Validation and Revalidation Procedure

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Validation and Revalidation Procedure

Introduction

1. Validation is the process through which Spurgeon's College (the College) ensures that a new programme meets defined academic standards and that it will offer students the best opportunity to learn. It is about assuring quality and high academic standards.

Principles

2. This validation procedure allows for a proposed new undergraduate or taught postgraduate programme at the College to be examined by a group of experienced peers including internal and external academics, employer representatives and a student representative. The programme validation procedure is aligned with the expectations, practices, advice and guidance within the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

3. The approval and ongoing review of units and programmes is one of the principal mechanisms through which the College secures academic standards and ensures the quality of learning opportunities within programmes of study that lead to a Spurgeon's College qualification.

4. This procedure applies to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision within the College leading to a recognised award of Spurgeon's College, or programmes that are validated by another institution but where the validation arrangements allow for the College to undertake its own academic validation processes. The procedure includes short programmes worth 60 credits or more.

5. The College's Academic Board is responsible for overseeing the validation of all new programmes[1], and delegates the responsibility for this process to the Programme Approval, Revalidation and Review Committee (PARRC).

6. The College's approach to validation involves a validation event, during which a panel scrutinises the new proposal.

7. The process ensures:
   a. Equivalence in academic standards with comparable programmes across the UK higher education sector.
   b. Alignment with all relevant external reference points, including the UK Quality Code and relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.
   c. Recognition by an associated Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB)[2] if relevant. The College remains solely responsible for all academic awards offered in its name and the validation of these programmes.

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[1] Apart from programmes validated by other institutions, where the College undertakes validation on their behalf. In these cases, final programme approval must be given by the Validating institution according to their procedures.

[2] The Baptist Union of Great Britain sets the national standards for ministerial recognition for accredited Baptist ministers. The ministerial training units offered by the College are aligned with the 'Marks of Ministry' approved by BUGB.

8. During the validation process consideration is given to the following themes:
   - The rationale for the new programme.
   - The programme curriculum, its design, content, delivery and assessment.
   - The appropriateness of the standards set for the level of the award.
   - The suitability of human, physical and other learning resources to support the programme.
   - The student experience offered by the new programme including opportunities for employment and further study for its graduates.
   - The way in which the programme facilitates the widest possible access to ensure that all students can maximise their potential.

9. Programmes will normally be validated for six years. Shorter validation periods may be approved. In exceptional circumstances, approval for a year's extension to validation may be sought from the Academic Board. Approval for this request will be considered by the PARRC before a request is brought to the Academic Board.

10. If a validated programme is modified, it may require revalidation depending on the nature and extent of the changes, and in accordance with the College's Curriculum Modification Policy.[3]

11. All new proposals must have gone through the College's Programme Approval Procedure prior to being considered for validation.

12. There are three stages to the programme approval process before a Validation Panel is convened. These are normally undertaken sequentially:
    - *Strategic Approval*: To test that there is a clear and appropriate academic rationale for the proposed programme; that it fits with the College's aims and objectives, and that there is a likely demand for the programme.
    - *Business Case Approval:* This must show clear evidence of sustainable demand and that appropriate resources are identified to support the delivery of the programme.
    - *Academic Approval:* This should demonstrate that the proposed programme will meet internal and external requirements and reference points for academic quality and standards.

13. This document has been informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, in particular the following Advice and Guidance themes:

    Course Design and Development (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/course-design-and-development)

    External Expertise (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/external-expertise)

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[3] Curriculum-Modification-Policy.pdf (spurgeons.ac.uk)

Monitoring and Evaluation (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/monitoring-and-evaluation)

Responsibilities

<u>Validation Panel</u>

14. A validation panel's responsibilities are:
    a. To receive proposals from the PARRC for the validation of new higher education programmes or pathways.
    b. To receive proposals from the PARRC for major changes to existing programmes or pathways.
    c. To receive proposals from the PARRC for new units on existing programmes or pathways.
    d. To ensure the effective scrutiny of any proposals by a process which facilitates peer review and uses methods deemed appropriate to the validation status and subject matter of the programmes concerned.
    e. To assess any proposals to ensure that they satisfy quality criteria and threshold academic standards appropriate to the type and level of award.
    f. To assess any proposals to ensure that they meet the external regulatory demands of the UK education sector and professional bodies.
    g. To provide summary reports to the Academic Board of all activity undertaken and to make recommendations based on the outcome of any assessment of proposals received from the PARRC.
    h. To report to the Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) any issues identified with existing programmes which require action.

