

Requirements for approving changes to courses

1. Overview of process

- 1.1 Routine changes to modules as part of regular updating to ensure that currency is maintained are the responsibility of the course committee. If these changes amount to significant or substantive change across modules, there may be a need for formal approval by SASQC or a Development and Approval Group (DAG).
- 1.2 All proposals for changes to courses must be recorded on a course change form and submitted to the appropriate Head of Department.
- 1.3 SASQCs have responsibility to maintain a record of all changes to modules, regardless of the extent of the change.

2. Business Evaluation

- 2.1 Once the course change form is completed and the category of change confirmed, the Head of Department and course sponsor (with input from the School Business Case Mentor and CADQ as required) must determine whether or not the proposal has any business implications. For example, a major change in academic terms may have minimal or no business implications. In addition, it may be that the change can be accommodated within an existing budget and therefore business evaluation is not needed.
- 2.2 It is particularly important to consider the impact of the change on any 'material information' that has already been provided to current students or to students who have accepted an offer, including those from progression route partners such as Nottingham Trent International College. This may affect the decision about when the change should be implemented.
- 2.3 Please note that the requirement to complete a business case is linked to the business implications identified rather than the category of course change.

Explanatory note

- During 2018/19 proposed changes to current undergraduate courses which have not been approved by a DAG by 15 January 2019 will need to be agreed by UET before academic approval can proceed. In the case of proposed changes to be approved by SASQCs, Schools will be responsible for informing course teams of the

latest deadline after which proposals must go via UET. For postgraduate taught courses, proposed changes scheduled for academic approval after mid-July 2019 will require UET agreement before they can proceed.

- Details of the Business Evaluation processes for standard University and collaborative provision can be found on the Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) webpages. If your School does not have a Business Case Mentor, speak to your School Standards and Quality Manager in the first instance.
- 'Material information' refers to the following aspects: *entry requirements, core and optional modules, information about how the course will be delivered (e.g. contact hours, work placements, expected workloads, levels of staff), methods of assessment, details of the award on successful completion, location of study and placements (where known), length of course, who regulates and accredits, and any surprising or important terms, including those that may prevent a student completing.*
- Advice about the impact of the change on material information should be sought from Legal Services and / or the College Marketing Team.

3. Routes to approval

- 3.1 The table below provides details and requirements of the routes to approval of different categories of change. Advice about the documentation requirements for particular cases should be sought from CADQ.

Type of change	Description of change	Process for formal approval of change	External consideration requirements	Documentation requirements
<p>1. Modification</p>	<p>Changes/new modules comprising no more than 40 credits in a level proposed within a single academic year.</p> <p>Modifications might include changes to module title, module level, credit value, module aims, module outcomes, assessment methods.</p> <p>No changes to course learning outcomes (apart from simple changes to expression / grammar).</p> <p>No changes to overall assessment strategy / regulations.</p>	<p>Course committee and SASQC.</p>	<p>External examiner consultation;</p> <p>Degree Apprenticeship Manager (where appropriate).</p>	<p>Course change form;</p> <p>Revised/new module specifications;</p> <p>Amended course specification (where appropriate);</p> <p>Updated curriculum map / assessment schedule;</p> <p>NTIC Progression Route Information form (where applicable).</p>
<p>2. Significant modification</p>	<p>Changes/new modules comprising no more than half the total number of credits (eg. less than 180 for undergraduate; less than 90 for postgraduate) proposed within a single academic year and where no more than 60 module credits are affected within a single level of study.</p> <p>And, where relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consequent changes to some course learning outcomes; • consequent changes to assessment strategy/regulations. <p>No changes to overall structure or essence of the course (aspects such</p>	<p>Course committee and SASQC where SASQC includes a staff member external to the School.</p>	<p>External examiner consultation;</p> <p>External expert(s) (subject specialist) written commentary;</p> <p>Degree Apprenticeship Manager (where appropriate);</p> <p>Staff member from a different School in attendance at SASQC.</p>	<p>Course change form;</p> <p>Course operational document;</p> <p>Revised/new module specifications;</p> <p>Amended course specification;</p> <p>Updated course structure diagram / curriculum map / assessment framework where applicable;</p> <p>External expert (subject specialist) written commentary;</p>

Type of change	Description of change	Process for formal approval of change	External consideration requirements	Documentation requirements
	<p>as addition of new pathways, new awards, placements and work-based learning, blended learning).</p> <p>Addition of a period of exchange.</p> <p>Addition of a Sandwich mode on an existing full time course (or vice versa) where there is no impact upon the overall structure or curriculum of the existing course.</p>			<p>NTIC Progression Route Information form (where applicable).</p>
<p>3. Thematic change</p>	<p>Changes related to a particular aspect(s) of the course in order to align with the Strategic Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes/new modules comprising no more than half the total number of credits (eg. less than 180 for undergraduate; less than 90 for postgraduate) proposed within a single academic year and where no more than 60 module credits are affected within a single level of study; • consequent changes to some course learning outcomes; • consequent changes to assessment strategy/regulations. <p>Likely to include significant changes to the scope or structure of the course –</p>	<p>Thematic DAG.</p> <p>May be combined with approval of similarly themed changes across unrelated courses (could be from different Schools).</p>	<p>External examiner consultation;</p> <p>External expert(s) (subject specialist) written commentary;</p> <p>Degree Apprenticeship Manager (where appropriate);</p> <p>External DAG member(s) (theme specialist(s));</p> <p>Chair from different School(s);</p> <p>DAG member from different School(s).</p>	<p>Course change form;</p> <p>Course operational document;</p> <p>Revised / new module specifications;</p> <p>Amended course specification;</p> <p>Updated course structure diagram / curriculum map / assessment schedule / assessment and feedback plan (where applicable);</p> <p>External expert (subject specialist) written commentary.</p>

