QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES
FOR TAUGHT COURSES AND
RESEARCH AWARDS

August 2016
INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides a short guide to the procedures which the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee, University Research Committee, Graduate Board and Senate have adopted for the validation and annual evaluation of courses, programmes of study and research awards, including those validated by external bodies, and for the review of teaching, research and academic support services. The procedures have been developed and align with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), as published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), to ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification concerned. It is aimed at academic and administrative staff and those at Collaborating Institutions. A separate document has been produced by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor covering the financial arrangement for collaborative provision, copies of which can be obtained from the Registry Executive Officer (Collaborative Provision).

Users of the handbook who require further information on any point should consult the Assistant Registrar or staff in the Registry in the first instance. Further information is also available from the Registry website at: http://www.hud.ac.uk/registry/regulationsandpolicies/qa/

Throughout this handbook the Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for curriculum delivery, and quality assurance and enhancement is referred to as the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning). The Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Research Awards is referred to as the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise).

The Changes included in the August 2016 edition can be found on the next page.
Changes for the August 2016 edition include:

- Throughout: References to ‘Deputy Head of Registry’ revised to refer to ‘Head of Registry’ or ‘Head of Registry (or nominee)’
- Throughout: Addition of Research Committees and Senior Staff to facilitate incorporation of procedures for research degrees
- Throughout: References to ‘Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses’ revised to ‘Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards’
- A2.2 Addition of University Research Committee and Terms of Reference
- A6.2 Addition of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
- A6.4 Revised to include Assistant Registrars
- A6.6 Addition of Dean of Graduate School
- A6.7 Addition of Directors of Graduate Education
- B1.2 Addition of requirement for Schools to include identification of CMA implications within validation documentation
- B2.1 Clarification of consultation with Disability Services in relation to assessment types within validation process
- B7.1 Clarification regarding confirmation of agreement by students affected by course changes added
- B7.2 Clarification regarding confirmation of agreement by students affected by module changes added
- B7.3 Addition of requirement for Schools to draft and consider an action plan following the Periodic Review of Validation Activity
- D1.2 Clarification of requirement for Schools to maintain record of staff meeting DLS requirements for distance learning
- D4.1 Clarification in relation to the production of Annual Evaluation reports in relation to distance learning provision
- F3.1 Clarification of the role of Quality Appraisals
- G (All) Addition of specific reference Research Provision within the focus of Subject Reviews and Revalidations
- H1 Clarification of the Role of Thematic Reviews
- H5 Clarification in relation to the preparation for Thematic Review events
- I9.1 Erroneous reference to ‘Memorandum of Co-operation’ corrected to ‘Contract of Collaboration’
- J6.2 Erroneous reference to ‘PVC (AA)’ replaced with ‘PVC (T&L)’
- L1.1 Clarification regarding the annual evaluation process
- L2.1 Addition of requirement that Annual evaluation reports for taught provision should be submitted by the University’s web-based system
- Appendix B Updated to remove reference to the PRG within the flow chart
- Appendix C Updated to include documentation in relation to research provision
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SECTION A: COMMITTEE STRUCTURE, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1 The Senate

The Articles of Government of the University state that the Senate is responsible for:

a) the consideration of the academic plan of the University and its associated academic activities and the resources needed to support them and for advising the Vice-Chancellor and the University Council thereon;

b) the maintenance of academic standards guided by the Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education;

c) making regulations for the admission of students;

d) making regulations for the examination and assessment of the academic attainment of students;

e) regulating research degrees and postgraduate studies;

f) the curricula and Teaching and Learning strategies;

g) the suspension and expulsion of students from the University;

h) the appointment, removal and regulation of external examiners and assessors;

i) making regulations for and the conferring of academic qualifications and academic distinctions of the University;

j) making recommendations to appropriate bodies for the award of academic qualifications, scholarships, bursaries, prizes and other distinctions;

k) making regulations and recommendations for the award of honorary academic qualifications and titles;

l) such other matters as the University Council or the Vice-Chancellor may assign to it.

2.1 The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee

The Committee is responsible to the Senate for overseeing all matters relating to the development and delivery of taught courses of study and for ensuring the maintenance of appropriate academic standards.

Terms of Reference

i) To determine on behalf of the Senate the quality and standards of teaching provision.

ii) To determine on behalf of the Senate the standards of conduct expected of students.
iiii) To determine on behalf of the Senate the regulations and procedures governing
    the conduct of students.

iv) To determine on behalf of the Senate the standards of attainment associated with
different courses and awards.

v) To approve all courses of study leading to the University’s awards.

vi) To develop and ensure the implementation of a University strategy for teaching
    and learning.

vii) To establish and oversee procedures for the validation, approval and annual
evaluation of all courses of study leading to the University’s awards, including
franchised or collaborative courses, and for the assurance of the quality of those
awards in line with Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) guidance.

viii) To approve the appointment of external examiners for courses of study leading to
    the University’s awards.

ix) To establish and oversee procedures for the review of the University’s Schools
    and Services.

x) To determine on behalf of the Senate the academic structures* through which the
    University’s courses of study should be delivered.

xi) To determine on behalf of the Senate the academic regulations governing
    courses of study leading to the University’s awards.

xii) To determine on behalf of the Senate the development and promotion of lifelong
    learning within the University.

xiii) To promote innovation, creativity and inspiration in teaching, learning and
    assessment.

xiv) To promote the continuing professional development of staff within the University.

* The term academic structures in term of reference x) includes the academic
    management substructure underpinning courses as well as the academic courses per
    se.

To assist it in discharging its responsibilities the Committee will establish panels
whose membership may contain persons who are not themselves members of the
Committee. Such panels shall include the Quality and Standards Advisory Group
(QSAG), and the Standing Committee for Collaborative Provision (SCCP), and ad
hoc panels for validation and review.

2.2 The University’s Research Committee

The University Research Committee (URC) is responsible to the Senate for progress
towards the strategic objectives and targets set by the University in research and
enterprise.
Terms of Reference

i) To determine the University vision and strategy for research, research degree education and business enterprise engagement; along with appropriate targets and performance indicators.

ii) To oversee the development and management of research activity, research degree education, the development and implementation of mechanisms and initiatives to improve the research and enterprise performance of the University and its participation in external reviews.

iii) To maintain oversight of performance in research and research degree education; responding appropriately as necessary.

iv) To interact closely with the University Teaching & Learning Committee and with the major administrative directorates including Human Resources, Student Services, Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment, International, Computing and Library Services, Finance and Estates.

v) To provide informal and flexible fora for the active management and co-ordination of research, research degree education and business development in liaison with the University Research Group (URG), the Graduate Board (GB) and the Business Development and Commercial Group (BDCG).

3 Validation Panels

Validation panels are appointed under procedures determined by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee and report to it. They are normally empowered to act on behalf of the Committee, subject to the requirement to report back. They are primarily concerned with assessing the academic validity of courses and modules in the context of their aims and learning outcomes, of the expertise of the staff, and of the resources available to them.

4 Review Panels

The panels which conduct Revalidation, Subject and Thematic Reviews are appointed under procedures determined by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee/University Research Committee and report to the Senate. They are primarily concerned with reviewing and assessing both the quality of teaching and research in the University and the provision of academic support services.

5 School Boards: Terms of Reference, Membership and Mode of Operation

School Boards are responsible to the Senate which has established terms of reference, membership and mode of operation. Guidelines for the operation of School Boards are detailed in Appendix A.

5.1 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for School Boards are:

i) subject to the approval of Senate, to determine, in the context of the University’s Strategic Plan, and the Senate’s decision with regard to the University’s degree and awards structure, the academic plan for the School;
ii) to approve, and review annually, the enabling strategy for delivery of the academic plan which takes account of resource constraints and identifies strategies including sources of income for overcoming them;

iii) to determine, and approve, the resource allocation model for use within the School;

iv) to promote the development of research in the School and to submit a School research plan annually to the Research Committee for approval, and make regular reports on research activities within the School;

v) subject to the approval of the Senate, or its principal committees where authority has been delegated, to determine:

   a) new academic and research developments within the School’s area of interest,
   b) the development of academic disciplines within an appropriate structure,
   c) the approval, evaluation and review of all courses of study through all modes and at all levels;
   d) to oversee the School's work in making a full contribution to the University International Strategy;

vi) to consider opportunities for collaboration with other Schools on the development of inter-disciplinary courses and activities;

vii) to be responsible to the Senate through the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee for the implementation of assessment regulations with respect to academic courses within the School, and to approve, within guidelines laid down by that Committee:

   a) the appointment of external examiners to academic courses within the School,
   b) the membership of assessment boards;

viii) to comment upon all matters of academic interest within the University;

ix) to assist in the promotion of good practice in the professional development of staff within the School and to approve the staff development plan;

x) to assist in the development of equal opportunities and to approve the equal opportunities report for the School;

xi) to elect representatives to University bodies when requested to do so, including the Boards of other Schools and to receive reports from these representatives;

5.2 Membership

The total membership of the Board shall not normally exceed 50.

i) Vice-Chancellor
    Deputy Vice-Chancellor
    Pro Vice-Chancellors
    Dean
    Heads of Department (or equivalent)

    Member - Ex officio

ii) University Secretary

    In attendance - Ex officio
### QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES FOR TAUGHT COURSES AND RESEARCH AWARDS

**SECTION A**

| iii) Chairs of formally established School Committees | Members |
| iv) Members of the University’s full-time teaching staff | Members - Number to be determined by the Dean within the limit of the overall numbers, and, if necessary, to be appointed from among the total number by a rotation mechanism determined by the School for a period of two years, with half of those appointed replaced each year. |
| v) Members of the teaching staff attached to the School on a part-time, visiting or consultancy basis | Members - Number to be determined by the Dean within the overall number but not more than 10% of overall membership. |
| vi) Research staff | Members - Two elected by and from the research staff of the School for a period of two years. |
| vii) APT&C staff on permanent or fixed term contracts | Members - Number to be determined by the Dean within the limit of the overall numbers, elected by and from the APT&C staff within the School save for the School Administrator and the Working Secretary to the Board (where appointed), and, if necessary, to be appointed from among the total number by a rotation mechanism determined by the School for a period of two years, with half of those appointed replaced each year. |
| viii) Students | Members - Four elected by and from the registered undergraduate and postgraduate students of the School of whom at least one shall be a postgraduate student and one shall be a member of the Students’ Union executive. |
| ix) Representatives of teaching staff from other Boards | Members - Two teaching representatives from other School Boards on a rotation basis; to be appointed by election from other Board. |
| x) An Academic Librarian, as the Director of Computing and Library Services’ nominee, associated with the School | One member; others in attendance at the Board’s discretion. |
| xi) Directors of Estates and Facilities, Computing and Library, Financial, and Student Services, and Head of Registry or their nominee | In attendance. |
5.3 Mode of Operation

i) The Board shall meet once per term at least two weeks prior to Senate in accordance with the University’s Committee Timetable.

ii) The Board shall report to the Senate although business may, in the first instance, be considered as appropriate by the University’s Teaching and Learning, and Research Committees. A copy of the full minutes from School Board will be sent to the Head of Registry along with a summary of decisions which will be forwarded for consideration at Senate.

iii) The Board shall be permitted to delegate such of its powers as it sees fit to a duly constituted executive committee or committee of itself, or to specific individuals, and may make rules relating to its own procedure.

iv) The Dean of the School shall have executive authority to act on behalf of the Board and any of the executive committees, in consultation with any body designated to assist in this capacity by the Board.

v) Voting at meetings, which is restricted to members, shall be by a show of hands except where any member of the Board requests a ballot.

vi) The quorum shall be one third of the membership of the Board of whom at least half shall be from membership categories iv), v) and vi).

6 Roles of Senior Staff

6.1 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

Has overall executive responsibility for the business of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

6.2 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)

Has overall executive responsibility for the business of the University’s Research Committee.