15. The validation panel will:
    a. Critically examine the validation documentation and undertake discussion with the PARRC and other relevant stakeholders in order to make a collective judgement as to the quality and academic standard of the proposed programme
    b. Recommend to the Academic Board whether or not the proposed programme should be validated.

<u>Programme Approval, Revalidation and Review Committee (PARRC)</u>

16. The PARRC has delegated authority from the Academic Board to oversee the validation and revalidation processes in accordance with this procedure. Its key responsibilities for the validation process are:
    a. To receive and review proposals from the Programme Development Working Group for the validation of new higher education programmes or pathways.
    b. To receive and review proposals from the Programme Revalidation and Review Working Group for the revalidation of existing higher education programmes or pathways.
    c. To send reviewed proposals to the validation panel as required.
    d. To ensure that all necessary action is taken to update programmes/courses following the revalidation or re-approval process.

e. To address any required technical corrections from the validation process and to report progress to the Panel and Academic Board.

<u>Programme Revalidation and Review Working Group (PRRWG)</u>

17. To gather evidence for the PARRC to facilitate the revalidation process. This will include evidence of consultation with students and other stakeholders, any changes to the curriculum or external standards, and other documentation as listed in paragraph 35.

<u>Other responsibilities</u>

18. The validation process is facilitated by the Secretary of the PARRC. They are responsible for the collation of paperwork and the production of the Validation Report on behalf of the panel.

19. The Programme Director is responsible for co-ordinating the follow up of any recommendations made by the Panel.

20. The Senior Management Team (SMT) is responsible for pre-assessing any revalidation proposals to ensure that they continue to meet the College's strategic objectives and for resource and management implications. The SMT is also responsible for implementing the Student Protection Plan in the event of a programme or unit not being revalidated.

21. The Academic Director is responsible for the appointment of external members to the Panel.

22. The Senior Registrar is responsible for the Definitive Programme Documentation (programme specifications and unit descriptors) during the life of the programme.

Validation Panel Membership

23. The membership of each Validation Panel will be independent of the PARRC and any working groups. This will avoid conflicts of interest and enable fully independent scrutiny of any proposals to take place.

24. Each instance of a Validation Panel is convened by the Academic Board, through the office of the Academic Director.

25. Membership of the Panel shall be made up as follows:
- At least one external member of AQAC who will act as Chair
- Other members of the AQAC may be included as required
- At least one appropriately qualified member from another higher education institution who does not currently serve on any other College body
- Suitably experienced members from employer or professional bodies, as relevant
- At least one student representative.

26. The Chair may consult others as appropriate e.g., sector experts, the College librarian etc. These individuals will not form part of the Validation Panel.

27. Others may be invited to panel meetings as observers, in order to answer the questions panel members may have. These may include, but are not limited to, the Academic Director, programme proposer, Programme Director, and other members of the PARRC.

28. The Secretary of the PARRC will act as Secretary to the Validation Panel.

A detailed guide to the roles and responsibilities of panel members during the validation process is given in Appendix A.

Criteria for the appointment of external panel members

29. External academic panel members are nominated and appointed through the office of the Academic Director. They should be able to demonstrate:
    a. Appropriate competence and experience and continuing active involvement in the relevant subject discipline(s)
    b. Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications, normally to at least the level of the qualification being presented for validation, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate
    c. Knowledge and understanding of relevant external reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality
    d. Competence and recent experience relating to the design and delivery of programmes of study within the relevant subject discipline(s) to at least the level of the qualification being presented for validation.

