

QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK 2018/19

SECTION B: PORTFOLIO PLANNING

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B1 FORM	New Course Proposal	
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Introduction:

- B1:** The Academic Portfolio is determined in light of the Academic Strategy and business planning functions, aligned within the University's Strategic Vision.
- B2:** Portfolio planning requires business and academic consideration and these are carried out by the University Executive Group (UEG) and Academic Board respectively. These bodies have delegated authority to the Academic Strategy Group (ASG) which considers:
- 1) additions and deletions from the portfolio (processes described within this section of the Quality Assurance Handbook):
 - new courses;
 - suspension to recruitment to a course; and
 - withdrawal of a course from the portfolio.
 - 2) changes to existing courses that impact on the character of the academic portfolio (processes described within Section E of the Quality Assurance Handbook):
 - changes to location of study from one UCA Campus to another UCA Campus or between Schools;
 - changes to course and/or award titles; and
 - changes to mode of delivery.

New Course Proposals

- B3:** A new course is an addition to the University's portfolio. To propose a new course title for an already validated programme of study there is a separate process (covered in Section E of the Quality Assurance Handbook: Changes to Courses).

B4: The 'New Course Approval Form' (B1) should be completed by the relevant Head of School (or equivalent including OCA Principal) for each new course proposal. It must be accompanied by the completed Section A of the Programme Specification Template in order to ensure that marketing complies with the published course information requirements detailed by the CMA.

School Consideration

B5: The completed New Course Proposal Form B1 will be considered by the School Management Team at the earliest opportunity. It is the responsibility of the School Management Team to ensure that:

- the course fits with the School/OCA Plans
- the School/OCA has given consideration to the resource commitment required to deliver the new course
- appropriate consultation has taken place with the relevant professional departments and this must be detailed in the New Course Proposal Form (B1):
 - Marketing – a summary of the regional and national demand, market attractiveness, competitor analysis and anticipated student profile;
 - Finance – each form must be accompanied by an annex detailing the financial implications in a course costing and assessing the implications of those course costs, following consultation with the Department of Strategic Planning; and
 - Internationalisation – comment on the appeal and demand for the proposal in an international context.
 - Library & Student Services - comment on Gateway and Library resources requirements.
- the B1 form has been correctly completed for onward consideration by ASG and provides all the requisite information to support the proposal (including the course costing annex).
- the B1 reaches the clerk to ASG for inclusion on the next available agenda.

B6: Once received, the clerk to ASG will circulate proposals to representatives from Estates Services, Registry Services, Library & Student Services, Admissions, Finance and Heads of School and collate their comments to feed into the next meeting of ASG.

B7: ASG will then determine:

- whether the proposal and Form B1 are approved and the course can proceed to validation; or
- whether to refer the proposal back to the proposer for further consideration of specific issues.

Notification of decision

B8: Once approved by ASG, the decision will be notified to stakeholders immediately to take action as appropriate (stakeholders comprise representatives from the QAE department; Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement Department; Department of Strategic

Planning; Student Records and Library & Student Services). It will also be notified to the next available UEG and Academic Board meetings.

Timescales

Printed prospectus

B9: The timescale for new course proposals to meet the printed prospectus deadline and maximize the application cycle window is as follows:

Month	Months prior to first intake	Activity
October	23	ASG approval and notification to stakeholders ⁱ
November	22	Course details added to the prospectus
December	21	
January	20	
February	19	
March	18	UCAS Recruitment Events start
April	17	
May	16	Applicants can start to apply for course with UCAS
June	15	
July	14	
August	13	
September	12	UCAS issue initial applications
October	11	Open Day promotion begins
January	9	UCAS applications deadline

B10: Exceptionally where there are external drivers, this timescale can be shortened with the approval of the Chair of ASG. However, in such cases the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, the Director of Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement and Head of Admissions must be consulted in order to ensure that the timescales allow for effective validation and recruitment processes. In such cases there is still a requirement to follow the process outlined above, but mechanisms such as circulation to committee members for approval may be used to expedite approval processes, and each case will be analysed by ASG on its merits in relation to the timescales.