6.3 Head of Registry

Is secretary to the Senate and has overall responsibility for the administrative procedures which underpin the validation of courses and modules and the review of Schools and Services.

6.4 Assistant Registrars

One Assistant Registrar will be secretary to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee. Nominated Assistant Registrars will have overall responsibility for the development of the programme of validation and review for approval by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee/University’s Research Committee. The post holder will also be responsible for preparing the draft membership of each panel on behalf of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee/University’s Research Committee.
6.5 Deans of School

Deans have overall responsibility for ensuring that Schools properly fulfil the role which is given to them by the Senate under four main headings:

i) the annual evaluation of courses of study;

ii) the approval of documentation prepared by Course Committees, Course Leaders and Module Leaders in connection with validation;

iii) the preparation of documentation for periodic reviews – such as subject or thematic reviews;

iv) any actions which may be necessary to satisfy conditions laid down by a validation or review panel.

6.6 Dean of Graduate School

Has overall responsibility to lead on the development and implementation of University policy on postgraduate research programmes, and is responsible for the business of the University’s Graduate Board.

6.7 Directors of Graduate Education

Have responsibility for the School-level implementation and delivery of University policy and strategy for all matters relating to postgraduate research education.

6.8 Module Leaders

Module Leaders are responsible for providing information for inclusion in validation and course annual evaluation reports and for the follow-up of issues which are referred back from the validation or evaluation process. They are expected to:

i) agree and adhere to a timetable of activities;

ii) prepare and present documentation in the required form, including the use of virtual module boxes in the University records management system;

iii) develop a response to any recommendations or conditions which emerge from an evaluation event;

iv) produce a definitive module specification document at the end of the validation process;

v) update the module specification document when any changes to it have been authorised;

vi) ensure the definitive module specification document and any subsequent amendments to it are saved in the University Records Management system.

vii) Conduct an annual evaluation by students of modules under their responsibility, including module evaluation surveys with students and the production of a Module Leader report for inclusion in module boxes.
6.9 Course Leaders

Course Leaders are responsible for the initiation and supervision of the Course Committee's preparations for initial validation, revalidation, course developments, and annual evaluation of the course(s) under its control and for the follow-up of issues which are referred back from either validation, revalidation or annual evaluation.

They are expected to:

i) agree and adhere to a timetable of activities;

ii) prepare and present documentation in an appropriate form, which will normally include the programme specification document(s) and appendices, specifications for validated modules available on the course(s) and specifications for new modules available on the course(s);

iii) lodge validation, revalidation and annual evaluation papers with the secretary of the relevant panel or committee on time;

iv) develop with the Course Committee a response to any recommendations or conditions which emerge from a validation or evaluation event;

v) produce a definitive programme specification and appendices at the end of an initial validation or revalidation event;

vi) update the programme specification document and any appendices when any changes have been authorised;

vii) ensure the definitive programme specification and appendices and any subsequent amendments to it are saved in the University Records Management system.

viii) Conduct an annual evaluation by students of the course(s) under their responsibility, including course evaluation surveys with students.

7 Role of the School Office

7.1 General

Members of the School Office are expected to have a basic working knowledge of:

i) the validation of courses and modules as laid down in the University handbook;

ii) the procedures governing reviews;

iii) University regulations and procedures including the Regulations for Awards and the Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards;

iv) Pearson (HND/C) regulations (where Pearson (HND/C) courses feature significantly in the work of a School).

7.2 In validation

i) The School Office should play an important part in ensuring that documentation is prepared in an appropriate form. Some of the information required may be
prepared by the School Office (e.g. composition of Course Committees, Course Assessment Boards, curricula vitae of staff etc.).

ii) A member of the School Office should be available at validation and review events to offer support to the Dean and the course team, to assist in their smooth running, and to be available for all 'open' meetings of the panel.

7.3 In Quality Appraisals, Internal Quality Audits, Thematic Reviews and Subject Reviews/Revalidations

The School Office should assist in the preparation of the documentation generally and, in particular, should be active in the preparation of the factual information required.

7.4 In Annual Evaluation

It shall be the responsibility of the School Office to assist in the preparation of the statistical return for each course in the School as part of annual evaluation.

7.5 Standard University Templates

The School Office shall be responsible for ensuring the most up to date formats and templates (available from University Records Management System) are used for the following:

i) Student Panel agenda;
ii) Student Panel rolling record;
iii) Course Committee agenda;
iv) Course Assessment Board agenda/minutes;
v) School International Committee agenda;
vi) School Teaching and Learning Committee agenda;
vii) School Board agenda;
viii) Generic minutes template where there is no specified alternative.
SECTION B: VALIDATION

1  The Validation of Courses

A flowchart illustrating the validation process can be found in Appendix B.

The development of courses might range from a development requiring the validation of a range of new modules to a relatively minor variant of an already validated course. The development of courses should be notified to the Registry who, on behalf of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee, will determine whether they are:

i) developments requiring a University validation event; or
ii) developments to be validated at School level.

1.1 Types of Validation events

There are three basic types of validation event:

- a University event;
- a School event;

or  a School event which has been enhanced by a representative of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee as a member of the panel.

The type of validation event held is determined by a number of factors:

- the level of the course;
- the structure;
- whether the proposal represents a new Subject area;
- the amount of new or substantially revised material to be considered (notionally one third or more of the credits for the course would require a University event); and the level of risk associated with the proposed development

In support of the above principles the following aspects of risk are considered:

- the validation history of the course and team;
- the professional context of the course and team;
- the degree of novelty and innovation in the proposed changes;
- the experience of the school/subject/team;
- the impact of the change on the overall course structure across all levels;
- the extent of shared or cross-disciplinary delivery

1.2 Documents Required for Validation

The following is the minimum documentation required for the validation of a new course or route and is subject to additions depending on the nature of the event and risk factors. Documentation should be submitted to Registry for distribution to the validation panel three-weeks before the date of a University validation event:

i) planning and resource approval documentation, including:
   - a statement from the Dean confirming that the new course will be accommodated within the existing space allocation of the School or that refurbished space within the School will be provided and has been costed and agreed by the Director of Estates and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor;
   - a statement from the Director of Computing and Library Services confirming all necessary computing and library facilities and resources are available;
c) a supporting statement from the Director of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment confirming the course has been appropriately researched, does not adversely affect the University's funding position and where relevant meets current visa requirements;
d) course management and staffing structure, including staff CVs for the course leader, module leaders, all permanent teaching staff and where relevant and possible all part-time hourly paid teaching staff.

ii) an introduction and rationale for the course, including an explanation of how the course fits in the portfolio of courses of the School/Department/Subject/Division, information on the potential market for the course (including statistical data demonstrating viability of course) and the rationale for the course design and delivery method.

iii) programme specification supplemented by the following (compulsory) appendices:
   a) demonstration of how course learning outcomes map onto modules*;
   b) demonstration of how course learning outcomes map onto the relevant benchmark statement (where appropriate)*;
   c) demonstration of how personal development planning (PDP) maps onto modules and is progressed through the course*;
   d) demonstration of how course learning outcomes map onto any Professional Body requirements (where appropriate)*;
   e) outline assessment schedule showing the nature and timing of assessments*.

iv) module specification document, which should clearly differentiate new modules, existing modules which have proposed amendments and existing modules for which no amendments are proposed and include copies of the current reading lists for all modules.

v) full report of the School event and confirmation from the Chair of the School panel that any conditions have been met (see 3.2 below).

vi) confirmation of support from the external examiner in consideration of the new course/route development (School or enhanced School event only).

vii) confirmation of the identification of areas which have been impacted by Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) implications (course amendments only).

Note: the programme specification (and * appendices) and module specifications, once validated should be published via the University Records Management system.

2 Role of School Boards in Validation

2.1 It is the responsibility of School Boards to ensure that documentation prepared by Course Committees, Course Leaders and Module Leaders fulfils the defined requirements and is in an appropriate form to be presented to a validation panel established by the University's Teaching and Learning Committee. School Boards must also be satisfied that the design and delivery of courses and modules are compatible with the Teaching and Learning Strategy and any other institutional policies which the Senate may from time to time adopt and that there has been relevant consultation with Disability Services on the implications of assessment types and delivery methods.
2.2 Documentation to be submitted for a University validation should first be subject to scrutiny by a panel within the School independent of the proposing team, and a written record of this should be made available to the University validation panel. If any conditions have been set there should also be written confirmation that the Chair of the School event has seen and approved the revised documentation prior to its submission to the University event.

3 Appointment of Validation Panels

3.1 University validation exercises are conducted by a validation panel appointed by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee, which includes in its membership persons with relevant expertise from both within and outside the University. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) or nominee on behalf of the Committee appoints chairs of validation panels. At the appropriate time the Registry, in consultation with the chair of the panel, prepares a draft membership for each panel on behalf of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

3.2 University validation panels will normally comprise 50% internal and 50% external members, excluding the chair, who is an internal appointee, and the registry representative. Internal membership comprises a subject expert (normally from the School seeking validation approval but who will not have had any previous involvement with the course) and a representative from another School. External membership normally comprises two external members: one from industry, commerce, public service or the professions; and one from the higher education sector. CVs for the proposed external panel members must be approved by Registry on behalf of the PVC (T&L) in advance of a formal invitation being extended.

The external panel member from the higher education sector should not only be academically qualified and experienced in a field directly related to the course under consideration, but should also have knowledge of current trends and practices within quality assurance in UK HE. This would normally be demonstrated by recent involvement in quality assurance events, either within their own UK institution or having been an external panel member at a validation event at another UK institution. They should not have had any close involvement with the University of Huddersfield for at least the preceding three years.

The external panel member from industry should currently (or have been very recently) employed at a middle or senior manager level within a sector directly related to the course under consideration. They should be able to evaluate the module and course learning outcomes in terms of the employability of successful graduates from the course in their own sector. Where they feel reasonable adjustments to the course would improve the employment prospects of graduates, they should be able to give constructive feedback to the panel. They should not have had any close involvement with the University of Huddersfield for at least the preceding three years.

3.3 It is the responsibility of the Registry, when the draft membership of a University validation panel is available, to ensure that none of the external members has had close involvement with the University in the previous three years.

3.4 Enhanced school validation events are conducted by the School Teaching and Learning Committee, or Accreditation and Validation Panel (where separately constituted) enhanced by a member of academic staff from another School acting on behalf of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee. The Pro Vice-
4 Guidelines for Validation Panels

4.1 Validation panels are composed of experienced members of University staff and where relevant external members who must be allowed to exercise their professional judgement as to matters which should be the subject of discussion during a validation event. The University expects, however, that panels will take note as a matter of course of:

i) the relevance of course aims, learning outcomes, structure, and assessment;
ii) the relevance of module aims, learning outcomes, content, and assessment (including confirmation appropriate consultation with Disability Services has taken place);
iii) the outcome and delivery of the course and modules, including the use of C&IT;
iv) the inclusion and progression of PDP through the course and modules;
v) the relationship of staff expertise (research, consultancy/teaching) and staff development to the course under consideration;
vi) the physical resources available to the course;
vii) the alignment of the course with the University Teaching and Learning and Assessment and Feedback Strategies

A proforma/checklist is provided for panel members as a prompt of the above.

4.2 Panels are encouraged to identify strengths as well as weaknesses in the course(s) and modules under consideration.

4.3 Panels will be advised of any general institutional regulations or policies affecting the design and delivery courses and modules and will be asked to ensure compliance with those regulations or policies.

4.4 Panel members shall be provided with, and will be expected to familiarise themselves with:

i) the validation section of the Handbook for Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards;
ii) the University Teaching and Learning and Assessment and Feedback Strategies;
iii) validation documentation as identified in 1.2 above;
iv) the draft programme and administrative arrangements;
v) any other relevant documentation that has been supplied.