30. Employer representatives on the panel are nominated and appointed through the office of the Academic Director, and should:
    a. Be an employer or professional representative of the sector in which graduates might be expected to work.
    b. Be of an appropriate level of seniority or have significant recent professional experience within the relevant field.
    c. Possess sufficient experience within the sector to be able to comment on the relevance of the programme for those wishing to gain employment in the sector.

31. Where relevant, external panel members may also need to satisfy additional criteria set by PSRBs.

32. Terms of appointment for all external panel members should be confirmed in writing.

Circumstances where appointment to a validation panel is not permissible

33. The appointment as an external panel member of anyone in the following categories or circumstances is not permissible:
   a. Anyone who has been involved in the design and development of the proposed new programme or is intended to be involved in subsequent programme delivery.
   b. A member of the governing body of the College.
   c. A current employee of the College.
   d. A current or former external examiner appointed to a programme at the College unless a period of five years has elapsed since the appointment ended.
   e. Anyone teaching on a programme where a current employee of the College is appointed as the external examiner for the programme.
   f. Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of the team involved in designing and delivering the proposed new programme.
   g. Anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative activities (including research) with a member of staff involved in the design or delivery of the proposed new programme.
   h. Former staff or students of the College, unless a period of five years has elapsed since their employment ended or they completed their studies.

Validation Process

34. The validation process involves a validation panel meeting of internal and external experts to discuss and recommend approval of the proposed new programme, based on:
   - Their prior consideration of a standard set of programme documentation compiled by the Validation Secretary; and
   - Discussion with the PARRC, key staff and, where relevant, students during the validation panel meeting.

Submission and circulation of documentation

35. Validation documentation provides the formal record of the programme(s) to be offered to students, and should include:
   a. Strategic Approval Form and Academic Approval Form (from the Programme Approval Procedure)
   b. Programme Specification providing a summary of the proposed new programme and associated learning, teaching and assessment strategies.
   c. Programme or Technical Handbook (where relevant)
   d. Student programme handbook (including unit descriptors).
   e. Definitive programme record.
   f. Where relevant, any additional student handbooks covering particular aspects of the programme (for example work-based learning or professional practice).
   g. Mapping of programme and unit intended learning outcomes for each award presented for validation (including exit awards).
   h. Staff CVs.

     i.   Feedback from external academics and/or other stakeholders consulted on curriculum development.

     j.   Evidence of, and feedback from, student consultation and input into the programme development.

36. In addition, other relevant policies, procedures, and background documentation should be provided. These may include:
   - Degree regulations
   - Fitness to study policy
   - Academic Malpractice Policy
   - Mitigating Circumstances Policy
   - Academic Appeals Procedure
   - External Examiners Policy
   - Disability Policy
   - Admissions Policy
   - Programme Approval Procedure
   - Student Complaints Procedure
   - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

37. As a minimum a validation panel must receive:
   - Validation documentation as outlined above
   - Validation panel meeting programme (including details of those attending)
   - List of panel members and roles
   - This procedure
   - Terms of Reference of a Validation Panel
   - Validation Threshold Criteria.

38. In addition, external panel members should be provided with directions to the College and an expenses claim form.

<u>Before the meeting</u>

39. To do their job effectively, panel members need time to read the documentation thoroughly and to seek clarification in advance on points identified. The Secretary will circulate the documentation to the panel members three weeks prior to the panel meeting. The Secretary will ask for initial written feedback, requesting that the panel members raise any queries for clarification and highlight any areas they wish to particularly explore during the validation panel meeting.

40. The Secretary will summarise these comments and circulate them to the panel members and to the programme director or PARRC as relevant. If time allows, the programme director/PARRC may respond to straightforward queries prior to a validation panel meeting, leaving more time to explore substantive issues on the day.

