responsive and constructive so as to assist meeting the objectives as laid out in the points above.

#### Process of Exit Agreements

In some instances, it may be necessary for the exit agreement to take place in two stages. This might occur where it is proposed that the validated provision transfers to another validating body and detailed negotiations between the three parties need to occur prior to the details of a final exit agreement being drawn up.

Where such instances occur, it is essential that the principle of the exit agreement is agreed as soon as possible after initial discussion and agreement between the validated institution and the current validating body. The signing-off of such an agreement should be done by a senior officer (usually the Principal) of each party and endorsed by an appropriate committee of each institution such as the Academic Board or Governing Body. It is only after written formal in principle agreement has been established can formal negotiations with any other proposed validating body take place. Any proposed validating body would need to have sight of the formal written agreement in principle before proceeding with formal negotiations.

### **Stage 1 - Initial Procedures of the Exit Agreement**

- **Date from which exit period will commence**

The exit period is the time between the establishment of the formal agreement in principle between the validated institution and validating body to enter into an exit agreement, and the actual final exit date. The normal length of an exit period should be stated in the current validation agreement and is normally one year. While it is normally possible for there to be subsequent negotiation between institutions about the length of the exit period, a suitable period of time needs to be established for the relevant procedures to take place, particularly where transfer of validation to another validating body is proposed.

Reference should be made in the exit agreement to the dates of the respective governing bodies' agreement for the termination to take place.

- **Provision**

Explicit reference to the validated programme/s (or any other activity) to which the exit agreement relates.

- **Reasons for termination**

a) An agreed statement between the current validating body and the validated institution as to the reasons for termination (for factual accuracy, for consideration by any proposed new validating body and in case of any press interest).

b) A statement of intent as to the future validation of the programme/s with any other validating body (unless the programme/s itself is terminating or any other relevant reason). This is essential for the current validating body to assure itself of the future of students currently registered on the validated programme/s.

### **Stage 2 – Detailed Exit Agreement**

- **Finances**

Agreement between the current validating body and validated institution regarding finances. This may include any validation fees payable within the exit period or any provision that might need to be made for the administration of the termination process.

- **Specific responsibilities for Students**

An agreement to exit from a current validation agreement and to subsequently transfer to an alternative validating body will affect students currently registered on the validated programme/s and those who have been made an offer of a place for the future year/s. The list below covers the various categories of students and indicates the body which will normally have responsibility. Confirmation of such arrangements needs to be defined explicitly in the final exit agreement following negotiation between the three parties.

- a) Responsibility for new, incoming students lies with the proposed new validating body
- b) Responsibility for matters arising from completing students (e.g. appeals against degree classification, re-sits) lies with the current validating body as does responsibility for conferment of degrees for those students completing their studies under the defined exit period.
- c) Responsibility for any deferred students, including those which have deferred entry to start the programme/s lies with the proposed new validating body.
- d) Responsibility for continuing students (exact details to be negotiated between the validated institution, current validating body and proposed new validating body). The University's preference would normally be for a clean break with all students transferring in one transition.

Negotiation must take place at an early stage (following the agreement in principle to exit) between the validated institution, the current validating body and any proposed new validating body as to letters or other documentation that should be sent to students affected by any transfer of validation (including students who have been offered a place on the validated course) to gain agreement (or otherwise) from these students on the proposed transfer. The letter would normally be drafted by the validated institution, with an opportunity for the current and proposed validating body to comment. Letters to students should be signed by appropriate officers of all three institutions so as to demonstrate commitment to the process.

The University would normally expect at least 90% consent to the transfer from the affected student body, but exact proportions would be dependent on factors such as size of cohort. Written confirmation from each student that he/she understands and accepts (or otherwise), the implications should be obtained by the validated institution and be available as evidence for the current and proposed validating bodies.

Provision must be made by the validated institution for an appropriate member of staff to meet with any student who does not consent to a proposed transfer and to discuss the concerns of the student. This process should be supported by the current validating institution as appropriate.

Any students who continue to have opposition to a proposed transfer after this stage, will be considered by all three parties who will consider appropriate action. Dependent on the nature of the reasons for opposition, legal advice may be sought prior to further consultation and negotiation with the students concerned.

- **Expectations**

Agreement between the current validating body and the validated institution that, during the exit period, the relationship will continue as per the procedures laid down in the current formal agreement or other associated documentation, unless specified otherwise in the agreement. It is likely that the current validating body will require any outstanding conditions of any revalidation event or other relevant review to be met as appropriate within this period.

An agreement between the current validating body and validated institution that the termination process will not be onerous on either body within the terms of the existing validation agreement and the exit agreement. There must also be acknowledgement of the current validating body's continuing responsibilities and obligations to ensure the maintenance of academic standards and procedures which support this (in line with national requirements).

An agreement from the current validating body to provide information to any new validating body on the standing and effectiveness of the relationship.

## Appendix 5

### Process and Responsibilities for Validation and Revalidation Events

<b>Process</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Agreement between parties to proceed with revalidation process	Validated institution and Course Board in liaison with Collaborative Provision Committee
Revalidation coordinator assigned within the institution	Principal of validated institution
Overall timetable agreed with University including date for visit and any pre-meetings requested by the institution.	Revalidation Coordinator and Student and Academic Services representative
Panel membership agreed	Collaborative Provision Committee in liaison with Student and Academic Services representative
Relevant staff and students notified of visit and briefed of purpose.	Revalidation Coordinator
Documentation compiled in accordance with University requirements	Revalidation Coordinator
Draft documentation submitted to University	Revalidation Coordinator
Draft documentation considered by University	Course Board Chair and Student and Academic Services representative
Meeting to discuss draft documentation	Course Board Chair and Student and Academic Services representative, Programme Director, Revalidation Coordinator
Amendments to documentation and discussion within institution	Revalidation Coordinator and Programme Director
Timetable for visit agreed	Revalidation Coordinator and Student and Academic Services representative
Documentation approved internally	Revalidation Coordinator
Submission of final documentation	Revalidation Coordinator
Circulation of documentation to panel	Student and Academic Services representative
Revalidation Visit	All
Draft report compiled	Student and Academic Services representative
Draft report approved by Chair and submitted to institution for factual accuracy.	Revalidation Coordinator
Report amended and submitted to Collaborative Provision Committee	Student and Academic Services representative
Report and recommendations considered	Collaborative Provision Committee
Outcome of consideration reported to validated institution	Student and Academic Services representative
Documentation resubmitted to University where required	Revalidation Coordinator
Action plan established by institution	Revalidation Coordinator
Report and plan considered	Course Board
Outcome of conditions reported to Collaborative Provision Committee	Student and Academic Services representative
New Programme Validation Agreement drafted	Student and Academic Services representative
Recommendations and progress on any conditions outstanding monitored	Course Board
Ensure that all conditions are met	Collaborative Provision Committee

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