

Programme Life Cycle Procedure

2025/26

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1 Purpose of this Procedure

1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to inform the development, approval and ongoing maintenance of taught programmes leading to a Wrexham University undergraduate or postgraduate awards.

1.2 Its aim is to ensure that the University delivers high-quality taught provision aligned with the University's mission and strategy, whilst responding to local and national priorities, market trends and demand. It sets out our approach to securing academic standards, quality assurance and enhancement of the student learning experience.

1.3 This procedure is informed by [the UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and the QAA [Advice and Guidance on Course Design and Development](#).

2 Defining Principles

Area	Principle
Academic Calendar	Programmes must fit within the existing academic calendar in place at the University.
Academic Partnerships	This procedure applies to home and academic partner programmes. Where practice differs from home programmes for academic partner programmes a specific reference has been added.
Award titles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must reflect the intended learning outcomes of the programme. • Specialist titles must have a minimum quarter of the programme's credits dedicated to the specialist area to justify the use of the specialist title. • Must not exceed 100 characters in English and Welsh.
Curriculum design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The defining principles of curriculum design apply to new and existing programmes. • The curriculum for undergraduate programmes must impose an increasing level of demand on the learner as they progress through the levels of study. • The body of knowledge and skills developed within the proposed curriculum is appropriate to the field and level of study and reflects current scholarship/expectations within the academic discipline or profession. • Embedded within each taught programme at all levels of study should be the ability for students to develop and demonstrate the 10 employability skills within the University Skills Framework. • There must be an appropriate balance within the programme, for example in relation to academic and practical elements, personal

Area	Principle
	<p>development and academic outcomes, and breadth and depth of the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum structure, learning and teaching and assessment strategies must be designed to enable the achievement of the intended learning outcomes of the programme, and be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of a range of students. • The curriculum structure should match the University's Modular Curriculum Framework (see academic regulations for further information). • When reviewing existing provision a significant amount of change may be identified. If the planned changes exceed 50% of the original programme, then a new programme proposal will need to be drafted and considered through the validation process. The original provision will need to be withdrawn and taught out. 50% can be defined as programme structure changes, for example. • Top up and pathway programmes are standalone programmes that need to be considered through the validation process and have their own programme specification.
Assessment Strategy	Each programme and module will have an assessment strategy which meets the requirements set out in the Assessment Policy .
Degree Apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree apprenticeships are work-based learning programmes that provide opportunities for individuals working in Wales to develop relevant industry knowledge and job competencies, while in paid employment. Requirements for completing a degree apprenticeship are set out in the relevant Apprenticeship Framework, commissioned by the Welsh Government and will include a level 6-degree qualification that is recognised by employers. Degree Apprenticeship programmes must demonstrate that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There has been comprehensive collaboration between employers and programme teams in the design of the programme, the planning of the delivery model, identifying progression routes for apprentices and agreeing the continuous monitoring and review process. ○ The delivery model has been carefully planned and clearly articulated, including day release or blended learning modes to facilitate and support the integration of on- and off-the-job learning/training. ○ There is a clear mechanism to support learning in the workplace, and ensure individual progress is regularly and consistently monitored. The roles and responsibilities of all individuals and

Area	Principle
	<p>organisations involved in supporting apprentice development and achievement are clear.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The assessments are directly related to the workplace, with opportunities for employers to be involved in the assessment process, where appropriate. ○ There are established progression opportunities provided by the University, the employer, or professional bodies.
External benchmarking and referencing	<p>All programmes must be benchmarked against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies. • Relevant characteristics statements. • Relevant subject benchmark statements. • Requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), where appropriate.
External engagement	<p>The proposing team should demonstrate an appropriate level of external engagement, and the proposal should be underpinned by research and scholarship/professional activity.</p>
Foundation Degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation degrees are typically (but not exclusively) designed for students who are in employment. Where such is the case, then the mode of attendance will typically be part-time. • Foundation degree programmes must demonstrate that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is an appropriate balance of theory, skills development and work-based learning. ○ Authentic work-based learning is an integral feature of the programme. ○ There has been collaboration between employers and programme providers in the design of the programme. ○ There will be collaboration between employers and programme providers in the delivery of the programme. ○ The programme equips students with skills and knowledge relevant to their current/prospective employment. ○ There are opportunities for those who successfully complete a foundation degree to progress to Level 6 of a named Honours degree programme. Where a bridging programme is required, this must be described in the submission documentation.
Learning Time	<p>One credit equates to ten hours of notional learning; this includes active learning and teaching hours and independent learning hours. All</p>