41. Should any significant shortfalls be identified upon receipt of the documentation, it is the responsibility of a validation panel chair to draw these to the attention of the Academic Director and Programme Director. A significant shortfall will normally fall within one or more of the following categories:

- Deficiencies in information which will leave a validation panel unable to draw a reliable conclusion
- Non-compliance with expected requirements/protocols, such as procedures set out in this procedure or non-adherence with relevant sections of the QAA Quality code.
- Presentation of information which is significantly unclear or contradictory.

Validation Panel Meeting

42. Consideration of the proposal will be undertaken through the analysis and discussion of the documentation provided.

43. During the validation process consideration is given to six main themes:
    1. The rationale for the new programme.
    2. The programme curriculum, its design, content, delivery, and assessment.
    3. The appropriateness of the standards set for the level of the award.
    4. The suitability of human, physical and other learning resources to support the programme.
    5. The student experience offered by the new programme including opportunities for employment and further study for its graduates.
    6. The way in which the programme facilitates the widest possible access to ensure that all students can maximise their potential.

44. The considerations below detail the issues on which the panel will focus, in order to assess the proposal and the resource base and learning environment in place for the delivery of the proposed provision.

How judgements are made

45. PARRCs should be clear about how these issues are being addressed in their proposal. Validation panels should use these as discussion prompts when evaluating new programmes but avoid a mechanistic 'tick-box' approach. If any of the following considerations have not been taken into account during the design process this would indicate a significant gap in the development of the programme.
    a. Are the characteristics of the programme clearly defined?
    b. Is the proposal in line with the College's learning and teaching strategy?
    c. Will the programme provide a good learning experience for the likely student intake?
    d. Will the curriculum prepare students for the opportunities potentially available on completion of a programme?
    e. Is the programme designed to ensure that the overall experience of a student has logic and an intellectual integrity that are related to clearly defined purposes?
    f. Is the intellectual challenge and value of the programme defined at the correct level, and with reference to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)?
    g. Has the PARRC taken account, as appropriate, of external reference points, including any relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s), Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), the Higher

Education Credit Framework for England and the requirements of Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and employers?

h. Does the curriculum impose an increasing level of demand on the learner during the course of the programme?

i. Is the programme balanced, for example in relation to academic and practical elements, personal development and academic outcomes, breadth and depth in the curriculum?

j. Does the award title reflect the intended learning outcomes of the programme?

k. Is it clear how the intended learning outcomes of the programme will be promoted, demonstrated, and assessed?

l. What has the team done to design and implement e-learning into the programme?

m. Are the identified resources necessary to support the programme and are they in place or committed?

n. Is the programme designed so that students are treated equally, in accordance with The Equality Act 2010?

o. Do programme learning outcomes feature employability and career management skills development?

p. Do placement learning outcomes contribute to the overall coherence and integrity of the programmes, where applicable?

46. The Panel should also ensure that each of the Validation threshold Criteria have been met and note this in the Validation Report Template.

47. The headings in the Validation Report Template or the Validation Threshold Criteria for the programme may provide a useful structure for discussion.

Outcome of the validation

48. At the end of a validation panel meeting, the Panel must decide whether it wishes to recommend approval of the proposal. Observers will be asked to leave the meeting whilst this final discussion and decision making takes place.

49. The Panel's recommendation will fall into one of the following categories:
- **Approval for six years**, without or without conditions and/or required technical corrections, and/or recommendations.
- **Approval for a shorter fixed period**, with or without conditions and/or required technical corrections, and/or recommendations.
- **Not approved** – an invitation given to resubmit.
- **Not approved** – recommendation that the proposal be withdrawn.

50. Approval for six years, which is the standard length of approval, is granted subject to the normal processes of ongoing review and the College's Curriculum Modification Policy.

51. The recommended outcome and any key conditions or required technical corrections may be fed back to the PARRC or Programme Director verbally by the Chair prior to the conclusion of the meeting.

52. A written summary should be given in writing as soon as possible after the meeting. This will be produced by the Secretary and approved by the Panel Chair. It should be made clear that the content of the summary is subject to change, prior to the final report being agreed.