Type of change	Description of change	Process for formal approval of change	External consideration requirements	Documentation requirements
	may include, e.g. a new work placement.			
4. Major revision	<p>Changes involve one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes to award designation or course title or mode of study, except where a Sandwich mode is added to an existing full time course (or vice versa) and there is no impact on course structure or curriculum; • changes to the majority of course learning outcomes; • changes to the overall scope and structure; • changes to over a half of the total number of credits (more than 180 for undergraduate; more than 90 for postgraduate). 	Traditional DAG.	<p>External examiner consultation; Degree Apprenticeship Manager (where appropriate); External DAG member (subject specialist); Chair and DAG member from different Schools.</p>	<p>Course change form; Course operational document; Revised/new module specifications; Amended course specification; Updated course structure diagram/curriculum map/assessment schedule / assessment and feedback plan (where applicable); NTIC Progression Route Information form (where applicable).</p>

4. Routine updating

- 4.1 Changes to modules may also be made as part of routine or regular updating to ensure that currency is maintained. These changes are the responsibility of the course committee in recognition of the fact that successful courses will develop and evolve. There is no requirement for formal approval beyond the course committee unless the course committee considers that the changes have a wider impact beyond an individual module and/or affect the course as a whole in some substantive way. Where this is the case, the process for approving changes (as above) should be followed.
- 4.2 All changes should be notified to, and recorded by, SASQC so that an oversight of changes to each course can be maintained.

5. Consultation and notification

- 5.1 Whilst the University reserves the right to modify its courses and assessment regulations at any time, it is expected that proposed changes will be discussed with staff, students and external examiners (and NTIC and other collaborative partners if applicable). Particular thought should be given to the timescale for enacting changes and the effect on current cohorts of students - those affected should be provided with details and given an opportunity to comment on the changes before they are implemented. Proposed changes may be modified in the light of feedback.
- 5.2 All changes must be considered by the relevant external examiner(s).
- 5.3 Course teams must ensure that students are inducted into the new or revised course, and that the course handbook reflects the changes (including any made as a result of meeting conditions of approval).
- 5.4 In liaison with Admissions and School Marketing teams (and NTIC where applicable), appropriate notification to students holding an offer should also take place in order to meet the guidance of the Competition and Markets Authority (see explanatory note above).
- 5.5 When making module modifications, the Course Leader of the course regarded as the 'home' of the module, should consult with the Course Leaders of all courses making use of the module.

6. Updating course and module specifications

- 6.1 It is important that the Course Leader keeps the course specification up to date. This specification constitutes a definitive description of the course for staff, students (potential and existing), parents, external examiners, employers and for internal and external quality assurance purposes. All other staff and student documentation should correspond with the components of the approved course specification.
- 6.2 Where changes to a course specification are made that are intended to affect existing students on the course, the change must be made according to the principles set out in the QH and the (approved) updated course specification should be distributed to students.

- 6.3 Where changes to a course specification are made after students have accepted an offer for the course, these students must be notified in time to be able to alter their decision. In these circumstances, Legal Services and / or College Marketing teams should be consulted.
- 6.4 Additionally, the Module Leader should keep the module specification up to date within the School. All other module documentation provided to staff and students should correspond with the approved module specification. This applies irrespective of the nature of the change or whether modules are amended as part of routine updating.
- 6.5 Changes to courses are only formally approved once the course and module specifications have been amended and approved
- 6.6 A copy of the updated course specification must be kept within the School.
- 6.7 A copy of the updated course specification must be forwarded by the School to Marketing for inclusion on Course Finder.
- 6.8 Selected course and module specifications will be scrutinised as part of the five-yearly Periodic School Review cycle.

7. Collaborative provision

- 7.1 Changes to partnerships and School-based collaborative provision should follow the mechanisms described in this Section; subject to any course committee decisions being agreed by the parent committee rather than any committee operating within a collaborative centre (see QH Sections 10A, 10B and 10C).
- 7.2 For information about making changes to Validation Service provision, please see Quality Handbook Section 10C.

8. Changes to a course not requiring academic approval

- 8.1 A change to a course may be proposed that does not require academic approval. For example, changes to the admissions requirements (e.g. UCAS points) or an additional course start date/cohort.
- 8.2 Changes of this kind should be managed and signed off at School level. Advice is available from CADQ.
- 8.3 The addition of another start date for a course would be agreed by the School (SASQC and School Executive). A change form should be completed and any business implications identified. The School may opt to use the Business Evaluation Process to determine the associated costs and business implications of an additional cohort(s).
- 8.4 Changes to the admissions requirements should be managed at School level. Information on admissions requirements is provided in the 'Apply' tab on the online course search.

Policy owner
CADQ

Change history			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Sept 2016	30.09.16	01.10.16	New 'routes' for approval of different kinds of changes Additional requirements in order to meet CMA guidance New documentary requirements for new courses and course changes
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	Addition of documentary requirements to include course operational document and assessment and feedback plan
March 2018	15.02.18	15.02.18	Significant modification category expanded to include the addition of a Sandwich mode on an existing full time course (or vice versa) where there is no impact upon overall course structure or curriculum
Sept 2018	12.09.18	01.10.18	Embedding of NTIC progression route requirements Removal of requirement for a Curriculum Refresh course road-map as part of approval documentation Added Degree Apprenticeship Manager to list of external consideration requirements (where appropriate) Explanatory note added regarding requirement for UET agreement of proposed changes for approvals scheduled after 15 January 2019 (UG) and mid-July 2019 (PGT)

Equality Impact Assessment		
<i>Version:</i>	<i>EIA date:</i>	<i>Completed by:</i>
Sept 2016	01.09.16	CADQ