Area	Principle
	modules must make use of all possible learning time. For example, a 20-credit module must make use of 200 hours of learning time and use the categories in noted in the Module Specification Guidance document, to breakdown the hours. Please refer to the Module Specification Guidance document for more information.
Programme and Module Leaders	Programme and Module Leaders must be Wrexham University staff members. Sessional staff cannot be appointed to these roles.
Resources	The Faculty are responsible for making sure that programmes going through validation / re-validation are suitably resourced to enable students to complete their programme successfully; the panel are not able to consider or approve funding requests for additional resources. If the panel feel there is insufficient resource, this could lead to a programme not being (re) approved through the (re-) validation process.
Student feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be appropriate arrangements in place to enable students to contribute to the quality management of the programme, for example, through Student Voice Forums (SVFs), and representation at programme and Faculty level meetings. Feedback mechanisms should be built into each module.
Student support	Provision for student support (academic and pastoral) must be appropriate to the nature of the proposed programme and equitable in comparison to similar programmes within the University. Adequate provision should be made to support students with a range of learning needs.
University Skills Framework	For all programmes, the University Skills framework mapping must be completed in collaboration with the Careers and Employability Service. Following approval, the mapping should be maintained annually as part of the Programme Handbook.
Welsh Medium Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All programmes must meet the expectations of the Welsh Language standards and the University Welsh Medium Strategy. The baseline expectation is that students can present their work, access forms, resources, email correspondence, work placements and personal tutorials in Welsh.
Work-based and placement learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmes should include elements of work-based learning or placement opportunities, which should be detailed within the programme specification, including if it is a PSRB requirement. The element must include appropriate learning opportunities aligned to the programme and module learning outcomes, and the staff involved in the element must be appropriately qualified, trained and supported.

Area	Principle
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is the responsibility of the programme team to oversee these elements of the programme and ensure that they are clearly embedded within the programme; students are supported throughout; placement providers and workers are trained and supported and provide opportunities for concerns to be raised, where appropriate.

3 Pre-validation

3.1 The pre-validation process considers new programme proposals. Following the pre-validation process if proposals are approved, they then move on to the validation process where the academic viability of the programme(s) is considered. The pre-validation process considers a proposal:

- Financial viability
- Market viability
- Strategic alignment to the University's vision and strategy
- Industry relevance

3.2 The Process

Stage	Detail
Stage 1- Informal consideration	<p>To propose a new programme, academic staff should initially discuss the idea with the Subject Lead/Principal Lecturer and relevant Associate Dean(s) for the relevant subject area to ensure alignment with the University and Faculty strategic plans.</p> <p>For Academic Partner programme proposals, the proposal should be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team at the partner organisation, the Programme Leader, the Partnerships Office and the Quality and Regulation Team at Wrexham University.</p>
Stage 2 – Faculty Leadership Team (FLT) consideration	<p>If the initial idea is supported, normally the proposer is required to prepare a pre-validation pack, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Initial Programme Proposal Form (IPPF). A market insights form – prepared by Planning and Reporting (home programmes only) A business case – prepared by Finance (home programmes) OR prepared by the Partnerships Office (academic partner programmes)

Stage	Detail
	FLT consider the proposal and recommend whether the documentation should be submitted to APDC, (Academic Portfolio Development Committee) for approval. In cases where cross-faculty delivery is involved, approval from both Faculties is required before submission to APDC for university approval to develop the programme.
Stage 3 – APDC	The new programme proposal will be discussed by APDC and if approved the programme can be marketed subject to validation and proceed to validation (see section 4). The Quality and Regulations team will send out a notification to the relevant departments following APDC which will initiate the programme set up process.
Timescales	The time it takes to consider a new programme proposal through the pre-validation process can differ depending on the complexity of the proposal and be subject to the timings of the relevant committees involved in the approval of the proposal.