Conditions

53. These are serious issues that must be addressed to the satisfaction of the panel, normally before delivery of the programme can commence or, in the case of a revalidation, to allow the programme to continue after a specified date. When setting conditions, the panel must specify clearly what is to be done, by whom and by when, and what the arrangements will be for ensuring that the given conditions have been satisfied. In certain instances, it may be appropriate to set deadlines for some conditions that fall after the planned start of delivery.

54. Issues not discussed during the day will not be included as conditions unless the panel discusses them with the programme team before issuing the formal report.

Required technical corrections (RTCs)

55. Items that are not serious enough to inhibit the commencement of the programme, but that do need to be addressed as soon as possible, such as changes required to programme handbooks and technical corrections to templates. If the panel chooses to identify the RTCs in a separate list, provided by the Secretary, this list should be appended to the validation report.

56. The PARRC are responsible for addressing any RTCs and reporting progress to the Panel and Academic Board.

Recommendations

57. These should be addressed by the programme director and the programme committee as part of subsequent review and development activities. The programme director is required to submit a formal response to the recommendations to the panel as a follow-up to the validation.

58. In addition to citing conditions and recommendations of approval, the panel may also wish to identify key observations arising from the validation process, to include exemplary features and examples of good practice.

Preparation of the report and validation follow-up

59. The outcome of a validation panel will be fully documented in a report, drafted by the Secretary, which should be finalised and circulated within five weeks of a validation panel meeting. The report should be drafted using the Validation Panel Meeting Report Template in Appendix 1.

60. Panel members will be invited to provide comments on a draft before a final version is agreed. The report, once finalised, will be circulated to key College staff for factual accuracy. Once checked it will then be circulated to the academic

board for approval. Copies should be sent to the PARRC and other relevant committees and individuals.

Responding to conditions and required technical corrections

61. The Programme Director (for recommendations) or PARRC (for Conditions or RTCs) is responsible for co-ordinating the follow-up activity. This includes the provision of evidence to the panel that changes have been made and action taken in response to the conditions and required technical corrections set, as well as the preparation of a formal response to any recommendations. The documentation produced must be sent to the Secretary for onward transmission to the panel. Where they have received responses, panel members must confirm to the Secretary that they are satisfied with the action taken in response to the conditions, required technical corrections and recommendations set.

62. Following validation, the Senior Registrar is responsible for the storage and maintenance of the Programme Specifications and Unit Descriptors (which form the Definitive Programme Documentation) during the life of the programme.

63. The Secretary is responsible for the appropriate storage of relevant documentation and reports relating to the validation process, so that an accurate record is kept of the process.

Revalidation

64. Programmes are normally validated for a period of six years. Towards the end of this period, the continuing appropriateness of provision is reviewed and confirmed via the revalidation process.

65. Programmes going through revalidation will normally follow the process as Programme Validation with a Pre-Validation Scrutiny and subsequent Validation Event.

66. Revalidation proposals should be sent to the SMT prior to any revalidation event, so that they can assess the programme to ensure it still meets the College's strategic objectives, and for any management and resource implications.

67. It is anticipated that some elements of the revalidation process may be less onerous than for a validation, especially if no significant changes have been made to the programme and standards have remained the same.

68. Revalidation may approve a programme for up to a further six years.

69. For revalidations, it is expected that the panel will have the opportunity to meet with a representative group of students (or recent graduates) from the existing programme. The PRRWG will liaise with the Secretary to secure appropriate representation.

70. If the outcome of the process is that re-validation is not approved, then the Senior Management Team will implement the relevant conditions and procedures within the College's Student Protection Plan.

<u>Revalidation in relation to Periodic Review</u>

71. Where the re-validation of a programme is scheduled in the same year as a periodic review, the periodic review should be undertaken at least three months prior to the start of the validation process. This will allow enough time for the outcomes of the periodic review to inform the validation. Relevant elements of the periodic review may also be used within the validation process to avoid unnecessary duplication (e.g., student consultation).

