

Beware common pitfalls:

Connect to collect Be sure that your Academic Contact has commented on and given support for the programme specification at all stages.

MLOs to PLOs MLO = module learning outcome, PLO = programme learning outcome, module outcomes should be distinct from the programme outcomes and be module specific. We normally expect to see 4-8 MLOs.

Grid lock The grid at the end of the programme specification template ('curriculum map') allows FAPs to swiftly and accurately grasp how progression is planned between levels, and how knowledge and skills, are balanced throughout the programme. Ensure the grid is accurately completed.

PLO overload Think carefully about the spread of programme outcomes across the modules. Not every module will meet every PLO but students need more than one opportunity to show that they can meet a programme learning outcome.

Credit crunch Every award has its own set of regulations which state (among other things) how many credits there should be at each level. See more under section B of the Quality Handbook.

Level headed The University learning outcomes tool will help you articulate outcomes at the correct level. This is vital - it ensures that students are taught and assessed against equitable standards.

PT / FT When a PT version of a programme is proposed at the same time as a FT version, show the order of modules, and at which point in the order of academic sessions students will take which modules.

Specify specifications specifically Make your programme specification as rigorous and clear as possible. Provide all module specifications and complete all sections. The more information the FAP receives, the better informed their decision.

Match, don't mix Assessment tasks should match the MLOs. For example, an unseen written examination may not be the best measure of presentation skills. Make sure re-assessment tasks are relevant.

External affairs The opinion of an external academic in the subject is essential. In your planning permission application give contact details of a colleague who has agreed to comment. Their views will be sought within one month of the PPC. Ask them first!

Useful links

Quality Handbook:

<http://www.hull.ac.uk/policyregister/qualityhandbook>

[select section H]

Resources to assist programme developers

<http://www.hull.ac.uk/quality/programmes>

QAA Codes, benchmarks, frameworks:

www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/

Your Academic Contact will also be able to assist with programme design and development.

For questions about the approvals process for collaborative programmes, or for details of training events, please contact the University Quality Office collaborativeprovision@hull.ac.uk

Please tell us whether you found this leaflet useful by emailing your feedback to collaborativeprovision@hull.ac.uk

Working with the...

Collaborative Programme Approvals Process

For members of staff proposing new collaborative programmes

2008 / 09 – 2009 / 10

This leaflet is designed to act as a succinct practical guide to the stages of the programme approval process and provide tips for getting your programme approved quickly and efficiently.

Fundamental principles

The fundamental principle behind the approval of new collaborative programmes at the University is collegiality. Internal and external academic peers, service areas, and senior managers all play their part, but programmes are ultimately approved by groups of academic colleagues.

As of September 2007, the responsibility for approval of new collaborative programmes lies with the Collaborative Programme Approvals Committee (CPAC). Members of this approvals committee are academic colleagues from on-campus departments and partner institutions.

Academic support

All University of Hull collaborative programmes are supported by an Academic Contact. In cases where the University does not have academic expertise in a particular area (non-comparable provision) an Academic Consultant will be appointed by the University to support the development and delivery of the programme.

Why are we waiting?

Some view the period of approval as too lengthy, but the dates in the approvals process are scheduled to allow you plenty of time to write the programme. The programme specification form is designed to enable Full Approval Panels to understand your proposal quickly and with clarity. Achieving this swift understanding demands rigour in design, which can take time. In addition, all of the dates we give are final deadlines - early submission will mean early approval!

On good form

Section H of the Quality Handbook contains all the forms and documentation you will need. Guidance notes are provided and if you need advice contact your faculty contacts or University Quality Office.

<http://www.hull.ac.uk/policyregister/qualityhandbook>

One step at a time

There are **three** stages of approval.

Step 1: Development Consent

All collaborative programmes are given development consent through the Educational Partnerships Committee. By the time you read this you should have development consent. If not, contact your Head of Department or HE manager now.

Step 2: Planning Permission

To achieve planning permission you submit a planning permission application (see 'On Good Form'), then meet a Planning Permission Committee (PPC). The PPC is organised by the faculty. The PPC will meet with you and evaluate your proposal on its resource requirements and general content. PPCs usually last about 30 minutes. Planning permission allows your institution to advertise the programme and provides early feedback on the programme outcomes and structure. One month after planning permission is granted you must submit a 'near final draft' of the full programme specification to the University in order that external comment can be sought.

Step 3: Full Approval

Having achieved planning permission, you will continue to develop the programme, respond to conditions or recommendations made by the PPC and by the external academic comment. Once your full programme specification is ready, ensure your HE manager or team and the University link department and faculty have given it their full support. The secretary to the Collaborative Programme Approvals Committee (CPAC) will then arrange for you to meet with a Full Approval Panel (FAP). At the FAP expect to discuss your programme in depth and to talk with the panel for about an hour. The approved programme specification is the heart of the University's contract with the student and acts as our public commitment to what you will teach and how this will be assessed. The FAP will make a recommendation to the Committee who will then decide whether to approve, defer or reject the application. Following approval, students can be recruited.

Deadlines

1 February: Planning permission: be sure your programme is with the faculty by the agreed deadline.

1 May: Submission of the full programme specification to the Quality Office. Remember it must be endorsed by the Department and the Faculty first.

Actions speak louder

Identify the market for the programme and invite stakeholders such as regional employers to give written support.

Calculate the resources required for learning and teaching (staffing, library, labs, performance space, software).

Write the programme learning outcomes and assessment strategy using the learning outcomes tool*, contacting your Academic Contact for support.

Provide the name and contact details of at least one academic colleague at another HEI willing to provide an opinion on the academic standards of your proposed programme. Ensure their prior agreement!

Consult external examiners and students for major amendments / title changes to live programmes.

*Available in the Quality Handbook.

Conditions

Many programmes are 'approved with conditions'. Conditions are issues identified by the FAP which must be addressed by a fixed date before the programme commences. This involves extra work for the programme team and a resubmission of the programme specification. Many of the most frequent conditions are highlighted in the 'Common pitfalls' section. Following this guidance should help you avoid 'approval with conditions'.