3.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Academic Partner Senior Leadership Team	Consider new programme proposals to ensure that they align to the strategic aims of the partner, WU and the partnership arrangement.
Academic Portfolio Development Committee (APDC)	Consider and, where appropriate, approve programme proposals to continue to the validation stage.
Faculty Leadership Team (FLT)	Consider and, where appropriate, approve programme proposals for consideration by APDC.
Finance	Complete the financial form template for new home programme proposals.
Partnerships Office	Complete the financial form template for new academic partnerships programme proposals.
Planning and Reporting	Produce a market insights report for new home programme proposals.
Programme Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support academic partner programme teams in the development of new programme proposals. Keep relevant stakeholders within WU informed of any new programme proposals, e.g. Quality and Regulation Team and Partnerships Office.

Role	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present proposals at approval meetings as required.
Programme Proposer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform relevant parties a new proposal in the early stages of its development. • Complete all required paperwork and make any revisions requested by approvers. • Inform Finance, Planning and Reporting, Partnerships Office of the requirement to produce the business case / market insights report. • Attend meetings where requested, to present on the proposal.
Quality and Regulation Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support programme proposers and approvers throughout the process. • Ensure the paperwork is accurate and submitted through the relevant stages of the approval process. • Ensure that key stakeholders are kept informed throughout the process. • Act as Secretary to APDC • Update the validation schedule as required.

3.4 Forms and Guidance

- Initial Programme Proposal Form (IPPF)
- Business case
- Market insights report (to be requested by contacting planningandreporting@wrexham.ac.uk)

4 Validation and Re-validation

4.1 The Process

4.1.1 The validation process is the final stage of the approval process for new programme proposals. Its main aim is to consider the academic viability of a programme proposal. All undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes must be validated to ensure that they meet the internal and external requirements and provide a high-quality experience for the students.

4.1.2 The re-validation process is a re-approval process for existing programmes that have previously been through the validation process to ensure currency and the ongoing health of the programme(s). The re-validation process considers programme groupings by subject area. Underperforming programmes deemed unsustainable should be suspended or withdrawn (see

section 7). As part of this process the Faculty should assess the performance of the area holistically, considering key metrics including financial reporting; student enrolment; retention and progression data; external market intelligence; engagement with Welsh medium; and the Continuous Programme Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) reports. This is an opportunity for Faculty to flag particular areas they wish to focus on through the re-validation process. It is the responsibility of the programme team to ensure that Faculty consultation takes place throughout the re-validation process. Programmes going through the re-validation process are not required to go through pre-validation.

4.1.3 Where changes are being made through the re-validation process students should be allowed adequate time to review and respond to proposed changes. Similarly, input from current external examiners regarding the proposed changes would be valuable. For programmes involving franchised delivery by partner institutions, it is compulsory to consult with the partners regarding the proposed changes and to confirm the start date for delivering the new programme.

4.1.4 All programmes that complete the validation process will subsequently undergo re-validation when the subject area is due for re-validation. A schedule can be sourced by contacting quality@wrexham.ac.uk.

4.1.5 The validation and re-validation processes are made up of three elements.

- Programme development
- Compliance checks
- Validation / re-validation event

4.1.6 The validation process commences following the completion of the pre-validation process (see section 3). Re-validation's typically take place every five years. The schedule is pre-determined and can be accessed by contacting the Quality and Regulation Team via quality@wrexham.ac.uk. The process begins with a planning meeting organised by the Quality and Regulations Team to discuss the process and set a timeline and source a panel for the validation event.

4.1.7 Programme teams will then need to work on creating / finalising the following documentation:

- Validation/revalidation supplementary information
- Self-analysis (re-validation only)
- Programme specification – new and/or existing
- Module specification – new and/or existing

4.2 Franchise provision

4.2.1 Proposed franchised programmes with a new partner will have been considered through the commissioning process outlined within the [Academic Partnership Procedure](#) prior to going

through the pre-validation and validation processes as detailed within section 3 and 4 (with the exception of 4.3 and 4.4).