Further information

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education

72. All approved programmes must conform to the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, found at https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

73. Within this website, please note the following especially:

- The Frameworks for HE Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies
- Higher Education Credit Framework for England
- Benchmark statements

Appendix A - Roles and responsibilities of panel members

1. By accepting membership of a validation panel, members are expected to allocate reading time as early as possible following receipt of the documentation and to raise points for clarification and discussion in advance. In the spirit of openness and transparency, the likely topics for discussion should be shared with the Academic Director or Programme Director in advance of a validation panel meeting. As a rough guide, panel members should be asked to submit their initial observations on the documentation to the Secretary within two weeks of receipt. There will follow a dialogue between the panel and internal staff, with a view to clarifying as many issues as possible in advance of a validation panel meeting. This process should ensure that the focus of a validation panel is on the major issues.

2. Depending on the validation type, a combination of all or some of the following members will form a panel:

Validation Panel Chair

3. The Chair's main role is to ensure that a fair judgement about the proposed programme can be made by the end of a validation panel meeting and that issues are explored and debated in a way that adds value to the quality of the proposal. Their key responsibilities are as follows:

Before the meeting

- Read through validation documentation as soon as it is available – if there are problems or points that need clarifying beforehand, it is essential to clear these up with the Academic Director and PARRC, via the Secretary, as soon as possible and at least one week before a validation panel meeting. This is particularly important where there are technical and procedural issues which ought to be clarified prior to a validation panel meeting.
- Review preliminary comments from panel members before the panel meeting.
- Decide whether any internal staff members should be invited to attend all or part of the panel meeting, and issue invitations as appropriate via the Secretary.

During the meeting

- Open discussion by establishing the purpose of the meeting and setting a constructive tone at the outset to promote a good dialogue with the programme team.
- Be transparent by making sure all the issues are on the table – share any concerns with the PARRC.
- Manage the debate by agreeing who will lead questioning and balance the time available to the topics in proportion with importance – this is done during the first private panel meeting.
- Discourage aggressive questioning styles towards internal staff present.
- Encourage everyone to participate but don't let individual members dominate – they may need to cut short contributions that are unproductive or repeating earlier business.

- Have regard to the core guidelines against which new proposals are validated and ensure that, either through the documentation presented or meeting with the team, these are satisfied.
- Guide the panel through the validation options available if there is a shortfall in meeting the core criteria, which range from not validating to combinations of validating with conditions, with required technical corrections (RTCs), with recommendations for improvement and making observations and commendations.
- Highlight resource deficiencies where these present a serious threat to students having a reasonable chance of achieving programme outcomes. A condition should be set which requires the deficiency to be addressed to the satisfaction of the panel. Chairs should refrain from directing the Academic Director in how to solve their resource problems. It is useful, however, in the spirit of sharing the expertise of the panel, to give feedback where, in the panel's judgement, enhancements in approaches to delivery could be considered.
- Close the validation panel meeting by giving provisional feedback on the outcomes and ensuring dates and follow-up actions are specified, including who is responsible for ensuring conditions have been met.

After the meeting:

- Approve a draft of the conditions and recommendations for circulation by the Secretary to the programme team.
- Approve the full report (drafted by the Secretary) for circulation to the panel.
- Confirm in writing to the Academic Director and Programme Director when all the conditions are satisfied. Note: it is the responsibility of the Secretary to co-ordinate submission of the evidence to the Chair and other panel members where appropriate.

4. A new programme proposal should be referred back for further consideration and development if the panel does not have confidence because:
- Resource deficiencies are such that students will not have a reasonable chance of achieving programme outcomes, and there is no strategic commitment to address the shortfall.
- The academic challenge of the programme is not set at the correct level and is defined without engagement with national reference points.

5. **If the panel is not confident that deficiencies can, or will, be remedied through setting validation conditions the outcome must be not to recommend validation.**

External panel member

6. Their main role is to give an independent and objective view of the quality of the proposal and to draw on their wider experience of provision elsewhere which can counter any inward-looking tendencies. Employer representatives will contribute their knowledge of the features of the programmes that lead to a valuable professional, creative or vocational profession.