4.5 It is the responsibility of the Registry to ensure that external members have an accurate perception of the University’s procedures in relation to validation.

4.6 It is the responsibility of the chair, in consultation with the course leader and the Registry, to draw up a draft programme for a University validation event.

4.7 It is the responsibility of the chair of the School Teaching and Learning Committee, or Accreditation and Validation Panel (where separately constituted), in consultation with the UTLC representative, to draw up a draft programme for an enhanced school event.
4.8 In drawing up an agenda for discussion on the day, panels shall indicate any issues which require the attention of members of the senior management or colleagues responsible for central services.

4.9 Where panels are required to divide up to conduct concurrent discussions it shall normally be the case that at least two members will be involved in any one area of discussion.

4.10 Where matters arise which relate to named postholders it is expected that panels will involve such postholders in discussions.

4.11 If panel members are requested to provide specialist reports as appendices, they should be notified in advance of an event and be asked to endeavour to return such reports within 28 days of an event. Such reports will normally be the responsibility of more than one member of a panel.

4.12 While oral reports on events may be made by the chair of a panel to representatives of course committees, the definitive report is as presented to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

4.13 The reports which panels produce must provide an indication of the nature of the discussions and of the views of the panel on issues relating to the course(s). Where the panel stipulates conditions which must be complied with and/or recommendations which must be carefully considered, these must be clearly defined in the report.

5 Procedure for Progressing the Reports of Validation Panels and Notifications of Changes for Approval by the University Teaching and Learning Committee

5.1 The following procedure will be adopted for progressing reports of University validation panels:

i) the draft report is written and circulated to panel members for confirmation or amendment;

ii) the draft report is circulated to the Dean or nominee so that factual inaccuracies can be notified to the Registry. The Registry will correct such inaccuracies before the report is presented to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee;

iii) the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee will receive the report as approved by panel members. The Committee can either accept the report or refer it back to the validation panel for clarification. It cannot alter the report, although it may append comments;

iv) the report will be considered by the Course Committee and a response to any recommendations or conditions will be prepared. This response may lead to changes to the programme specification or supporting documentation;

v) the response will be presented to the chair of the validation panel for approval on behalf of the panel;

vi) the Dean will be responsible for ensuring that matters raised in a report are followed up, and for reporting to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee when any problems arise;

vii) it is expected that the implementation of any conditions and recommendations will feature in the subsequent annual evaluation reports of the Course Committee.
5.2 The following procedure will be adopted for progressing reports of new courses/routes validated at school validation events and all enhanced School validation events:

i) the School Board will determine procedures for progressing reports of School validation panels consonant with paragraph 5.1 above;

ii) the Dean will ensure that an approved report in the standard format is presented to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee;

iii) a signed statement from the chair of the School validation panel will be sent to the Registry to confirm that any conditions set have been met.

5.3 The following procedure will be adopted for notifying changes approved at a school validation event to:

i) course/route title;

ii) mode of delivery or attendance;

iii) new campus delivery location

A signed statement from the chair of the School validation panel will be sent to the Registry to confirm that any conditions set have been met.

6 Mechanism for Appeal Against the Outcome of a Validation Event

6.1 If the School Board believes there is cause for appeal against the outcome of a validation event it may appeal to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee clearly stating the grounds for appeal. The Committee will establish a small group of different composition to the original panel to consider the matter.

7 Changes to Validated Courses and Modules

7.1 Changes to Course Documents

Course teams may find it desirable or necessary to make changes to programme specifications. The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee has empowered School Teaching and Learning Committees, or Accreditation and Validation Panels (where separately constituted), to approve minor changes to existing courses. Confirmation of consideration of changes at course committee and by the external examiner must be included in the documentation submitted for approval.

Confirmation of discussion and agreement with students affected by the changes in line with University guidance (including CMA implications) must be included in the documentation.

The chair of the school event is responsible for confirming the changes to existing courses do not raise issues which ought to have been referred to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee. In addition, the chair of the school event is responsible for confirming that resources (including C&LS resources) are in place for the proposed courses.

7.2 Changes to Module Documents

Module Leaders may find it desirable or necessary to make changes to module specification documents or to devise new modules for use within validated courses. The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee has empowered School Teaching and Learning Committees, or Accreditation and Validation Panels (where separately constituted), to act on behalf of School Boards:
i) to approve new modules;

ii) to make changes to existing modules (e.g. in the content or in the strategies for teaching and learning or for assessment). STLC/SAVPs should approve changes to the assessment of modules but any other changes could be signed off by Chairs of School Teaching and Learning Committees (or SAVPs where appropriate);

New modules which are intended for use in a new course which will be the subject of a University validation event will be submitted to the University validation panel for approval.

Confirmation of consideration of changes to modules at course committee and support from the external examiner must be included in the documentation submitted for approval. Confirmation of discussion and agreement with students affected by the changes in line with University guidance (including CMA implications) must be included in the documentation submitted for approval.

The chair of the school event is responsible for confirming the changes to existing modules do not raise issues which ought to have been referred to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee. In addition, the chair of the school event is responsible for confirming that resources (including C&LS resources) are in place for the proposed courses.

7.3 Periodic Review of Validation Activity
The Registry will conduct an annual quality appraisal of SAVP activity for reporting to the University Teaching and Learning Committee. Schools should draw up an action plan in response to the review report. The review report and School action plan should be considered and discussed at the second SAVP meeting of each academic session.

8 Termination of Courses

8.1 Where courses are to be discontinued an exit strategy should be drawn up by the course team, which identifies all relevant information relating to the course closure. The exit strategy should be approved by the School’s Management/ Executive Committee and monitored via the School Teaching and Learning Committee.
1 Introduction

1.1 Special arrangements apply to the validation of ‘Major with Minor’ undergraduate courses which fall within identified parameters. Following notification of the proposal to the Assistant Registrar, such courses will be validated within the School by either the School Teaching and Learning Committee or the SAVP. Joint courses which do not fall within the identified parameters should be notified to the Registry who will determine the nature of the event in accordance with Section B1.1.

2 Underpinning Principles for ‘Fast-Track’ Major/Minor Validation

In order to be considered for a fast-track validation, the proposed course must conform to the following principles:

2.1 Major Subject Minor Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major Subject</th>
<th>Minor Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total credits at foundation level</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total credits at post-foundation level</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum core credits</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum optional credits to be taken</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Major and minor combinations may only be approved for subject areas which are already offered as a single honours degree.

2.3 The modules offered within the major or minor combination remain invariant irrespective of the other major or minor subject with which they are paired.

3 Validation

3.1 Documentation submitted for validation should address the following:

i) Title

The titles of the named major and minor disciplines should normally be those of the parent discipline course – explanations for any discrepancies should be provided.

ii) Rationale, aims and learning outcomes

These should be described for each major or minor component with an emphasis on the rationale for the combination of modules, the aims of the components and the learning outcomes to be achieved.

iii) Entry qualifications

Regulations for admission will be in accordance with Section D of the University’s Regulations for Awards. Additional regulations for admission should be described in line with the course documents from which the major or minor is drawn.

iv) Structure

The compulsory and optional modules included in each component should be listed and reference made to details of level, credit rating, and any pre-requisites.

Module specifications of validated modules are not required.

Opportunities for transfer into or out of the major or minor should be described where these are available.
v) **Assessment**
   The general principles and regulations governing assessment, progression, examinations, general assessment criteria, internal and external examiners and moderation shall be in accordance with Section E of the University Regulations for Awards. Where appropriate, these should be supplemented by the assessment regulations prescribed in the course documents for the major combination included in the award. Any specific regulations not included in these documents should be specified at the validation stage.

Decisions about the award of credit for modules, student progression, condonement, extenuating circumstances and the classification of awards will be made by the Course Assessment Board for the course from which the major combination is drawn. Membership of the Board should be augmented to include at least one representative from each minor combination to be considered at the Board.

vi) **Staffing and management**
   Responsibility for admission and pastoral care of students will rest with the School providing tuition in the major discipline.

   Responsibility for the teaching assessment and quality assurance of the course will be shared appropriately between the Schools/Departments responsible for the major and minor disciplines involved.

   Annual evaluation will be undertaken in association with that of the parent courses.

   Each School will designate a ‘major/minor subject leader’ who will be responsible to the Dean of the School for the recruitment, admission, teaching assessment and pastoral care of the students.

vii) **Guidance and counselling**
   The School providing the major course will allocate each student to a personal tutor.
SECTION D  THE VALIDATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING PROPOSALS

1  General Considerations

1.1 This section describes the processes involved in the validation of Distance Learning (DL) proposals - the first part of the section addresses the validation of courses delivered entirely by distance learning; section 6 addresses the validation of the delivery of a specific module by distance learning. DL is a mode of delivery whereby teaching content (on-line and hard copy), academic mentoring, assessment and all other pedagogic and pastoral functions are provided and maintained by University staff for students who study (usually part-time) at locations remote from the University, such that teaching staff and students do not ever meet in the same physical location and may or may not make use of flexible delivery methods to meet and interact 'virtually'. Courses where students and teaching staff meet for the purposes of an induction only and all other aspects of the course are delivered as described above will be classed as DL for the purposes of validation and reporting. Distance Learning differs from Collaborative Learning in that there is no element of collaboration with another institution for the provision of local support.

1.2 All staff responsible for designing and delivering on-line materials must meet the University's minimum training requirement, as defined in the Digital Literacies for Staff (DLS) grid. It is the responsibility of schools via STLC/SAVP to maintain records of staff who meet the training requirements and to check and confirm that all relevant staff meet the training requirements before validation.

1.3 These procedures have been devised to ensure:

i) that the processes of validation give full consideration to the mechanisms and resources required for delivery of the courses and to support students, as well as to their academic content;

ii) that both the University and the staff team are provided with an opportunity to evaluate and develop the course in the light of experience so as to assure the highest quality standards.

2  Administrative Procedures for Validation

2.1 The initiative to consider the validation of a course of Distance Learning study must be taken by the School responsible for that subject area. The proposed financial and resource arrangements must be approved by the Dean of the School.

2.2 Courses, including their mode of delivery, must be validated before recruitment can commence.

2.3 All Distance Learning proposals will require a University validation.

2.4 The procedures for validating a Distance Learning proposal will be the same as for a University validation for a course delivered at the University (see Section B. of the University’s Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards), except where noted below under 3.

3  The Validation Process

3.1 The purpose of the validation event, in addition to that for a course being delivered internally, will be to establish that the proposed course is capable of being delivered
in a Distance Learning environment, and that the School has the resources and expertise to support the course and the students enrolled on the course.

3.2 The composition of the validation panel will be as detailed in section B of this Handbook and the subject specialist external panel member must have experience of distance learning.

