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| **Frequently Asked Questions** |
| **What is the relationship between the Strategic Plan and Curriculum Refresh** |
| The **Curriculum Refresh Framework**2 articulates those ambitions of the Strategic Plan which have a particular implication for curriculum and course design, which is why individual courses need to consider them . In parallel to this, there will be a range of enhancements and developments happening across NTU in order to meet the broader ambitions of the Strategic Plan; your School will probably already be thinking about these. |
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| **How do I know if my course needs to make a change to its curriculum in order to meet the Strategic Plan?** |
| Most courses will use their scheduled [Periodic Course Review](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/180595.pdf)[[1]](#footnote-1) to consider whether the current design of the course and the curriculum need any changes to be made. The **Framework for Curriculum Refresh[[2]](#footnote-2)** provides an indication of the expectations of the Strategic Plan. It describes these expectations in a way that enables individual course teams to make decisions that are most appropriate for their specific contexts. All course teams must articulate how they have engaged with all of the criteria. This is done by summarising the outcomes of these discussions on the **Curriculum Refresh Course Consideration** document which prompts for a summary of present and future plans in relation to the Framework. Curriculum Refresh Course Consideration documents will be made available for colleagues across the University in order to support the sharing of ideas and practice.If you decide, as a result of the review, that the course needs to make some changes, then you will record these plans on your [Course Development Plan](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/quality_handbook/handbook_supplements/index.html)[[3]](#footnote-3) (as is usual practice) and your Quality Manager will advise about the process for these changes to be approved. |
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| **My course is new – it’s been recently approved, but we haven’t had an intake of students yet - do we still have to do a Periodic Course Review?** |
| No, but you do need to invest some time considering how your course addresses the **Framework for Curriculum Refresh2**. A course team meeting may be the most appropriate way to do this. You will need to articulate your engagement with the Framework by completing the **Curriculum Refresh Course Consideration** document. If, through this consideration, you decide that the course needs to make some changes, your Quality Manager will advise about the process for these changes to be approved |
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| **We’re currently designing a completely new course – what does this mean for us?** |
| You will need to build in consideration of the **Framework for Curriculum Refresh2** into your planning as you design the course. You will need to demonstrate that your course has considered the **Framework** by articulating this on the **Curriculum Refresh Course Consideration** document. The Dean of the School is ultimately responsible for deciding that this consideration is adequate. At the approval event, the approval group will *not* be judging the extent to which the course meets Strategic Plan criteria, but will, as is usual practice, consider the academic standards and the appropriateness of the learning opportunities which will be offered to students by the new course. |
| **Our course is governed by a set of requirements stipulated by a PSRB which may mean we are limited in being able to address aspects of the Curriculum Refresh Framework. What should we do?** |
| The University recognises that some course accreditation requirements will define what can and can’t be changed in relation to the Curriculum Refresh exercise. Your School will make a judgement about this and you will be able to record this on the **Framework for Curriculum Refresh**. |
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| **Does this exercise apply to *all* courses?** |
| Academic Board have agreed that all undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses will be reviewed against the following framework. The extent to which aspects of the Framework apply to different kinds of courses will need to be decided by your School. For instance, in the case of single year ‘top-up’ courses, it may be that much of the Framework has been addressed in the provision that the students have experienced in their prior Foundation Degree. The outcomes of the consideration of the Curriculum Refresh framework for postgraduate course will be different in scope and nature from those for undergraduate courses, but Schools should ensure that all areas have been appropriately considered such that they reflect the principles of the Strategic Plan. |
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| **How do I know what is required to ensure the curriculum meets the Strategic Plan?** |
| The **Framework for Curriculum Refresh** sets out the expectations associated with the Strategic Plan. The important thing to remember about this Framework is that it is not prescriptive about how courses should look; it describes the University’s expectations in a way that enables individual course teams to make decisions that are most appropriate for their specific contexts. The University will be running a number of briefing events and sharing practice events to cover all the areas of the Strategic Plan over the forthcoming months. Many of these will be TILT events, so look out for details. |
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| **Are there any other constraints to course design that we should know about?** |
| You need to adhere to NTU standard underpinning principles for [course design](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/138218.pdf)[[4]](#footnote-4): this includes, for example, that the minimum module size for undergraduate courses, is 20 credits, and that larger modules should be multiples of 20 credits. |
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| **Has the expectation around tutorials changed?**  |
| There are no longer tutorial requirements around the number, format or size of tutorial group. As part of the **Framework for Curriculum Refresh**, course teams are required to articulate how their tutorial system underpins a personalised learning experience for all their students. |
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| **If we want to make changes to the course after the Periodic Course Review, how will these be approved?** |