4.2.2 New franchise programmes with an existing partner will be considered through the pre-validation and validation process as detailed within section 3 and 4 (with the exception of 4.3 and 4.4).

4.2.3 Re-validation of franchised programmes will be considered at the same time as the home programme(s) during the subject level review.

4.2.4 Academic Partners must be included in the process and be kept informed at all times by the Academic Link, Programme Team and Event Officer. The following exceptions will apply when franchise provision is being considered through either process:

- The programme(s) will not go through the programme development (CREATE) process as the home programme will have completed this process when it was validated.
- The internal panel member is a trained Academic Link, not from the area that is under review, wherever possible.
- The areas considered by the Event Officer through the compliance checks and the validation panel at the event may differ. Further information can be found within the report template for franchise programmes.

4.2.5 The validation / re-validation event may take place in person where the students will be studying, allowing the panel to assess the quality of the services and resources supporting the learning environment. If this is not possible, a nominated member of staff from Wrexham University will need to conduct a site visit or at minimum, require submission of a Resources and Facilities Questionnaire with supporting video and/or photographic evidence, or verification of the site through the University's procedure for approving new/additional partner delivery.

4.3 Validated and/or Dual Degree Provision

4.3.1 Validated and Dual Degree provision will follow the processes documented within this section (section 4, with the exception of 4.2) for validation and re-validation processes with the exception of the points below:

- Programmes will be considered through the re-validation process as standalone re-validation events.

4.4 Programme Development

4.4.1 Programme development is in some part facilitated through the Collaboration for Reviewing and Enhancing Assessment and Teaching Excellence process (CREATE).

4.4.2 CREATE is an asynchronous support function that includes online information, development resources and a live CREATE workshop. The Academic Development Team (ADT)

Core strengthened CREATE using a distributed and collaborative approach. This approach of continual development and renewal contributes to the University's vision, Strategy and growth. Programme Teams are introduced to CREATE online information and development resources and then invited by the Quality and Regulation Team to engage in a CREATE workshop at the appropriate time in the Programme Life Cycle.

4.4.3 Programme Leaders and teams are provided with documentation and a timeline for validation, introduced to key themes and support colleagues, this includes:

Key Areas	Lead
All documentation needed for validation/re-validation	Quality and Regulations Team
Details and assurances linked to compliance with Academic Regulations and curriculum framework	Associate Pro Vice Chancellor / Quality and Regulations Team
Overall programme design and curriculum framework/Academic Learning Framework (ALF)	Associate Deans for Academic Affairs / Quality and Student Experience
University Values, Strategies and our Trauma Informed approach to learning wellbeing and EDI	Interim Dean SLS
Learning outcomes and benchmark statements	Associate Deans for Academic Affairs / Quality and Student Experience
Ethical approaches to authentic assessment	Associate Deans for Academic Affairs / Quality and Student Experience
Embedding Careers education and the Employability Skills Framework into the curriculum	Head of Careers & Employability
Welsh Development (Welsh Language Skills and Welsh Language Provision)	Head of Welsh Development
Embedding Digital learning and Library and Learning Resources into the curriculum	Learning and Digital Support Manager and Digital Learning Manager
Any other enhanced themes identified by the University or the Faculty(ies)	Quality and Regulations Team, the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor and appropriate member of the ADT Core Team.

4.4.4 Workshops are held in person and facilitated by the Quality and Regulation Team and members of the ADT Core Team. The format of the workshops may differ for academic partner programme proposals.

4.4.5 Key members of the programme team are expected to be present at this workshop to ensure that programmes are developed collaboratively. External advisors, industry partners and other stakeholders may also be invited to input into the programme design at this stage.

4.4.6 The workshop is designed to be an informal, peer led, PSRB informed, supportive process to enhance the quality of the proposed provision and related paperwork, in addition to reducing possible conditions through the compliance and peer review validation stages. Following the completion of the workshop, all programme and module specifications should be finalised.