3.3 The course documentation should, in addition to the content specified in Section B 1.2 ‘Documents required for validation’, address the following issues:

i) **Rationale for the course**
   a) A clear rationale for the proposed distance learning course should be provided which explains the difference between the proposed course and that of other courses within the Department and the School.
   b) The rationale should consider the relationship of the proposed course to the University’s Teaching and Learning Strategy, clearly identifying the responsibilities of each category of staff.
   c) If the course is also delivered in a conventional face-to-face mode, the rationale should explain why it is considered appropriate to deliver the course by distance learning and why it is appropriate to deliver it through the particular means (e.g. internet or hard copy) proposed.

ii) **Admissions policy**
   a) Any variations to University-based admission requirements or specific provision for identifying applicants to whom Distance Learning is an appropriate delivery mechanism should be detailed, including, where appropriate, minimum levels of C&IT proficiency and English language competence.

iii) **Target Market**
   a) The target market for the course should be described, including the location of the students and the plans for promoting the award. If it is intended that students will be located outside the UK, any issues of foreign government approval and relevant local laws relating to, inter alia, consumer protection, employment, packaging and postal despatch should be addressed.

iv) **Delivery and support of the course**
   a) The student materials being provided should be described, whether they are being developed in-house or bought in, how they will be updated and of the legal issues (in particular those of copyright) which have been considered.
   b) The means of delivery of the teaching and library materials must be described in detail, as must any implications for potential students in terms of requirements for access to IT equipment, specific levels of software and so on. Any proposed arrangements for access to library material through other institutions should be described. Where relevant, the implications of delivering teaching materials and assessment across time zones should be considered.
   c) The arrangements for providing students with feedback should be provided, including through what medium (e.g. on-line, e-mail) and arrangements for follow-up support.
   d) The arrangements by which students will be able to communicate with University staff should be defined.
   e) If student collaborative learning will be a feature of the course, a statement of how it will be achieved should be provided, including a description of
facilities such as electronic discussion groups, live chat rooms and group work.

f) The specific technical support which may be proposed for staff and/or students should be described. It should be made clear if no technical support will be provided for students, especially if the course will be delivered over the Internet.

g) CVs of academic staff members involved in the delivery should be provided along with confirmation from the School that staff meet the training requirements of the Digital Literacies for Staff grid and details of any provision proposed for staff development in respect of the producing and updating of distance learning materials (if in-house) and/or the use of technology.

h) Proposals for the provision of the necessary time for academic staff to support delivery of the course and the development and updating of student materials (if in-house) should be described. This could include the basis upon which academic members of staff will have their timetables credited with teaching hours.

i) Details should be given of any Departmental/School requirements for hardware and software;

j) A statement of the requirement for technical and administrative support staff to be involved in the course should be provided;

k) A draft student handbook should be submitted, which should include detailed explanations of what students can expect from the course, what support they will receive, and of progression and assessment criteria. If the course is being delivered over the Internet, the draft handbook should state minimum hardware and software specifications, together with guidance to students in the event of loss of Internet access. Where it is not delivered over the Internet, but the student materials require students to have access to C&IT equipment (e.g. if CDs are used), students should be advised of the minimum hardware and software specifications;

l) A draft induction programme should be submitted.

v) Assessment and quality assurance

a) Arrangements for quality assurance and external examiners should be defined.

b) The means of assessment should be described where they will differ from an internally-delivered course, and any specific arrangements which are proposed because of the Distance Learning delivery.

c) The monitoring mechanisms which are proposed to ensure that the expected level of student support is being provided should be described.

d) The monitoring mechanisms which are proposed to record students' progress and identify students experiencing difficulties, including the arrangements for gathering student feedback on their learning experience should be described.

3.4 The initial approval for a Distance Learning course shall be for a maximum period of five years.

3.5 The validation event will consist of discussions between the panel and representatives of the course team.

3.6 The Assistant Registrar or nominee will prepare a report of the event. The report will be approved by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee.
4. **Annual evaluation**

4.1 The annual evaluation report should conform to the standard pro forma approved by the University including a discussion of any issues arising from Distance Learning delivery. The report will be considered by the School delivering the course at its annual evaluation meeting.

5. **Revalidation**

5.1 Revalidation is a mechanism through which the Senate reviews and assesses the quality of provision of University courses. The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for ensuring that each approved Distance Learning course is subject to re-validation at least once every five years.

5.2 The course team will submit documentation which will be scrutinised by means of a revalidation event held at the University which will be organised by the Registry on behalf of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee. The membership of the approval panel will be as defined in Section B of this Handbook.

5.3 Revalidation of Distance Learning courses will concentrate on the following:

i) evidence of continuing demand;
ii) appropriateness of delivery medium and learning resources;
iii) feedback from students;
iv) consideration of annual evaluation reports;
v) student progression and achievement statistics;
vii) procedures for quality assurance;
viii) rationale for the School’s continuing involvement.

The documentation submitted to the panel should focus on issues listed above and should incorporate critical appraisal where appropriate.

5.4 The revalidation event will consist of discussions between the panel and representatives of the course team.

5.5 The Assistant Registrar or nominee will prepare a report of the event. The report will be approved by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

6. **Validation of individual modules to be delivered on a distance learning basis**

6.1 The School must secure confirmation from the Head of Registry that the extent to which delivery of a course is undertaken by means of distance learning does not require the course in its entirety to be subject to a full distance learning validation event.

6.2 The School appoints an external referee or scrutineer (who has had no close involvement with the University in the previous three years) with appropriate subject expertise and experience in distance learning models to look at the module, its learning materials and its assessment. The nomination of the scrutineer must be approved by the Head of Registry in advance of any involvement in the validation.

6.3 The referee or scrutineer submits a written report on the proposal for consideration by the SAVP. The report should cover:

i) is the module coherent in terms of its content and aims?
ii) do the proposed e-learning processes/arrangements comply with the QAA Code of Practice and University regulations?
iii) is the proposed assessment appropriate and secure?
iv) are the mechanisms for students to express their views and share experiences with others sufficient?

6.4 The written report and the full set of learning and assessment materials must be submitted for approval by the SAVP.

6.5 It is the responsibility of the SAVP to check and confirm that staff designing or delivering modules meet the training requirements of the Digital Literacies for Staff grid.
SECTION E: THE VALIDATION OF COURSES WHICH LIE OUTSIDE THE CATS FRAMEWORK

1 Validation of Courses

The Senate may exceptionally give approval for the design of courses of study leading to awards of the University which lie outside the CATS framework.

1.1 Documentation Required for Validation

The following is the minimum documentation required for a course to be validated:

i) **Context of the course**
   a) introduction and rationale (including institutional policies and plans),
   b) statement on resources (signed by the Dean of the School),
   c) curricula vitae of the course team, and research and staff development activities relevant to the course,
   d) a signed resource statement from Computing and Library Services.

ii) **Definitive course document**
   a) aims and objectives of the course,
   b) regulations for admission, assessment, progression and award,
   c) course structure and rationale, syllabuses and teaching methods,
   d) course management,
   e) full report of the School event and confirmation from the Chair of the School panel that any conditions have been met.

1.2 Validation Procedures

The validation procedures will normally be in accordance with those specified in sections B3 to B8. In cases where the course is also subject to external validation the procedures may be modified to take account of the requirements of the external body and to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

2 Annual Evaluation, Minor Changes and Revalidation

Courses which lie outside the CATS framework will follow the standard University procedures for annual evaluation, the approval of minor changes to courses and the revalidation of courses as specified in sections L, B and G of this handbook.
1. School Reviews

The evaluation of the strategic direction and performance of the School within the University and the audit of the operation of its quality assurance and enhancement arrangements along with an examination of its assessment, teaching and learning and research strategies is undertaken through mechanisms including Quality Appraisals, Subject Review, PSRB Reviews, HEFCE and UNIAC audits and most regularly through the mechanism of the Annual Planning Round. Externality to the process is provided through the periodic audits of HEFCE and PSRBs to which all Schools are exposed.

2. Service Reviews

The evaluation of the strategic direction and performance of the Services within the University and the audit of the operation of its quality assurance and enhancement arrangements is undertaken through mechanisms including Quality Appraisals, UNIAC audits and most regularly through the mechanism of the Annual Planning Round.

3. Quality Appraisals

3.1 The Function of Quality Appraisals

Quality appraisals are an audit of existing practice in a small defined area which is reported to the Quality and Standards Advisory Group. The purpose of quality appraisals is to provide evidence to assist the University in ensuring that its policies and procedures operate effectively and are being implemented consistently across the Institution.

3.2 Types of Quality Appraisal

3.2.1 School/Service quality appraisals may cover a wide range of topics related, but not limited to:
   i) the operation of formal academic committees;
   ii) course documentation;
   iii) course/module evaluation and review mechanisms;
   iv) implementation of teaching and learning strategies;
   v) regulatory compliance;
   vi) the student learning experience.

3.2.2 Service quality appraisals will cover activities, identified on an ad hoc basis, which support the student learning experience. This may include the processes for supporting centrally serviced committees, such as University Teaching and Learning Committee and University Research Committee (and any other committees outside of Registry).

3.3 Evidence Required for Quality Appraisals

3.3.1 The minimum evidence required for each quality appraisal will be specified by at least 1 month in advance and will have an emphasis on evaluating processes against existing University regulations, policies and procedures.
3.3.2 It is the responsibility of the School/Service being appraised to ensure that documentation is prepared in an appropriate format to be presented to the quality appraisal panel.

3.4 Appointment of Quality Appraisal Panels

Panels will normally comprise of a minimum of 2 members of staff not associated with the School/Service where the quality appraisal is taking place (usually 2 members of Registry staff, one of whom normally will be a senior member of the Service). The panel may be accompanied by any member of staff, independent from the School/Service being appraised in accordance with criteria defined by QSAG/Graduate Board.

3.5 Conduct of Quality Appraisals

3.5.1 The schedule of quality appraisals for each academic year will be determined by the Quality and Standards Advisory Group/Graduate Board, on behalf of UTLC/URC, and incorporated into the annual review schedule.

3.5.2 Quality appraisals are paper-based exercises conducted as a desk-based activity by the panel, but if appropriate may include meeting(s) with relevant members of staff and students.

3.6 Reports of Quality Appraisals

3.6.1 It is the responsibility of the quality appraisal panel to ensure that a report of the documentation presented as part of the quality appraisal is prepared in an appropriate format to be presented to the School or Service being appraised to enable them to identify and confirm actions to be taken to address any issues identified.

3.6.2 Reports will detail the conduct observed, draw conclusions and make recommendations.

3.6.3 The Dean/Director or Head of Service, or nominee, will receive the final report and will draw up a formal response and action plan to be presented for consideration by the Quality and Standards Advisory Group/Graduate Board, on behalf of UTLC/URC.

4. Internal Quality Audits (IQA)

4.1 The purpose of an Internal Quality Audit is to scrutinise in-depth areas of rapid change and development or to determine the nature of problems and to report on action and support required where issues of concern have been raised – for example through the annual evaluation process or other review mechanism.

4.2 The precise terms of reference, model of audit, panel membership and means by which the report of the audit will be considered will be agreed with the PVC (T&L)/PVC (R&E) in advance of commencing the Internal Quality Audit.
SECTION G: SUBJECT REVIEW AND REVALIDATION

1 The Function of Subject Review and Revalidation

The main focus of subject review and revalidation is the holistic consideration of the curriculum, revalidation of the suite of taught courses which comprise that subject area and research activities. The two elements of subject review and revalidation are separated into two activities with the first element (subject review) informing the second element (revalidation).

The purpose of a subject review is to:

i) discuss issues relevant to and generated by the subject area team under review
ii) consider curriculum development plans and broad proposals, which subsequently feed into the standard validation process as necessary
iii) promote the discussion of quality enhancement and innovation in course delivery within the subject area
iv) evaluate the operation of the subject area against the University regulations and quality procedures
v) consider research development plans and promote discussion of the quality of research degree provision

The review is intended to be a helpful, consultative and supportive mechanism and includes internal, student and external academic (and where appropriate) industrial input.

Where there are no planned changes to taught courses the revalidation will be confirmed as part of the subject review event. Where there are planned changes to the taught courses the subject review discussions will inform the detailed development of course changes, which will be considered by the School Accreditation and Validation Panel. Where necessary further comments would be sought from the external panel members involved in the subject review event.

Each subject area (notionally based on QAA’s JACS subject classifications and recognising School boundaries) will be reviewed at least once every five years in accordance with a programme determined by Schools and the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee on behalf of the Senate. The University’s Research Committee will be notified of the review schedule once confirmed by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

2 The Format of Subject Review and Revalidation

2.1 The format of these events should normally:

i) have been preceded by an exercise arranged by Registry to evaluate the alignment of the subject area’s activities with the University’s regulations and quality procedures and following the format as detailed in Appendix D,
ii) be no longer than a day long and timed to ensure that teams are in a position to review their curriculum at a time that is sensible for course development and can be revalidated before the end of the academic year concerned,
iii) have external involvement: a panel member from outside the School, one academic representative from outside the University (to be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)/(Research and Enterprise) or nominee on behalf of the relevant Committee) who has had no close involvement with the
University in the previous three years, a student representative and, at the discretion of the review panel chair, one external representative from industry, iv) include meetings with staff and students from across the range of provision.