| Once the University has a good understanding of the nature and scope of intended change across its courses, the process for approval will be confirmed.  |
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| **Will we need to complete a business case for any changes that we want to make?** |
| This will be decided on a case-by-case basis. The decision will be based on the extent of the changes being proposed and the likely resource implications. |
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| **I had heard that NTU might be moving to a semester model – should we not wait until will know the outcomes of that consideration before we plan any changes to the curriculum?** |
| The University Executive Team have decided to retain the current overarching structure of the academic year, so there is no need to wait. |
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| **What if we agree to develop an area of the curriculum in a certain way, but in 12 months’ time the external context changes such that this would no longer be a sensible approach?** |
| That’s fine. The main objective of Curriculum Refresh is to ensure that course teams engage with the Strategic Plan through the **Framework for Curriculum Refresh**. It is understood that for courses to remain current and aligned to the sector, plans may well need to change as the sector changes. It is anticipated that, as we learn more about the implications of the Strategic Plan for the curriculum, the Framework itself is likely to develop over time. The normal processes for interim reporting and periodic course review will ensure continued currency and strategic fit.  |
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| **Who will decide if my course meets the requirements of Curriculum Refresh?** |
| You need to demonstrate that your course has considered the **Framework for Curriculum Refresh** by articulating the team’s response on the **Curriculum Refresh Course Consideration** document. The Dean of the School is ultimately responsible for deciding that this consideration is adequate. If your course goes forward to make some changes as a result of the consideration of the Framework, the approval event will *not* be judging the extent to which the course meets Strategic Plan criteria, but will, as is usual practice, consider the academic standards and the appropriateness of the learning opportunities which will be offered to students by the revised course. |
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| **When will students start on the ‘refreshed’ course?** |
| Your Dean and Quality Manager will be able to confirm the plan for your course. In the main, the University anticipates that all courses will have considered the **Framework for Curriculum Refresh** and made any appropriate changes in time for first year students enrolling in 2018/19. |
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| **If we make changes to the course, will this affect *all* students or just first years when it rolls-out?** |
| Only first years need to be enrolled on the ‘refreshed’ course. However, you may decide that the changes you have made would most usefully be rolled out to other years at the same time, and this is fine too. You will need to get School agreement that it can meet any resource implications associated with this roll-out and will have needed to consult with students on the course.  |
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| **What documentation needs producing as part of the Periodic Course Review?** |
| The only additional documentation that will need producing (over and above what is normally produced – see [NTU Quality Handbook Supplement 6B Periodic Course Review](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/180595.pdf)) is the **Curriculum Refresh Course Consideration** document which prompts for a summary of present and future plans in relation to the Framework. Curriculum Refresh Course Consideration documents will be available for colleagues across the University in order to support the sharing of ideas and practice. |

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| **Where can I find out more about the topics that are identified in the Framework for Curriculum Refresh?** |
| The University will be running a number of briefing events and sharing practice events to cover all the areas of the Strategic Plan over the forthcoming months. Many of these will be TILT events, so look out for details. |
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| **Who should I go to for more help?** |
| If your question is about process, then you should speak to your School Quality Manager or your CADQ School Liaison Officer. If your question is about a particular area of the curriculum then you might go to someone who has some expertise in that field, for example your School Learning and Teaching Co-ordinator, or your School Employability Co-ordinator. The University will also be running a number of briefing events and sharing practice events to cover all the areas of the Strategic Plan over the forthcoming months.  |
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| **What is the status of the current graduate attributes in this process?** |
| Fundamental to the Strategic Plan is the increased value that we will provide to our students who graduate. The Plan describes a set of ambitions that relate to what we expect of students when they leave NTU. The graduate attributes that courses align to currently will be superseded, therefore, as courses align to the new Strategic Plan. As such, there will be no need to additionally demonstrate mapping to the last set of graduate attributes when courses undergo Periodic Course Review. |
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| **Should I continue to use the current Course and Module Specification templates to provide information about my course?** |
| We are hoping to update the Specifications as part of Curriculum Refresh, but we are not yet able to provide details about the precise nature of the changes. You should talk to your School Quality Manager about how the School is going to manage this process as we seek to develop the new Specifications. |
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1. *NTU Quality Handbook Supplement 6B Periodic Course Review.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Refreshing and reinterpreting the curriculum. Paper updated after Academic Board. 9 February 2016.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *NTU Quality Handbook Supplement 6A Interim Course Report and Course Development Plan.* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *NTU Quality Handbook Section 12 Course Design.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)