4.5 Compliance Checks

4.3.1 Each validation/re-validation will be assigned an Event Officer from the Quality and Regulation Team. Following the programme development workshop, the Event Officer will review the documentation (see 4.1.7) and start completing the report, which includes a compliance checklist. Where required the Event Officer may meet with the programme team to discuss the outcomes of their desk-based review of the documentation.

4.3.2 This Event Officer will ensure at this stage that:

- Procedural and documentary requirements have been met.
- Evaluate the proposal documentation against the University's regulations, policies and procedures, including adherence to the Modular Curriculum Framework and advise the proposing team on any additional work that must be completed in advance of the validation/revalidation event in order to strengthen the proposal to ensure the submission documentation is fit for purpose as a basis for discussion between the Panel and Programme Team.
- Confirm the final preparations and arrangements for the validation/re-validation event.

4.6 Validation/Re-validation Event

4.6.1 The event is focused on peer review and enhancement. It will take the form of an online event organised by the Event Officer where the panel can meet to discuss the proposal amongst themselves, to agree any questions the panel may have, and meet with the programme team.

4.6.2 There are three possible outcomes to the event and the process as a whole:

- Approved
- Approved with conditions and/or recommendations
- Not approved

4.6.3 Where there are conditions and / or recommendations the panel will agree how long the programme team have, to respond.

4.6.4 Conditions are essential actions that must be met prior to approval being given to complete the process. They should relate to regulatory and statutory requirements and alignment with external reference points.

4.6.5 Recommendations are desirable actions identified to enhance the quality of the provision and present no risk to the academic standards of the programme.

4.6.6 Panels may also identify commendations which capture examples of best practice.

4.6.7 A response to the panel's recommendations must be provided by the programme team prior to the validation process being concluded.

4.6.8 When programme teams are providing a response to the panel's conditions and / or recommendations they must do this through the sections provided within the report; any changes made to the documentation must be made using track changes and highlights.

4.6.9 Once the process is complete an e-mail will be sent by the Event Officer to the programme team and relevant departments. The e-mail will include:

- A link to a set of definitive documentation. The link will lead to a dedicated programme folder within the Quality Hub SharePoint site.
- A link to the programme and module catalogue which will include any new/updated programme specifications and module specifications.

4.6.10 The e-mail will alert relevant departments to action the final stages of the programme set up process, including removing subject to validation from marketing literature and webpages.

4.6.11 The outcome of the process will be reported to Academic Board (AB) via the validation and re-validation schedule.

4.6.12 The Panel Membership consists of a:

- Chair
- Internal Panel Member
- External Panel Member (external assessor)
- Student Panel Member
- Event Officer.

4.6.13 Normally there will be one of each role listed above on a panel; however, there may be occasions where more are needed; in cases where industry and / or PSRBs are involved, for example. The requirement of more than one representative should be discussed with the Event Officer, at the planning meeting at the beginning of the validation process.

4.6.14 The validation process cannot go ahead if the Chair, External Panel Member or Event Officer cannot be present.

4.7 Documentation

4.7.1 The documentation that is reviewed by the Event Officer and sent to the panel for consideration will include:

- The draft report, including the Event Officer's findings
- Validation/Re-validation supplementary information
- Self-analysis (re-validation only)
- Programme Specification
- Module Specifications
- Continuous Enhancement and Monitoring Review Reports (past 2 years – re-validation only)
- External Examiners Reports (past 2 years – re-validation only)

4.7.2 For **academic partner events** the documentation will also include:

- Partner learning resources facilities questionnaire, with supporting video/and or photographic evidence OR Site visit report
- Staff CVs for new staff members only.

4.8 Validation/Re-validation Timescales

4.8.1 The timeframe for the validation process will be customised for each programme to meet the demands of the external environment and university strategic goals. However, it is essential to consider a sufficient lead-in time for marketing and recruitment and the advertising deadlines to ensure viable cohorts for new programmes.