3 Documentation Required for Revalidation and Subject Reviews

3.1 The documentation should be submitted to Registry for distribution to the panel three-weeks before the date of the review and should comprise a self-evaluation document which should provide:

i) an overview of curriculum developments and improvements and their drivers
ii) an identification of the key issues the team wants to explore as part of the review
iii) an overview of research activities and their drivers

Evidence should be drawn from Student Panels, module evaluation, external examiner reports, peer observation of teaching and annual evaluation.

3.2 The self-evaluation document should be supported by:

i) a copy of the report of the compliance exercise together with the team’s response to that report,
ii) full set of Programme and Module Specification Documentation for the current courses delivered in the subject area under review, including copies of the current reading lists
iii) staff CVs for the subject area leader, course leaders, module leaders, all permanent teaching staff, professoriate and where relevant and possible all part-time hourly paid teaching staff
iv) the most recent annual evaluation reports (taught and research), including associated external examiner reports for taught provision and feedback forms for courses in the subject area
v) results of the most recent course evaluation exercises - plus the latest NSS and PRES results
vi) a summary of the most recent PSRB reports/engagements where relevant
vii) a sample course (taught and research provision) and module handbook

4 Reports of Revalidation and Subject Reviews

4.1 Following the review, Registry will produce a draft report for approval by the review panel. The report will normally be passed to the School within 4 weeks of the date of the event.

4.2 The subject area team will draw up a formal response (with clear actions) to the report and arrange for both to be considered by the next available Course Committee and School Board. The report and School’s response should then be submitted to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee/University’s Research Committee.

4.3 Course teams should include specific proposals for the extent and timing of subsequent course or module changes as part of the formal response so that decisions regarding the nature of the revalidation event(s) can be determined.

4.4 Feedback on the review and action plan should be reported as part of the next annual evaluation process.
SECTION H: THEMATIC REVIEWS

1 The Function of Thematic Reviews

Thematic Reviews are intended as an open review to enhance practice across the Institution in a strategic area. The purpose of thematic reviews is to evaluate the strategic direction and performance of the theme across the University, to audit the area of work and its operation and to ensure appropriate quality assurance and enhancement arrangements are in place. The review will be concerned with both ‘fitness of purpose’ and ‘fitness for purpose’. A programme of themes for review will be determined by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee/University’s Research Committee on behalf of the Senate.

2 The Content of Thematic Reviews

Thematic reviews allow close scrutiny of key areas and their operation across the University to allow attention to detail, and to links between different units, that other quality assurance processes may not produce. The aim of thematic reviews is to evaluate the area under consideration in relationship to university, service and School mission statements, aims and objectives, strategic plans and the external environment.

Thematic reviews will focus on an areas relationship, as appropriate to the theme being reviewed, with:

i) quality assurance, management and enhancement issues;
ii) teaching and learning, and assessment;
iii) C&IT strategies;
iv) University’s Strategic plans;
v) student retention, progression and achievement;
vi) research and scholarly activity;
vii) policies for staff development;
viii) the articulation and assurance of standards;
ix) external reports and annual evaluation;
x) links with professional bodies, employers, and other external organisations;
xii) links between Schools and Services in the University;
xiii) customer care;
xiv) cost effectiveness.

3 Documentation Required for Thematic Reviews

The documentation submitted to thematic review panels should utilise existing documents wherever possible but should include the following:

i) self-evaluation reports (not exceeding 4-6 sides of A4) where a service is responsible for the area, highlighting current perceived strengths and achievements, matters requiring and receiving attention and focusing on the relevant issues listed in paragraph 2 above;
ii) self-evaluation reports from Schools (not exceeding 4-6 sides of A4) highlighting current perceived strengths and achievements, matters requiring and receiving attention and focusing on the issues listed in paragraph 2 above;
iii) an appendix document of appropriate supporting information such as relevant regulations, procedures and policies relating to the theme.
4 Appointment of Thematic Review Panels

4.1 Thematic review panels are appointed to act on behalf of the Senate and report to it. The chair of the panel will normally be a senior academic member of staff. At the appropriate time the Assistant Registrar, in consultation with the chair, of the panel will prepare a draft membership for the panel, approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)/ (Research & Enterprise). External membership of the panel will reflect the nature of the theme under consideration.

4.2 In addition to the chair, panels must normally comprise at least:

i) one senior member from a School in the University;
ii) a senior member from a Service in the University;
iii) a member of a major University Committee;
iv) two external members who are recognised as having relevant expertise and who have not had a close association with the University over the previous three years;
v) a representative from the Students’ Union.

5 Conduct of Thematic Reviews

5.1 The Assistant Registrar will circulate the documentation for consideration by the panel. After receipt of the documentation the panel will hold a pre-meeting, which may be held virtually, to draw up a list of issues for consideration during the thematic review, a draft programme and allocation of responsibilities.

5.2 The programme for each review is determined by the chair of the panel and the Assistant Registrar following the pre-meeting with members of the panel.

5.3 The programme typically should include the following:

i) a meeting with key users/stakeholders,
ii) a meeting with representatives of formally established committees or groups,
iii) meeting(s) with a sample group of staff involved in the area,
iv) meeting(s) with relevant support staff,
v) meeting(s) with a range of students undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research students and recent graduates (if appropriate),
vi) inspection of facilities (if appropriate).

6 Reports of Thematic Reviews

6.1 Panels are asked to report in detail on their conduct of the review, to draw conclusions and to make recommendations.

6.2 Following the review, Registry will produce a draft report for approval by the review panel before submission of a final report to the University's Teaching and Learning Committee/University's Research Committee.

7 Response by Schools or Services

7.1 The Schools or Services must prepare and submit a report on the actions taken in response to the findings of the panel to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee/University’s Research Committee within one calendar year of the review.
SECTION I: COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

1 General Considerations

1.1 This section describes the processes and procedures involved in the validation of collaborative provision (CP) proposals associated with the delivery of University credit by an approved partner institution under the categories of CP contained within section 2 (below). Guidance in relation to work-based learning, placements, and study abroad arrangements will be as defined in the Managed Work Placement guidance document.

1.2 It is recognised that CP arrangements need to reflect a diversity of local circumstances and it is essential to establish a framework of principles and procedures which define and protect the interests of the institutions involved. In the context of the proliferation of CP agreements such procedures are the principal means by which the University can assure the quality of the courses delivered by external institutions on its behalf and the learning experience of University students studying these courses.

1.3 In order to ensure the integrity of CP agreements the partner institutions must undertake a commitment to maintain procedures for quality assurance and control, identifying appropriate channels of communication, authority, accountability, and executive action.

1.4 Onward or subsequent contracting of any University award to a third party (sometimes referred to as serial franchising) is not permitted under any circumstances.

1.5 All marketing and publicity information pertaining to the collaborative agreement issued by the collaborating institution will require the specific prior approval of the relevant School on behalf of the University.

2 Categories of Collaborative Provision

The University operates the following categories of collaborative provision:

2.1 Franchise
A franchise describes the arrangement whereby the whole, part of (for example one year of a two year course), or discrete parts (such as individual modules) of a course are delivered in an institution other than the University by academic staff not employed by the University.

2.2 Designed and Delivered
Designed and delivered describes the arrangement whereby a programme of study is developed by an external institution and presented for validation by the University as an award of the University. Once validated, the delivery of the award is undertaken by the external institution.

2.3 Off-campus Delivery of University Provision Led by University Staff (ODUPLUS)
This describes an arrangement whereby a course validated by the University and taught by University staff is delivered at an off-campus location. It is the role of the partner institution to support student learning through provision of an appropriate range of learning resources, including library and computing facilities, and administrative, promotional and marketing services. The proportion of teaching by
University staff must constitute at least one third of the total taught delivery for each module. All learning materials must be produced by the University of Huddersfield.

2.4 Joint Awards
A joint award is a single course devised and delivered jointly between two or more institutions and leading to the conferment of a single award in the name of all partners. Arrangements for the validation of joint awards are detailed separately in this Handbook.

2.5 Articulation
An articulation arrangement describes the situation whereby the University and an external institution enter into a formal joint agreement to confirm that the learning outcomes and standards required for the award of University credit can be satisfactorily demonstrated through successful completion of the external institution’s own award or credit. Such an agreement would allow entry to an identified University award with advanced standing. Arrangements for the validation of articulation arrangements are detailed separately in this Handbook.

3 Administrative Procedures for the Validation of Collaborative Provision Activity

Not all of the following considerations will apply to all proposals. An initial consultation with colleagues in the Registry will clarify which elements require completion depending in the categorisation of the proposal presented and existing contracts with the partner institution in question.

3.1 Indicative Approval

3.1.1 The initiative to enter into a collaborative arrangement with another institution is taken by the School owning the course. The proposed financial and resource arrangements must be approved by the Dean of the School. Curriculum or academic matters in relation to collaborative provision must be approved by the School Teaching and Learning Committee, or Accreditation and Validation Panel (where separately constituted). Where the course includes modules delivered by another School on a servicing basis, the prior written agreement of that School must also be obtained.

3.1.2 For all proposals, written confirmation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Pro Vice-Chancellor that the proposal satisfies the University’s indicators necessary for progressing a new collaborative arrangement must be obtained before the proposal is progressed.

3.2 Business Case

3.2.1 The Dean will submit a formal business case of approximately 5 pages to the University’s Standing Committee for Collaborative Provision (SCCP) giving a brief description of the nature of and rationale for the proposal, detailing the general proposals for its costing and resourcing, including the costs of validation and revalidation in addition to any standard annual costs that may apply. Where the University has no existing links with an external institution, the case made by the Dean should include explicit references to the institution’s mission, existing provision and strategic aims.

3.2.2 The documentation must include an initial financial statement agreed by Financial Services indicating the costs/charges to be borne by each partner.
3.2.3 Where the external institution has no current collaborative links with the University, the Business Case must be supported by the report of a rapporteur’s visit to the proposed partner undertaken by a member of the School submitting the proposal.

3.2.4 The rapporteur’s visit is undertaken as part of the initial development, and the report should provide information under the following headings:
   i) the institutional setting, namely range of provision, size, and management structure;
   ii) a brief summary of the course to be franchised;
   iii) anticipated demand for the course;
   iv) resources available for the course, both human and physical;
   v) proposals for staff development;
   vi) arrangements for quality assurance, including appointment of external examiners;
   vii) other relevant information.

3.2.5 The Business Case must be supported by signed statements from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), the Head of Registry, the Director of Finance and, where the external institution is overseas, the International Office.

3.2.6 For overseas institutions, any local or in-country government approvals which are required must be identified as part of the Business Case presentation with an indication of likely timescales and processes for these to be satisfied. The SCCP should be assured that appropriate actions will be taken to confirm such approvals which will need to be secured before the course can begin operation.

3.2.7 The University reserves the right to require a visit by a representative of its Computing and Library Services at any point if deemed necessary.

3.3 Institutional Approval

3.3.1 Where the University has no previous relationship with the proposed partner institution, an institutional approval event shall be organised to establish that the educational objectives and methods of the proposed partner are compatible with the University’s strategy and objectives.

