

Appendix C.2 Validation Process

1. Programme proposal

1.1. The programme proposal is compiled by the Programme Development Group, on the basis of consultation with key stakeholders and completion of market research. A rationale and business case for the new programme will follow the standard template and will include information which, if approved, will be used to advertise the programme subject to validation.

1.2. Headings for the Proposal

Core Information

- Factual information including title/award, modes of study, proposed start dates, duration, potential partners for delivery

Programme outline

- Brief programme outline (200 words approx.) targeted at potential students, for use in initial marketing activity (web/prospectus)
- Programme structure diagram indicating level and credit weighting of modules
- Indicative aims and learning outcomes
- Entry requirements (including entry qualifications, audition requirements, prior experience etc.)
- English language requirements (additional to institutional threshold requirements).
- Plans for sharing modules/content with other programmes

Rationale for the programme

- Academic and strategic rationale for the programme including:
 - Fit within the FHEQ
 - Fit within Trinity Laban's academic portfolio
 - Relationship to the values and core aims set out in the strategic plan
 - Relationship with the objectives set out in the Learning and Teaching Plan
- Potential for the programme to increase the diversity of the student body
- Distinctive features of the proposed programme (USPs)

Market research (to be approved by the Director of Corporate Affairs)

- Consultation with employers/ evidence of employability
- Consultation with prospective/current students
- Programme title testing
- Evidence of sustainable demand for the programme
- Details of competitor programmes and relative strengths/weaknesses of proposed offer
- Proposed recruitment/marketing strategy (e.g. plans to target key home or overseas markets and proposed publicity schedule)

Financial viability (to be approved by the Director of Finance and Estates)

- Proposed fee level
- Projected student numbers (first 5 years) and rationale for these projections
- Details of staff resource required (academic/professional), including anticipated cost of additional staff
- Details of space requirements, including cost of planned refurbishment/acquisition of additional space
- Equipment and learning resources required, including cost of additional IT, specialist equipment and library resources
- Other set-up costs

Cost/benefit summary

- Table summarising main educational, financial, reputational and strategic benefits versus the main costs of setting up and delivering the programme

Key Risks

- Specific risks associated with the proposed programme and strategy for the mitigation of these

2. Validation submission

2.1. The main submission will follow the standard template, including the programme specification and module specifications. The submission document provides an opportunity for the programme development team to demonstrate that the academic standards of the programme meet the requirements of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and relevant subject benchmark statements. The submission should also provide a rationale for the programme in terms of fit with institutional strategy, the existing academic portfolio and developments within the subject area.

2.2. The rationale will be informed by work undertaken at the programme proposal stage, including detailed market research and consultation with staff, students, academic peers and industry professionals. Resource requirements identified at the proposal stage should be thoroughly reviewed and any changes highlighted.

2.3. Headings for the Report

Programme Context

- Fit within the FHEQ
- Brief overview of market for the programme
- Other key considerations informing programme development

Rationale for the development of the programme

Vision and strategy for the programme within the context of TL's strategic plan

- Student demand
- Employer requirements
- Contribution to the sector
- Relevant national/international initiatives
- Opportunities to build external relationships or raise TL's profile
- Opportunities to widen access or diversify the student body

Programme management and oversight

Brief overview of responsibilities for Programme development, leadership and support within the Faculty

Recruitment and Admissions

- **Projected student numbers for the next 5 years including:**

- Application numbers by student type
- Enrolment numbers by student type
- Rationale for the numbers presented

- **Market for the Programme**

Evidence of viability and demand for the programme to include:

- Graduate employment opportunities and employer demands
- Details of competitor programmes and USPs of the TL programme in relation to these
- Consultation with prospective students
- Programme title testing

- **Recruitment and Marketing**

Brief outline of recruitment strategy and marketing proposals, including:

- Target markets for recruitment (including underrepresented groups)
- Proposed home and overseas recruitment activities
- Proposed online marketing strategies
- Strategies for widening participation

- **Admissions**

Summary of proposed admissions procedures, including:

- The application process
- Audition, interview and applicant testing arrangements
- Academic entry requirements and RPL
- Non-standard and direct entry arrangements
- Arrangements for progression from other TL programmes (where appropriate)
- Any potential barriers to accessibility and steps proposed to mitigate these
- English language requirements above the TL minimum

Content and Delivery

- **Curriculum Design**

A summary of the curriculum and the rationale the proposed design/structure, making reference to:

- Developments/demand within the discipline/profession
- Impact of any recent curricular changes in associated programmes
- Opportunities for exchange and/or work-based learning

- Opportunities for further study
 - Staff expertise and links with the profession
 - Accessibility and diversity (in terms of culture, background, disability, gender etc.)
 - Programme structure map
- **Learning and Teaching**

Outline of proposed learning and teaching strategies, with reference to:

 - Student induction
 - Accessibility
 - Research-informed teaching
 - Peer observation arrangements/outcomes (if applicable)
 - Tutorial support
 - Staff development opportunities
 - Innovative practice
- **Assessment and Feedback**

Outline of assessment strategy, including a rationale for the proposed assessment design, giving due consideration to:

 - Inclusivity of assessment design
 - Relationship of assessment to learning outcomes (including a map)
 - Volume of assessment
 - Assessment and feedback literacy amongst students
 - Resit (retake) arrangements
- **Progression and achievement**
 - Proposed strategies to support student retention
 - Proposed strategies for the mitigation of potential attainment gaps between different student groups
- **Student Voice**

Reflection on the contribution of students to the design and delivery of the programme, including

 - Student/alumnus involvement in the programme development group
 - Wider consultation with potential and/or existing students

Student Experience

- **Learning Resources**

Summary of how learning resources will support the delivery of the programme, including details of the additional resource required in terms of:

 - teaching and learning spaces (particularly those specific to the programme)
 - library, IT and AV provision

- Performance spaces and production support (where applicable)
- virtual learning environments
- **Student support**

Summary of the proposed mechanisms for student support, including:

- personal tutorial support
- counselling
- support for students with a disability
- English for academic purposes
- careers support
- Support for placements and WBL
- Opportunities for volunteering and extra-curricular activities
- any other relevant support mechanisms

2.4. Programme and Module Specifications

All programme and module specifications, including any proposed changes, must be included using the relevant templates.

2.5. Supplementary Documents

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

- copies of any marketing materials published to date
- a copy of the programme proposal document approved by PMG
- marking criteria for the programme

Panel members should also be provided with links to relevant institutional documents including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- TL Strategic Plan
- Academic Quality Handbook
- Assessment Regulations

3. Areas for Consideration at Validation

The Panel may consider the following areas at the validation event, drawing upon consideration of the documentation, the views of panel members and issues arising in meetings with staff.

3.1. Recruitment and admissions

The panel will wish to assure itself of the market interest for and potential recruitment for the programme. The panel will consider evidence of market research, consultation with industry, academic peers and students, and recruitment activities undertaken prior to validation. Consideration will also be given to:

- the proposed award title and its fit with the content and learning outcomes of the programme.

- The clarity of the proposed admissions policy, its fit with institutional requirements and reference to any additional support that may be needed.

3.2. Academic standards

The Panel will wish to satisfy itself that the programme seeking validation offers a high-quality educational experience to students and is commensurate with HE requirements including the level at which it is offered within the National Qualifications Framework. The Panel will consider the procedures in place for the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience and for securing academic standards.

3.3. Aims and learning outcomes

The Panel will wish to see evidence that programme aims and learning outcomes are clear (to staff, students and the Panel) and relevant to HE requirements (such as the FHEQ and subject benchmark statements).

3.4. Content and assessment

The Panel will wish to see evidence that the curriculum has been designed with due consideration of:

- developments within the associated profession/s
- new technology
- research findings
- new aspects of professional practice when designing the curriculum

It is expected that such consideration will involve consultation with staff, students, experts from other institutions and industry professionals.

The overall structure of the programme, credit distribution and proposed exit points should be reviewed to ensure that these are in line with institutional and national expectations.

The panel will also wish to see that assessment methods are appropriate to learning outcomes, and to assure itself that curriculum and assessment design are inclusive and will not create barriers to learning for students with particular needs or backgrounds. Assessment design must be aligned with institutional assessment regulations and policies and assessment load should be appropriate to the credit weighting and programme level.

3.5. Learning and teaching

The Panel will wish to see that learning and teaching strategies are appropriate to the HE level of the programme and the nature of the discipline, and that the range of teaching, learning and assessment methods are appropriate for the expected student entry profile.

The Panel will wish to assure itself as to the appropriate level of learning resources available to students to assist them in achieving the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

Consideration will be given as to how students' transition into, through and out of the programme is supported, and to the learning support strategies in place.

Where the programme includes placements or work-based learning, the panel will seek assurance that processes are in place for formal agreements to be established and reviewed. Processes for risk assessment and reasonable adjustments should also be in place.

2.5 Student voice

The panel will wish to see evidence that the student body has had some input into the design of the programme and that opportunities for students to influence the future development of the programme will be established. This should include opportunities for student representation and feedback.

2.6 Institutional matters

The Panel will consider any Institutional matters that may affect the validated programme and should assure itself that no conflict exists between the aims and objectives of the Institution and the programme for which validation is sought. This will include confirmation of the Institution's commitment to resources required for the successful management and delivery of the programme, following statements provided in the programme proposal. Any concerns of this nature should be referred to Academic Board for further discussion.

2.7 Staff development

The Panel will wish to see evidence that plans for training and development of teaching staff are in place, and that sufficient expertise will exist within the institution to deliver the programme to a high standard. It will also wish to assure itself that programme staff will be experienced in teaching and assessment at the appropriate HE level.