4.8.2 A new undergraduate programme should normally be validated approximately 18 months ahead of the academic session in which the programme is due to commence delivery, and a new postgraduate programme should typically be validated 12 months in advance of the intended start date. For example, to launch a new undergraduate programme commencing Sept 26, validation should normally be completed by the end of Mar 2025.

4.8.3 Fastrack validation may be permitted where programme teams have the capacity to develop the programme in a short timeframe, and where the proposal is to respond to a strong business need, and employer demand. However, all validation events should be concluded at least three months prior to the commencement date in order to allow sufficient time to address conditions set by the validation panel and set up the course following final approval.

4.8.4 Re-validations are carried out at subject level, a list of subject areas and when they are due to go through the re-validation process can be sourced from the Quality and Regulations Team by e-mailing quality@wrexham.ac.uk.

4.8.5 Re-validation of existing programmes must be finalised 6 months prior to the intended date of commencement. For example: re-validations for Sep 2025 commencement should be completed no later than the end of March 2025. Where the re-validation includes a change to the programme title, it must be completed at least one year prior to the commencement of recruitment to the new programme title, see section 6.2 Modification timescales.

4.8.6 Subject areas are normally reviewed every five years. Where significant changes are being planned the re-validation date may be brought forward for the subject area. Exceptions to the approval period may be granted subject to approval by the Quality and Regulation Team. Reasons for an extension may include: PSRB re-accreditation events, staff availability, and portfolio review initiated by senior management at the University.