3.3.2 Information in support of institutional approval should include reference to the following at the strategic and managerial level – where the partner institution has particular strengths which do not fall into the categories below, these should also be included:

   i) general introduction to the partner institution:
   ii) the institutional setting, namely range of provision, size, and management structure, and if overseas, its position within the local higher education system
   iii) history of relationship with the University (if any) and/or other experience of HE provision;
   iv) organisation and Management of the partner institution:
   v) approaches to academic management and development
   vi) Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategies
   vii) procedures for resource allocation and monitoring
   viii) management of standards
   ix) Quality Assurance processes
   x) approaches to quality enhancement
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The documentation should include copies of relevant internal policies, procedures and plans.

3.3.3 The proposed arrangements will be scrutinised by means of an approval event at the institution concerned, which will be organised by the School. The process of approval must include consideration of the facilities and resources which will be accessed by the proposed collaboration.

3.3.4 The approval process is undertaken by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (or nominee) and the Head of Registry (or nominee). The SCCP has the authority to request additional members (such as a representative of Computing and Library Services) as necessary.

3.3.5 The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a report on the event for approval at SCCP. The report will indicate whether or not the approval is to be supported, any recommendations to be considered in the development of the relationship and any specific issues to be addressed by subsequent course validations.

3.3.6 Institutional Approval programme will usually be a separate event completed in advance of any course validation. In exceptional circumstances, it may be the first part of a combined event looking at both institutional approval and course validation. This largely (but not exclusively) depends on the scale of collaboration with the partner institution and the logistics of organisation. Where a joint event is arranged, the documentation for Institutional Approval and course validation may be submitted as a joint document.

3.3.7 Institutional approval is granted for a period of five years.

3.4 Course Validation Documentation

3.4.1 The purpose of this element of the collaborative provision validation process is to allow the validation panel to establish that the proposed course is of an appropriate standard for the award of the University to which it is intended to lead.

3.4.2 The programme of study must be a validated course of the University. For courses proposed for franchised and ODUPLUS delivery, it is likely that this exercise will already have been undertaken to allow delivery of the course at the University. A validation exercise will have considered and approved the academic standards and structure of the course. Where this has happened the documentation submitted as part of the validation process shall include the validated programme specification and module documentation.

3.4.3 Where course validation has not been previously addressed and confirmed (for example, in the case of a Designed and Delivered proposal), the approval event shall include the submission of the programme specification document and related appendices (as outlined in section B of this Handbook) by the partner institution for approval by the validation panel.

3.4.4 Where the proposed collaborative provision includes modules delivered by another School on a servicing basis or deemed to be part of a subject area owned by another School, the agreement of that School must also be obtained.
3.5 Rationale Document

3.5.1 The validation of the proposed collaboration shall include consideration of documentation and discussion to indicate that the requisite teaching experience and expertise is available, that the physical resources are appropriate and sufficient for the anticipated number of students, that the support services are able to meet the needs of the course, that the learning opportunities offered to students and the environment in which the course is delivered is appropriate to HE provision.

3.5.2 The external institution or (in the case of ODUPLUS) the team seeking the collaboration must prepare a written submission providing information under the following headings:

i) the institutional setting, namely range of provision, size, and management structure, and if overseas, its position within the local higher education system

ii) history of relationship with the University (if any) and/or other experience of HE provision;

iii) the rationale for the proposal;

iv) anticipated demand for the course;

v) statements on resources available for the course, both human and physical (including curricula vitae of the programme team, indicating research interests and professional development activities relevant to the course);

vi) proposals for delivery of the course including student support arrangements

vii) procedures for the management of the course and details of the quality assurance interface with the University (at the level of both the School Teaching and Learning Committee and the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee) including external examining arrangements, annual evaluation and revalidation;

viii) other information relevant to the provision.

3.6 Delivery Mechanism

3.6.1 The validation of previously approved courses already being delivered at the University will have been completed on the basis of a stated delivery mechanism - usually a weekly class contact. Explicit approval is required for the delivery of a previously validated course in a format other than the one described at validation.

3.6.2 The School seeking validation for the delivery of a course overseas must prepare documentation to support an alternative delivery mechanism as follows:

i) appropriateness of course for the proposed method of delivery,

ii) details of the delivery at the University (if delivered at the University),

iii) details and breakdown of the delivery at the host institution, including details of the proposed pattern of delivery,

iv) details of staff allocation to modules and tutorial support (both University and partner staff as relevant)

v) key features of the validated course,

vi) any changes required to accommodate the local context;

vii) signed statement from the Director of Computing and Library Services to confirm that any demand on this Service has been fully costed and approved;

viii) mechanisms for communication, student support (including pastoral care) and administrative support.
3.7 **Staff Involved in Academic Support, Course Delivery and Summative Assessment**

3.7.1 Collaborative proposals may include an element of support from academic staff who are not employed by the University. Explicit approval is required for all staff involved in the delivery, support or assessment of the proposed provision who are not employed by the University.

3.7.2 Documentation to support the inclusion of non-University staff in the delivery, support or assessment of provision shall be submitted as part of the validation event and shall include the CVs of the proposed team, indicating research interests and professional development activities relevant to the course. The documentation shall clarify the roles and responsibilities of all staff from the partner institution involved in the course including administrative and pastoral functions.

3.7.3 The CVs of staff not employed by the University who are subsequently appointed to the delivery team shall be approved by the relevant School Board before participation in the course commences.

3.8 **Location and Premises of Delivery**

3.8.1 The location and premises for the delivery of courses have to be explicitly confirmed as appropriate for the operation of HE provision.

3.8.2 Documentation describing the physical environment and resources available for learning shall be submitted as part of the validation event and shall include details of any specialised facilities or equipment required by the proposal.

3.8.3 A tour of the facilities available to the course and the students shall be included as part of the panel’s validation schedule.

3.8.4 Where a change of location or premises is required following the completion of an event, the Designated Academic Liaison Officer shall be required to undertake a site visit and submit a separate report and recommendation regarding the continuation of the collaboration to the SCCP.

3.9 **Collaborative Provision Validation Event**

3.9.1 The proposed arrangements will be scrutinised by means of a validation event at the institution concerned, which will be organised by the School. If the delivery of the course is proposed at a multi-campus institution, the process of validation must include a full evaluation of each campus at which it is proposed that the course will be offered.

3.9.2 The validation panel will discuss the submission with representatives of the institution, including representatives of the institution’s senior management and key members of the proposed teaching team – no more than one member of staff from the University should be present in support of the local teaching team (normally the University’s designated liaison officer). The panel will require to be shown the physical and learning resources that will be made available to the course. Where possible the panel should meet potential students or students from existing related programmes already in operation at the institution.
3.9.3 The membership of the validation panel must include:
   i) a representative of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee who will act as chair of the event and who will not be drawn from the proposing School,
   ii) one or more academic subject specialists,
   iii) a representative of Computing and Library Services (Computing and Library Service reserve the right to request one of the academic subject specialists to act on behalf of the Service),
   iv) at least one member who is an external subject specialist. CVs for the proposed external panel member(s) must be approved on behalf of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) in advance of a formal invitation being extended.
   v) the Head of Registry or nominee.

3.9.4 Panel members shall be provided with, and will be expected to familiarise themselves with:
   i) the Handbook for Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards;
   ii) the proposed or validated programme and module documentation;
   iii) the rationale document outlining the specifics of the proposed collaboration;
   iv) the report of any previous stage of the validation process (such as the Institutional Approval report);
   v) the report of any other previous event relevant to the course(s) or modules;
   vi) the draft programme and administrative arrangements;
   vii) any other relevant documentation that has been supplied.

3.9.5 The normal expectation is that the validation event will be held at the institution concerned. However, when submitting the Business Case to the SCCP, the School may choose to request that the validation event should take a form other than a visit by the panel – for example, an event held at the University with a video link to the external institution or an event held at the University with representatives from the external institution attending. Where such a request is made, a full justification for the exception should be included.

3.9.6 Panels are encouraged to identify strengths as well as weaknesses in the course(s) and modules under consideration.

3.9.7 While oral reports on events may be made by the chair of a panel to representatives present at an event, the definitive report is as presented to the University’s SCCP.

3.9.8 The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a report on the event for submission for approval by the Standing Committee for Collaborative Provision (SCCP). The report must provide an indication of the nature of the discussions and of the views of the panel on issues relating to the proposal. Where the panel stipulates conditions which must be complied with and/or recommendations which must be carefully considered, these must be clearly defined in the report.

4 Contract of Collaboration and Financial Schedule

4.1 Once a collaborative proposal has been approved, the Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a Contract of Collaboration detailing the academic and administrative arrangements for the course.

4.2 The Contract of Collaboration will be signed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the Principal of the external institution. The original documents...
will be held by Registry. The Contract of Collaboration will be valid for the period of validation only and will be re-issued at each re-validation point.

4.3 The financial arrangements will be the subject of a formal financial schedule as an appendix to the Contract of Collaboration, an annual agreement between the School and the collaborating institution, and a copy will be lodged with Finance. The financial schedule must be approved by the Director of Finance (or nominee) before being issued.

5 Financial Arrangements

5.1 The financial arrangements for each collaborative activity are negotiated between the School and the external institution, although the School must consult with the Director of Finance to ensure that the proposed arrangements are acceptable to the University. The financial arrangements must cover both the School's costs and the University's central costs.

5.2 The cost of the validation is borne by the collaborating institution and the current scale of charges can be obtained from Registry. The School, in consultation with Financial Services, is responsible for the collection of the validation fee and its disbursement as appropriate, and all incidental expenses.

6 Annual Evaluation

6.1 Timetable for Annual Evaluation

Evaluation reports on collaborative courses will be prepared by the relevant body collaborating institution and sent to the Dean of the School owning the course (or nominee) at the start of the following academic session for inclusion in the Annual Evaluation process. For ODUPLUS courses, it is likely that the majority, if not all, of the report will be written by the University-based team. The Dean of the School (or nominee) will ensure that a copy of the report is submitted to the Head of Registry or nominee.

6.2 Contents of Annual Evaluation Reports

A report including information as specified in Section L.2 of the University's Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards should be produced for each course. A report written by the University’s designated liaison officer must be appended, detailing:

i. the number of visits undertaken by staff at the University to the partner institution in the period covered by the report

ii. the number of visits undertaken by staff at the partner institution to the University in the period covered by the report

iii. the nature of contact between the two institutions

iv. a summary of any issues raised and dealt with – or any issues that remain outstanding

v. confirmation that all publicity has been seen and approved

vi. a critical evaluation of the activities that formed part of the annual evaluation visit

6.3 Monitoring Visits

A designated liaison officer will visit the external institution at least once a year until the first cohort has graduated and at least every two years thereafter.
7 Mid-term Review

7.1 The Function of Mid-term Review

Mid-term review is the mechanism through which the University reviews the compliance of an individual collaborative arrangement with the requirements of the quality assurance framework. The SCCP is responsible for ensuring that each collaborative arrangement is normally subject to a mid-term review in the third year of the five year approval period.

7.2 Mid-term Review Process

7.2.1 Mid-term review will be undertaken by means of an event at the University, which will be organised by the School and undertaken by a representative of the SCCP and a member of Registry staff. The event will examine the standard documentation which supports the quality assurance framework - such as records of Student Panel meetings, Course Committee minutes, external examiner reports and responses, annual evaluation reports, approval of additional staff from the partner institution teaching on the provision, minutes of DALO visits and Annual Executive meetings.

7.2.4 The member of Registry staff will prepare a report on the event. The report will be submitted to the School for comment and the both the report and the School's commentary will be submitted for approval by the SCCP.

8 Collaborative Revalidation

8.1 The Function of Collaborative Revalidation

Revalidation is the mechanism through which the Senate reviews and assesses the quality of its academic provision and, as part of this, the revalidation event will consider the appropriateness and achievement of the general and specific aims and the objectives of the course. The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for ensuring that each collaborative arrangement normally is subject to revalidation at least once every five years.