B11: Using the above timescales course developers must anticipate building in time in case a course requires several iterations before ASG approval.

Suspension of Recruitment to a Course

B12: Suspension of recruitment to a course may be recommended by ASG based on a risk assessment on prior enrolment numbers and application statistics for the current cycle, or recommended by one of the following bodies:

- School Management Team;

- Academic Scrutiny Group;
- AQC (e.g. on the recommendation of a QER panel: see Section F);
- UEG as part of its regular review of data for poorly recruiting courses (all decisions will be sent to ASG clerk to notify stakeholders)

In these circumstances the Head of School should seek approval from ASG using the Suspend Recruitment to a Course Form B2.

B13: Once received, the clerk to ASG will circulate the B2 to representatives from Estates Services, Registry Services, Library & Student Services, Admissions, Finance and Heads of School and collate their comments to feed into the next meeting of ASG.

Risk Process

B14: Where possible, course suspensions should be received by ASG before 30 November of the current admission cycle in order to meet UCAS deadlines, consider implications for CMA and minimise any disruption for applicants. Where this deadline cannot be met, the Head of Admissions should be consulted. ASG will consider approval in relation to the University's Academic Portfolio (student number planning, resources, market demand and the Academic Strategy).

B16: Course suspensions should include a clear statement/rationale for the suspension and outline the intentions for recruiting to the course in the following admissions cycle.

B17: A course can only be suspended for a maximum of two recruitment cycles. After this time, it must be withdrawn from the portfolio (see below) and will require a new validation in order to reinstate.

B18: All course suspensions will be reviewed on an annual basis by ASG before 30 May of the current admission cycle to confirm whether the course is to be reinstated for the following admissions cycle, suspended for a further year, or withdrawn.

Notification of decision

B19: Once approved by ASG, the decision will be notified to stakeholders immediately to take action as appropriate (stakeholders comprise representatives from the QAE department; Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement Department; Department of Strategic Planning; Student Records and Library & Student Services). It will also be notified to the next available UEG and Academic Board meetings.

Withdrawal of a course

B20: This procedure relates to the complete withdrawal of individual courses from the University portfolio.

B21: Course withdrawals can be initiated:

- by UEG or ASG - based on portfolio planning in relation to market indicators and other business factors
- by the relevant Head of School/OCA Principal - based on School planning

processes

- due to continued suspension from recruitment for more than two recruitment cycles
- by the Academic Quality Committee - in very exceptional circumstances, based on serious on-going issues relating to the student experience or academic standards highlighted through quality processes.

B22: All course withdrawals must be put forward to the clerk to ASG on the Proposal to Withdraw a Course Form B3, completed by the Head of School or equivalent, and if possible before 30 November of the current admission cycle to minimise disruption to potential applicants. Once received, the clerk to ASG will circulate the B3 to representatives from Estates Services, Registry Services, Library & Student Services, Admissions, Finance and Heads of School and collate their comments to feed into the next meeting of ASG.

B23: ASG will consider approval in relation to the University's Academic Portfolio (student number planning, resources, market demand and the Academic Strategy). Once approved by ASG, the proposal will be notified to the University Executive Group and the Academic Board.

Notification of decision

B24: Once approved by ASG, the decision will be notified to stakeholders immediately to take action as appropriate (stakeholders comprise representatives from the QAE department; Marketing, Student Recruitment & Engagement Department; Student Records; Department of Strategic Planning; and Library & Student Services). It will also be notified to the next available UEG and Academic Board meetings.

Migration and exit strategies for withdrawn and suspended courses

B25: QAE will liaise with the Head of School or equivalent to ensure there is a clear plan for minimising disruption for any students impacted by a course withdrawal or suspension and to ensure that they are able to satisfactorily complete their studies in line with their contract with UCA. AQC will approve the ensuing migration/exit strategy in line with the Student Protection Plan approved by the Office for Students to protect the student experience as the course winds down. QAE will liaise with the Head of School or equivalent to ensure the effective implementation of this exit strategy.