Figure 1: Validation Process Map

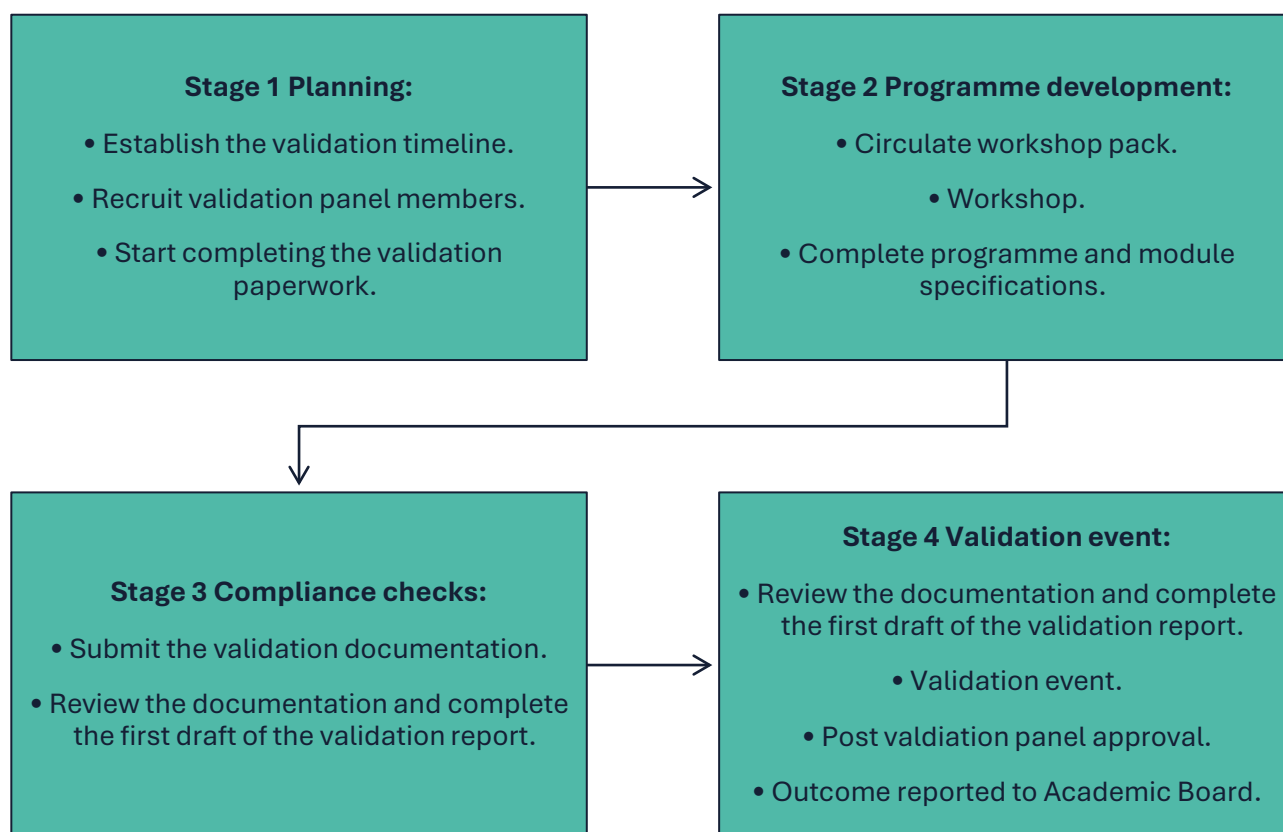
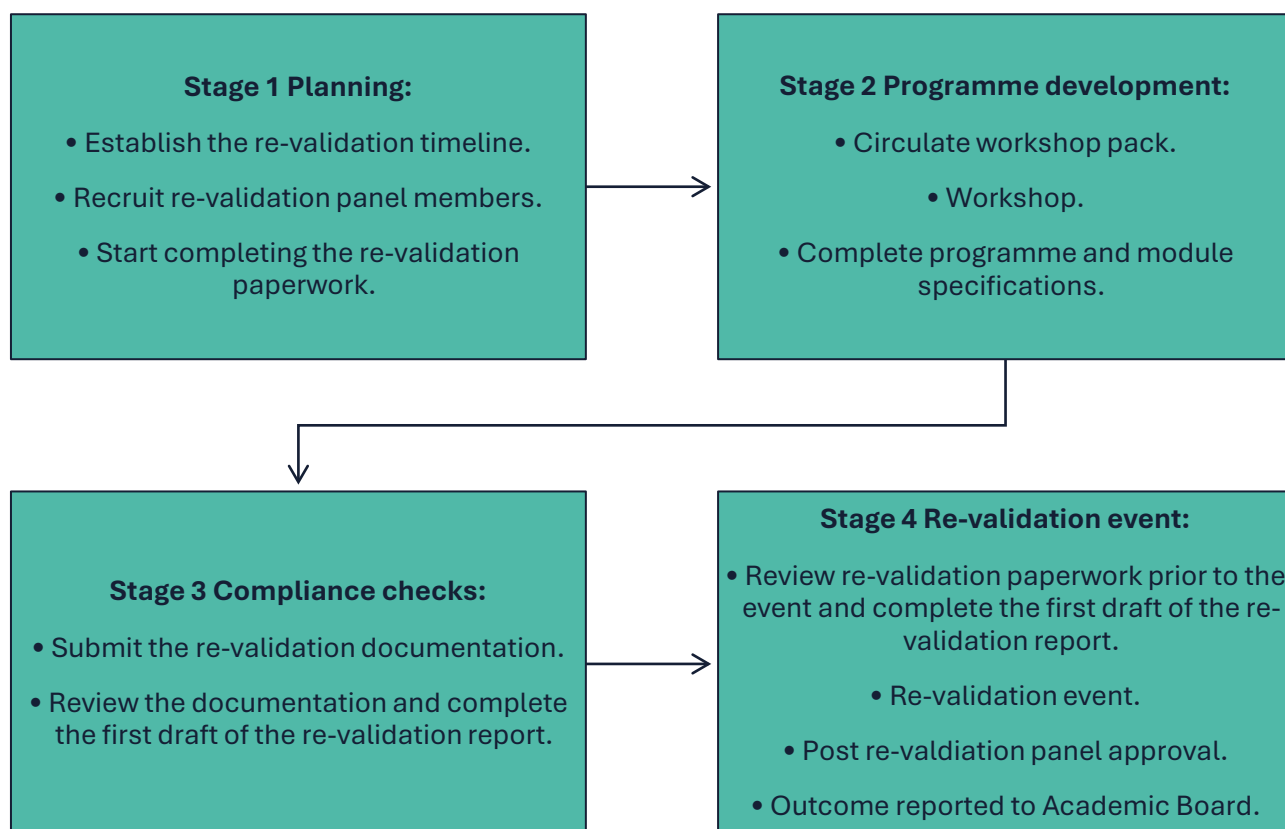