8.2 Collaborative Revalidation Process

8.2.1 Revalidation will be undertaken by means of an event at the external institution, which will be organised by the School and will mirror the procedures, panel membership, documentation and the issues identified for initial approval with the additional requirement that a critical appraisal will be submitted by the delivery team analysing the performance of the course and the experience of the students in the validation period. The programme specification and module specification documents should also be reproduced - with proposed changes or additions highlighted where these documents are written by the partner institution.

8.2.2 As part of the revalidation event the panel shall meet students currently registered on the course or recently graduated from it.

8.2.3 The normal expectation is that the revalidation event will be held at the institution concerned. However, the Dean may choose to make a request to the SCCP that the revalidation event should take a form other than a visit by the panel – for example, an event held at the University with a video link to the external institution or an event held at the University with representatives from the external institution attending.
Where such a request is made, a full justification for the exception should be included.

**8.2.4** The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a report on the event. The report will be submitted for approval by the SCCP.

### 9. Termination of Agreement

**9.1** Decisions to terminate agreements may be initiated either by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), as a result of strategic decisions about the future of the collaborative provision or as a result of concerns expressed about its operation, or by the Dean of the School identified as having responsibility for the course in the Contract of Collaboration in consultation with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

**9.2** A decision to terminate must be approved by either the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) or by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in consultation with SCCP.

**9.3** Arrangements for the support of students who have yet to complete an award will be submitted to the SCCP for approval.
SECTION J: THE VALIDATION OF JOINT AWARDS

1 General Considerations

1.1 This section describes the arrangements for the validation, annual evaluation and revalidation of a course of study leading to the conferment of a joint award. A joint award is a single course devised and delivered jointly between two or more institutions and leading to the conferment of a single award in the name of all partners.

1.2 In order to ensure the integrity of such arrangements the University must satisfy itself that appropriate and clear arrangements are in place to ensure the standard and quality of the award, identifying appropriate channels of communication, authority, accountability and executive action.

1.3 All marketing and publicity information pertaining to the award will require the specific prior approval of the relevant School on behalf of the University.

2 Administrative Procedures for Collaborative Validation

2.1 The initiative to consider the validation of a joint award is taken by the School responsible for that subject area. The proposed financial and resource arrangements must be approved by the Dean of the School.

2.2 Following confirmation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor that the proposal satisfies the University’s indicators necessary for progressing a new collaborative arrangement, the Dean will submit a formal business case of approximately 5 pages to the University's Standing Committee on Collaborative Provision (SCCP) giving a brief description of the nature of and rationale for the proposal, detailing the general proposals for its costing and resourcing, including the costs of validation and revalidation in addition to any standard annual costs that may apply. The documentation must include an initial financial statement indicating the costs/charges to be borne by each partner signed by the Dean and an appropriate representative from the external institution. The case must be supported by signed statements from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), the Head of Registry, the Director of Finance and, where appropriate, the Director of Marketing. Where the University has no existing links with an external institution, the case made by the Dean should include explicit references to the institution’s mission, existing provision and strategic aims.

2.3 The Business Case must include evidence of that the proposed partner is legally empowered to grant an award jointly with another institution. The mechanisms for determining responsibility for the central administration and regulatory framework for the course should be included in the Business Case.

2.4 Following approval by SCCP, a Co-operation Agreement shall be drawn up by the Head of Registry or nominee signed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the relevant signatory of the external institution.

2.5 The course will be scrutinised by means of a validation event which will be organised by the School in conjunction with the proposed partner institution. If the delivery of the course is proposed on a multi-campus basis, the process of validation must include a full evaluation of each campus at which it is proposed that the course will be offered. The membership of the validation panel must include:
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SECTION J

i) a representative of the University's Teaching and Learning Committee who acts as Chair and who will not be drawn from the proposing School,

ii) two or more academic subject specialists (who also act on behalf of Computing and Library Services),

iii) at least one external member who is a subject specialist. CVs for the proposed external panel member(s) must be approved on behalf of the PVC (T&L) in advance of a formal invitation being extended,

iv) the Head of Registry or nominee.

It is the responsibility of the Dean to ensure that any external member has not had any close involvement with the external institution or the University in the previous five years.

3 The Collaborative Validation Process

3.1 The purpose of the event undertaken by the validation panel will be to establish that the course is of an appropriate standard for the award of the University to which it is intended to lead, that the requisite teaching experience and expertise is available, that the physical resources are appropriate and sufficient for the anticipated number of students, that the support services are able to meet the needs of the course and that the environment in which the course is delivered is appropriate to HE provision.

3.2 The team seeking validation of a course of study must prepare documentation as follows:

i) a programme specification supplemented by the following (compulsory) appendices:
   a) course context (an introduction and rationale for the course)
   b) staffing and management
   c) demonstration of how course learning outcomes map onto modules
   d) demonstration of how course learning outcomes map onto the relevant benchmark statement (where appropriate)
   e) outline assessment schedule

ii) module specification document, which should clearly differentiate by means of colour coding new modules, existing modules which have proposed amendments and existing modules for which no amendments are proposed

iii) a support document offering an overview of the relationship between the institutions involved in the delivery of the course:
   a) rationale for the proposal,
   b) history of the relationship between the institutions (if any),
   c) rationale for the proposed course of study, including anticipated demand,
   d) statement on resources,
   e) curricula vitae of the programme team, indicating research interests and professional development activities relevant to the course,
   f) proposals for delivery of the course,
   g) student support arrangements,
   h) proposals for maintenance of student records,
   i) procedures for the management of the course and details of the quality assurance interface with the University (at the level of both the School Teaching and Learning Committee and the University's Teaching and Learning Committee) including external examining arrangements, annual evaluation and revalidation,
   j) other relevant information.
3.3 The validation panel will discuss the submission with representatives of the institutions, including key members of the senior management team and the proposed teaching team. The panel will require to be shown the physical and learning resources that will be made available to the course.

3.4 The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare both a report on the event and, if validation is recommended, a Contract of Collaboration detailing the academic and administrative arrangements for the course. The report will be submitted to the University's Teaching and Learning Committee and SCCP for approval.

3.5 Following validation of the course, the Contract of Collaboration will be signed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the relevant signatory from the partner institution. The Contract of Collaboration will be valid for the period of validation only and will be re-issued at each re-validation point.

3.6 The financial arrangements will be the subject of a formal financial schedule, an annual agreement between the School and the partner institution, and a copy will be lodged with the Registry as an appendix to the Contract of Collaboration. The financial schedule must be approved by the Director of Finance (or nominee) before being issued.

4 Financial Arrangements

4.1 The financial arrangements are negotiated between the School and the partner institution and must cover both the School's costs and the University's central costs, although the School must consult with the Director of Finance to ensure that the proposed arrangements are acceptable to the University.

5 Annual Evaluation

5.1 Timetable for Annual Evaluation

Evaluation reports on courses of study validated by the University will be sent to the Dean of the School responsible for that course (or nominee) at the start of the following academic session for inclusion in the Annual Evaluation process. The Dean of the School (or nominee) will ensure that a copy of the report is submitted to the Head of Registry (or nominee).

5.2 Contents of Annual Evaluation Reports

A report including information as specified in Section L.2 of the University’s Handbook of Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards should be produced for each course.

6 Collaborative Revalidation

6.1 The Function of Collaborative Revalidation

Revalidation is the mechanism through which the Senate reviews and assesses the quality of its academic provision. The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for ensuring that each collaborative arrangement is subject to revalidation at least once every five years.
6.2 Collaborative Revalidation Process

The revalidation will be undertaken by means of an event organised by the School. The membership of the panel must include:

i) a representative of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee who acts as Chair and who will not be drawn from the proposing School,
ii) two or more academic subject specialists (who also acts on behalf of Computing and Library Services),
iii) an external member who is a subject specialist. CVs for the proposed external panel member(s) must be approved on behalf of the PVC (T&L) in advance of a formal invitation being extended,
iv) the Head of Registry or nominee.

6.3 Issues Considered at Collaborative Revalidation

Revalidation of a course of study jointly designed and delivered with an external institution will concentrate on the following:

i) the success of the relationship between the partners;
ii) the appropriateness and achievement of the general and specific aims and the objectives of the course;
iii) the structure of the course, its progression, balance and coherence;
iv) strategies for teaching and for assessment;
v) evidence of sustainable demand for the course
vi) resources available for the course, both human and physical (including curricula vitae of the programme team, indicating research interests and professional development activities relevant to the course);
vii) staff development;
viii) procedures for management of the course and for quality assurance, including involvement of external examiners and evidence of effective student representation arrangements;
ix) a review of the financial aspects of the provision.

6.4 Documentation required for Collaborative Revalidation

The documentation submitted to the panel should focus on issues listed in paragraph 6.3 above and should incorporate critical appraisal where appropriate. The programme specification and module specification documents should also be reproduced with proposed changes or additions highlighted.

6.5 Conduct of the Collaborative Revalidation event

The programme for revalidation is determined in consultation between members of the panel after receipt of documentation. The programme should normally include two or more meetings with the teaching team, including representatives from the senior management and a meeting with students.

6.6 Report of Panels

The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a report on the event for the approval of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee and the SCCP.
7. Termination of Agreement

Decisions to terminate agreements may be initiated either by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), as a result of strategic decisions about the future of the collaborative provision or as a result of concerns expressed about its operation, or by the Dean of the School identified as having responsibility for the course in the Memorandum of Co-operation in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

A decision to terminate must be approved by either the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) or by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in consultation with SCCP.

Arrangements for the support of students who have yet to complete an award will be submitted to the SCCP for approval.
SECTION K: ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENTS

1 General Considerations

1.1 An articulation arrangement describes the situation whereby the University and an external institution enter into a formal joint agreement to confirm that the learning outcomes and standards achieved as part of a University award can be demonstrated satisfactorily through successful completion of the external institution’s own award (or award of credit). Such an agreement would promote entry to an identified University award with advanced standing as a natural progression route for a successful student from the external institution.

1.2 Progression to a course at the University through an articulation route will still require the submission of an application by the student. The University will reserve the right to refuse admission.

1.3 Applications to the University submitted independently by potential students who wish to claim APL for prior study and tariffs established by Schools for commonly held qualifications which allow advanced entry do not fall into this category and should be treated as part of the admissions procedure. Similarly, applications to top-up degrees do not fall into this category and should be treated as part of the admissions procedure.

2 Administrative Procedures for Approval of Articulation Agreements

2.1 The initiative to enter into an articulation arrangement with another institution is taken by the School owning the course. Curriculum or academic matters in relation to articulation arrangements must be approved by the School Teaching and Learning Committee, or Accreditation and Validation Panel (where separately constituted).

2.2 A formal case outlining the nature of and rationale of the proposed articulation should be submitted to the School Teaching and Learning Committee, or Accreditation and Validation Panel (where separately constituted). The case must be signed by the Dean (or nominee) and an appropriate representative from the external institution and should include explicit references to the institution’s mission, existing provision and strategic aims.

2.3 Following approval of the arrangements, the Memorandum of Understanding will be signed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the Principal of the collaborating institution. The original documents will be held on central file by Registry.

2.4 Schools are required to establish mechanisms for the review of articulation agreements to ensure their continued currency.
SECTION L: ANNUAL EVALUATION

1 Timetable for Annual Evaluation of Courses

1.1 Evaluation is done annually at course and module level to reflect on the key successes/issues from the last academic session and to identify actions required.

The evaluation of a course or programme of study, or where appropriate closely linked courses, is prepared at the end of each academic year and considered by the appropriate Course Committee. Completed reports should be submitted to School Boards for consideration at their first meeting of the following session. A School may establish a sub-committee of the School Board for this purpose, including appropriate student representation.

2 Contents of Annual Evaluation Reports

2.1 Annual Evaluation reports should be streamlined to focus on agreed indicators, e.g. external examiners’ comments, course statistics, student evaluation and feedback, responses to reviews and identification of best practice, with a brief report by the course leader including commentary on any issues raised in the previous year’s exercise and actions in the coming year.

