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CD04: PROCESS FOR THE DISCONTINUATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMMES

1. General Approach

The course approvals process is predicated on a risk-based approach: those proposals posing greater risk to academic quality and standards, the student learning experience, institutional reputation or financial loss requiring greater scrutiny and higher levels of authority as the final point of approval. The purpose is to evaluate and confirm the final detail of all courses of study open to students. The formally approved version of any course is designated as the 'definitive document' forming the basis of the record in LUSI (Lancaster University Student Information).

Note that
describe <u>both</u> programmes and modules. Where the context refers to only one of these, the relevant term (i.e. programme   module) will be used instead.

2. Categories of approval

The Course Approvals Process is aligned to the University's statutory and regulatory obligations in relation to quality and standards, and consumer protection rights. Categories of approval are further determined by the scope of the proposal, the breadth of scrutiny required, and the level of reputational, financial or organisational risk which the proposal may expose the University. There are three broad categories of approval.

a) New programmes
Which covers both new programmes and the introduction of new variants to existing programmes. Note that where new core or optional modules are being introduced *as part of a new programme*, these should be submitted alongside the programme proposal for scrutiny and approval.

b) Modification of existing provision
Which covers
i) major modifications;

programme of study. Because of the contractual obligations between applicants and students and the University, no department or faculty may permanently lay-down a programme on its own authority. Proposals to temporarily suspend an existing programme of study must be approved by the faculty, but proposals to permanently lay-down an existing programme of study must be approved by the University Dean (UA), acting on behalf of Senate and Council. This ensures that the interests of offer-holders, applicants with deferred places, and students who have intercalated from ster senatesupported

3.3.1. Evidencing the proposal

3.3.1.1. Rationale

- If the programme uses modules from other areas, will the student numbers on those modules be affected? Could the reduction in the subsequent student numbers make such modules unviable?
- Will the discontinuation of a programme also result in modules being discontinued that are used in other programmes? How will the discontinuation of these modules affect those programmes?

- Current students
  - Will the choice of modules available to students remaining on the programme be fewer or different?
  - What will the impact be on students who have to re-sit a module, or repeat a year, or have interrupted their studies?
  - If modules are to be laid down that are used in other programmes, how might this affect students on those programmes?
- Applicants
  - Have any offers of a place on the programme been made to prospective students?
  - Have any applicants accepted a place on the programme, and have any of these elected to defer their year of entry?
  - If the programme is no longer available to them, what alternatives will be offered? Are there any other stakeholders who will be impacted by the proposed discontinuation, and what is that impact likely to be?

Should any additional resources be needed to prospn, andoHꝗꝘq̃Q̃Ꝭ̃U̇ꝏΌꝏꝂΫ̌ẂWUꝲ‚ꝑꝶꝐD̃Bꝑ(ɪJꝪꝲ„ΩA)rU1ꝲ5̄Ɓ(AꝹꝺRꝪ

In the case of discontinuation proposals, the departmental approval gateway will want to ensure that the proposal aligns with wider department, faculty or University plans and that appropriate steps have or will be taken to protect the interests of any applicants holding offers or students registered on the programme in question.

In the event that there are:

- no students registered on the programme proposed for discontinuation,
- no applicants who have been made or accepted offers on the programme, and
- there is no impact from the discontinuance on other departments or faculties,

a written recommendation, signed by the relevant Associate Dean, to discontinue a programme can be submitted directly to the UAD rather than progressing the proposal through the full process.

Once a decision regarding approval has been made, the outcome should be recorded on the **Discontinuation of Existing Programme Form**, noting any observations, assumptions or conditions which contributed to the decision taken, and signed by the Chair of the departmental approval gateway. Subject to satisfactory completion of any conditions or recommendations the proposal can then be passed to the Faculty approval gateway as the next stage in the approval process.

3.3.4. Faculty approval

The faculty approval gateway is responsible for considering proposals from a strategic perspective, assessing each against faculty and University objectives and strategies.

The faculty approval gateway will assure itself that each discontinuation proposal provides a coherent and sound rationale and should be satisfied that students' academic experience will be secured, and that the curriculum, assessment, learning outcomes and learning resources can be maintained during any teaching-out period.

In order to meet its responsibility, the faculty approval gateway may invite the programme team to take questions during its deliberations. Where appropriate, a Joint Faculty Teaching Committee may be convened to execute the duties of the faculty approval gateway.

Having considered the proposal and reviewed the submission documents, the faculty approval gateway may determine one of the following outcomes:

- to recommend or approve the proposal as presented
- to recommend or approve the proposal subject to conditions, or
- to reject the proposal

Once a decision regarding approval has been made, the outcome should be recorded on the **Discontinuation of Existing Programme Form**

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