7. Their contribution to the validation process is to:
   - Take an independent view and be frank where they judge there are shortfalls in quality or standards to be addressed.
   - Recognise and commend good practice.
   - Look at the proposal with a fresh pair of eyes and be corrective to possible tendencies in programme design or learning and teaching which are stale or no longer effective.
   - Challenge assumptions held by the programme team – or the College – and offer a fresh critical, but constructive, perspective.

Academic representative external to the College

8. Their main role is to give an independent and objective view of the quality of the proposal and to draw on their experience of provision within their own institution.

9. Their contribution to the validation process is to provide expertise on:
   - Equivalence in academic standards with comparable programmes across the UK higher education sector.
   - Alignment with relevant external reference points, including the UK Quality Code and relevant subject Benchmark Statements.

Student representative

10. Their main role is to comment on whether the proposal is likely to appeal to students, and on issues relating to student accessibility and support, for example:
    - Whether they feel the methods of learning and assessment described would be accessible to part time as well as full time students, to students with disabilities, and to those of differing ability, culture and gender.
    - Whether the levels of support provided would meet student needs and expectations.

11. They will also be asked to comment on the information provided to students about the new programme, specifically whether the faculty/programme handbook is appropriate and accessible.

12. Further guidance on the role of the student representative will be provided by the College as required.

Validation Secretary

13. Their main role is to prepare the validation report and act as the key point of liaison between the panel and the programme team. They are responsible for co-ordinating the domestic arrangements for the validation, working closely with the Academic Director, Programme Director and the Validation Panel Chair. In particular, they are responsible for:
    - Booking the venue, refreshments, transport and/or accommodation for panel members.
    - Ensuring the documentation is collated and subsequently circulated to the panel.

- Acting as the key point of contact between the panel and the programme team, in respect of collating and sharing the panel's initial observations and circulation of the programme team's responses to these in advance of the validation.
- At a validation panel meeting, keeping minutes on all discussions, including a list of issues that are likely to be identified as conditions, required technical corrections (RTCs) or recommendations.
- Draft the summary of outcomes and circulate an agreed version to the PARRC and other relevant staff.
- Draft the full validation report and circulate an agreed version to the panel, and then to the PARRC and other relevant staff.
- Liaise between the panel and PARRC or Programme Director, as they respond to any conditions, RTCs and/or recommendations.
- Maintain a full e-record of the validation documentation and audit trail (with hard copies as appropriate).

Appendix B

Validation Panel Meeting Report

Programme title:

Award (including exit awards):

Mode(s) of study:

Programme Director:

Location of Delivery:

Awarding Body:

Anticipated Date of First Intake:

___

Validation Panel

Chair (Member of AQAC)
External Panel Member
External Panel Member
Student Representative
 Secretary
In attendance:

___

Section A: Outcome

Approval for six years
Approval for a shorter fixed period
Not approved – invitation to resubmit
Not approved – recommendation that the proposal be withdrawn.

1   Recommended Conditions of validation

2   Required technical corrections (RTCs)

3 Recommendations

The following sections provide a summary of the comments of the panel regarding the programme, including commendations. The section headings are based on the Threshold Criteria for Validation.

Section B: General

Section C: Programme Aims and Outcomes

Section D: Graduate Attribues

Section E : Curriculum

Section F: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Section G: Entry Requirements, Student Progression and Achievement

Section H: Student Support and Guidance

Section I: Learning Resources

Section J: Quality Management and Enhancement

Section K: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Issues
(Good practice; areas for development; support for students with disabilities and learning differences). Note that EDI issues are covered in sections 5,9 &10 of the Threshold Criteria.

Section L: Any other observations
(Please include in this section confirmation that the panel have confirmed that the programme meets all the Validation Threshold Criteria)

Section M: Authorisation of Report

Chair (Member of AQAC)   <date>

Copy sent to Academic Board   <date>

The minutes of the Validation Panel may be attached to this report for additional information and context.