Annual Evaluation reports for taught provision should be submitted via the University’s web-based system.

3 Lines of Report from School Board

3.1 School Boards may refer unresolved problems to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee/University’s Research Committee and, if necessary, to the Senate itself. It is the responsibility of Deans to monitor any requirements identified as necessary during the evaluation process.
APPENDIX A: GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

1 School Plan [Terms of Reference i)]

Annually, each School shall produce a School plan detailing firm plans for the forthcoming academic year and outline plans for the subsequent two years. The academic part of the plan will inform the University’s planning processes.

2 Research Plan [Terms of Reference iv)]

Each School shall establish a Research Committee whose terms of reference will normally include the following:

i) to develop and monitor research and scholarly activity;

ii) to discuss School level issues related to research;

iii) to produce the School’s annual research plan;

iv) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the School Board;

v) to receive information from the University’s Research Committee;

vi) to ensure that the regulations and guidelines laid down by the University are complied with in the processes of research degrees;

vii) to ensure that all research degree projects are conducted in accordance with established ethical principles;

Annually, each School shall produce a research plan which, following approval by the School Board, shall be forwarded to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) for approval by the University’s Research Committee.

Membership of the School’s Research Committee shall be determined by the School Board and the Committee shall normally be chaired by the School’s Director of Research.

3 Development of Academic Disciplines [Terms of Reference v) b)]

3.1 School Teaching and Learning Committee

Each School shall establish a Teaching and Learning Committee whose terms of reference will normally include the following:

i) to oversee the credit accumulation and transfer systems within the School and to promote and ensure consistency of practice across all courses and modules owned by the schemes;

ii) to promote high quality teaching and to develop innovative methods of teaching and learning and to disseminate them throughout the School;

iii) to incorporate the functions of the School Accreditation and Validation Panel (as identified in paragraph 4 of this appendix) where this panel is not separately constituted;
iv) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee through the School Board.

Membership of the School Teaching and Learning Committee will normally include representatives from all academic areas, a cross section of academic staff, representatives of other categories of staff and a Student Union Sabbatical Officer. Representatives of the student body would be entitled to membership but would be excluded from those matters which relate to named students and from the functions of the School Accreditation and Validation Panel. The exact membership and the quorum of the School Teaching and Learning Committee shall be decided by the School Board and notified to the Head of Registry.

3.2 Subject Areas

Each School Board shall establish an appropriate structure – e.g. departments, divisions or course committees - to take responsibility for curriculum development across all undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the School.

3.3 Courses

A Course Committee shall be established for each course or cluster of closely related courses and shall assume collective responsibility for the effective operation, evaluation, and revision of the course(s).

The terms of reference for Course Committees will normally include the following:

i) to determine and develop the modular structure of the course(s);

ii) to ensure that course regulations (including assessment regulations) do not conflict with University regulations;

iii) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the course(s) and to produce a course annual evaluation report;

iv) to liaise with or seek the advice of external examiners;

v) to liaise with the structure referred to in 3.2 above concerning the requirements of the course(s) with reference to:

   a) the development of the curriculum,
   b) the assessment strategy including the assessment of work-based learning and enterprise skills,
   c) the teaching and learning strategies (including the development of resource-based learning),
   d) the resource requirements of the course,
   e) liaison with the Director of Computing and Library Services in respect of possible new demands for the modules,
   f) the arrangements for student evaluation of modules and to ensure that records of that evaluation are kept;

vi) to establish a Student Panel and to take account of the views of that committee;

vii) to make arrangements for student evaluation of the course(s);

viii) to consider such other matters as the School Board may request;
ix) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the School Teaching and Learning Committee.

Membership of Course Committees shall be determined by the School Board and must include appropriate student representation. The standard course administration timeline can be found in appendix D of this handbook.

4 Approval of Courses of Study [Terms of Reference v) c)]

4.1 Notification of new courses of study, as identified in the School’s academic plan, must be sent to the Assistant Registrar (or nominee) for determination as to whether they are major developments which will require a University validation event or minor developments which can be validated at School level.

In order to discharge the following terms of reference, each School shall establish an appropriate mechanism for:

i) the validation of incremental changes to existing courses, incremental changes to existing modules, new modules, and new courses which are minor variants of existing courses;

ii) the accreditation of learning or study undertaken either within or outside the University up to the maximum allowed in section D3.4 of the University’s ‘Regulations for Awards’;

iii) the responsibilities which School Boards are given in respect of curriculum or academic matters in relation to the approval of collaborative arrangements;

iv) the maintenance of an overview of the procedures governing the accreditation of prior learning and the validation of individualised courses;

v) the evaluation of recommendations for APLA tariffs;

vi) the responsibilities of auditing the procedures for maintaining equivalence in the award of credit throughout the School;

vii) to report and submit minutes of its meetings to the School Teaching and Learning Committee, when constituted as a separate body.

These functions may be assigned to a separately constituted School Accreditation and Validation Panel or incorporated within the terms of reference of the School Teaching and Learning Committee.

4.2 The School shall inform the Head of Registry of the mechanism (which may or may not be the School Teaching and Learning Committee) by which these duties will be discharged. The Head of Registry (or nominee) shall have the right to attend the committee or panel which is convened by the School to fulfil these functions.

Terms of Reference and Membership of a separately constituted School Accreditation and Validation Panel shall be determined by the School Board.

Recommendations arising from the above are subject to final approval by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee, which is normally exercised by the
5 Evaluation and Review of Courses of Study [Terms of Reference v) c)]

5.1 Each School Board shall establish an appropriate mechanism to fulfil the following:

i) the review of the operation of all courses;

ii) the consideration of problem areas as identified by external examiners and/or from information provided in evaluation reports. The Dean should ensure that action plans and appropriate mechanisms for ensuring the resolution of issues identified are developed.

5.2 Where a sub-committee is established to carry out these duties, minutes of its meetings must be submitted to the School Board. The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee receives independent reports direct from its representatives nominated to attend the meetings at which annual evaluation reports are considered.

School Boards may refer unresolved problems to the Senate’s committees as appropriate, and, if necessary, to the Senate itself. It is the responsibility of Deans to monitor any requirements identified as necessary during the monitoring process.

6 Overseeing the School’s Work in Contributing to the University’s International Strategy [Terms of Reference v) d)]

6.1 Each School shall establish a School International Committee whose terms of reference will normally include the following:

i) To oversee the School’s work in making a full contribution to the University International Strategy.

ii) To enable the School to communicate international strategy and policy internally.

iii) To support the School in meeting its international KPIs and targets.

iv) To oversee the School’s production of a coherent international plan and accurate international student number forecasts.

v) To advise the School regarding an attractive course portfolio for international students.

vi) To advise the School on providing a first class international student experience.

vii) To identify and exploit strategic international partnership opportunities.

viii) To strategically monitor and develop the School’s international profile.

6.2 Membership of the School International Committee will normally include senior managers, representatives from all academic subject areas, including taught and research provision, as well as staff from marketing and recruitment. Representatives of the student body would also be entitled to membership.

6.3 The exact membership and the quorum of the School International Committee should be decided by the School Board and notified to the Head of Registry.
7 Inter-Disciplinary Courses of Study [Terms of Reference vi)]

7.1 In the case of courses put forward for validation by more than one School, the Deans involved shall decide, in advance of submission, the School in which the course will reside.

The administration of the course will be the responsibility of the School in which the course resides.

The membership of the Course Assessment Board shall reflect the proportional contribution of the Schools involved.

8 External Examiners [Terms of Reference vii) a)]

8.1 External Examiners

The University’s Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for the final approval of course external examiners. Applications should be completed in accordance with the criteria for the appointment of external examiners. Following the recommendation of approval of external examiners at the School Board, completed application forms, shall be submitted to the Registry together with a copy of the relevant minute from the meeting of the School Board which considered the application.

External examiners must be involved in the assessment of all modules at I, H and M levels. They are only involved in the assessment of modules at F level in those cases where a course consists solely or largely of modules at those levels.

9 Membership of Assessment Boards [Terms of Reference vii) b)]

9.1 Course Assessment Boards

The membership of each Course Assessment Board shall be determined by the School Board and shall normally comprise the Dean of School or nominee (chair), the External Examiner(s), the course leader(s), module leaders (as necessary), and staff teaching on modules. The minimum quoracy of a Course Assessment Board shall be the chair, the course leader and the external examiner. If the external examiner is not in attendance one module leader is required in addition to the chair and the course leader.

10 Academic Interest [Terms of Reference viii)]

10.1 Each School shall establish appropriate arrangements for the consideration of ethical issues.

11 Staff Development Plan [Terms of Reference ix)]

11.1 Annually, each School shall produce a staff development plan which, following approval by the School Board, shall be forwarded to the University’s Staff Development Co-ordinator. The staff development plan shall be submitted by 31 August.

12 Equal Opportunities Report [Terms of Reference x)]
12.1 Annually, each School shall produce an equal opportunities report which, following approval by the School Board, shall be forwarded to the University’s Equal Opportunities Committee. The equal opportunities plan should be submitted by December of each year.

13 School Committee Structure

13.1 A diagrammatic plan detailing the School's committee structure (including School-specific sub-committees of the School Board) shall be forwarded to the Registry. Subsequent changes to this plan shall be notified to the Head of Registry.
APPENDIX B: FLOW CHART INDICATING VALIDATION OF NEW COURSES

School Agree in Principle

*Notify Registry for inclusion in validation schedule and identification of event type

SAVP

Event/Meeting arranged by School

Event held and report produced by School and submitted to Registry for UTLC

Approved unconditionally

Approved

Submit revised documents for approval

Approved

UTLC Notified for final approval

ARO informed by Registry – Recruitment can commence

SAVP+

UTLC nominee approved by PVC (T&L)

Planning meeting arranged by Registry

Event arrangements made by Registry

UTLC Notified for final approval

ARO informed by Registry – Recruitment can commence

Chair approved by PVC (T&L)

Yes

No

Do not proceed

No

Yes

Yes Yes

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APPENDIX C: GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF THE REVALIDATION SUBJECT REVIEW COMPLIANCE EXERCISE

1. Purpose
   To evaluate the alignment of the subject area’s activities with the University’s regulations.

2. Outcome
   i) A report identifying strengths and weaknesses and any areas of good practice.
   ii) A response to this report by the subject area indicating planned actions in response to the conclusions
   iii) Submission of both documents to the subject review/revalidation

3. Timing
   To be arranged between the Registry representative and the School admin contact and to be concluded 3 weeks in advance of the scheduled subject review/revalidation exercise.

4. Focus
   Access should be provided to:
   i) Student Panel Rolling Log
   ii) Course Committee membership, agenda, papers and minutes
   iii) Course Assessment Board minutes
   iv) Annual evaluation report
   v) External examiner reports for taught provision and team’s EE3 response forms
   vi) Module Specification documents for all modules belonging to that subject area
   vii) Programme Specification documents for all courses managed through that subject area
   viii) School Teaching and Learning Committee agendas and minutes (showing consideration of course committee minutes and items)
   ix) SAVP agendas and minutes (showing consideration of course and module developments)
   x) School Research Committee agendas and minutes (showing consideration of research developments within the subject area)
   xi) Other committees which show consideration of course-related information (e.g. NSS results, course development discussions etc.)

   Documentation should be provided for the current session plus one full preceding session, with the exception of iv) and v) above where the last two full cycles should be provided.

   Consideration will, for example, be given to:
   i) Evidence of issues being raised, progressed, actioned and reported back within and between committees
   ii) Evidence of consultation with respect to course changes and their submission through the committee structure for approval
   iii) Clear identification of actions required and taken in AE reports and as a response to External Examiner reports
   iv) Compliance with University regulations in course and module structures, and in Assessment Boards