Figure 2: Re-validation Process Map



4.9 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Event Officer	<p>A member of the Quality and Regulation Team who will coordinate the process and act as subject expert for quality and regulatory matters. They will also complete the compliance checks and draft the validation report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise and facilitate the planning meeting. • Finalise and communicate the process timeline. • Source a panel. • Support the approval process for external assessors • Organise and facilitate the workshop. • Review the documentation prior to the event. • Write the report. • Coordinate post- event activity until the process is concluded. • Maintain the validation and re-validation schedule. • Ensure that the outcome is reported to AB.
Programme team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the marketing team to refine the marketing plan and ensure accurate advertising of the programme on the website.

Role	Responsibility
	<p>For validation prior to the completion of the validation process programmes must be advertised as subject to validation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the necessary paperwork. • Nominate an external assessor. • Ensure that there is Faculty consideration of validation/re-validation paperwork prior to it be submitted to QRT for circulation to the panel.
Chair	<p>A member of the University staff outside of the subject area leading the proposal. The role of Chair requires the fulfilment of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of acting as a Chair for formal committees / meetings internally or externally. • Working knowledge of the University's regulations, policies and procedures. • Experience of engaging in Quality Assurance procedures.
Internal Panel Member	<p>A member of University Staff outside of the subject area leading the proposal and who has received the appropriate training. The role of internal panel member requires the fulfilment of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of programme curriculum design and development and programme delivery; and/or curriculum or teaching-related research or consultancy. • Where the proposed programme is a degree apprenticeship, the internal panel member should have programme design/delivery experience of degree apprenticeship/work-based learning. • For events including academic partner programmes the internal panel member will be a trained Academic Link, not from the area that is under review, wherever possible.
External Panel Member (external assessor)	<p>Someone external to the University, who is from the subject area leading the proposal, and has had no links to the University for the past five years.</p> <p>It may be appropriate to appoint up to 3 External Panel Members to provide expertise in specialist areas depending on the volume of provision being considered, such as industry or specialist subjects. Where more than one EA is required, the Faculty must confirm how many EA posts they require as they are responsible for the fees. For the validation of a degree apprenticeship programme, an employer representative is required as an External Panel Member.</p>

Role	Responsibility
	Once the programme team have found a suitable external assessor they should complete the nomination form, and send it to quality@wrexham.ac.uk who will submit it to the External Nomination Review panel for approval.
Student Panel Member	A current student studying outside of the subject area leading the proposal and who has received the appropriate training. They do not have to be from the same level of the subject area being considered.

4.10 Forms and Guidance

- Self-analysis
- Validation/revalidation supplementary information
- Programme specifications (one for each home/partner programme)
- Module specifications
- Report template

5 New Delivery Site Approval

5.1 There may be instances where the University requires the approval of a new or additional delivery site for the programmes. The procedure for the approval of a new / additional delivery site is detailed below and is separate to other processes outlined within this procedural document. This process focuses on ensuring that staffing and learning resources at the proposed new / additional site are appropriate to support the delivery of the programme(s). Sufficient detail will need to be provided regarding the suitability of the proposed location and whether the existing programme team will be delivering at the proposed site or a new team will be established. If it is the latter, the staffing information template will need to be completed to accompany the new / additional delivery site template when it is submitted for consideration and approval. Assurances on when the new team will be in place will also need to be detailed within the form to ensure quality and standards are maintained.

5.2 For the approval of new or additional sites for partner provision, please refer to the [Academic Partnerships Procedure](#).

5.3 The approval process is as follows:

- The Faculty Dean and Programme Leader complete Section A of the new / additional delivery site template.
- The Associate Dean carries out a site visit of the proposed location and completes Section B of the new / additional delivery site template.
- The completed form is submitted to Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) for home proposals.

- Following approval the programme team, including the Associate Dean and Faculty Dean will be informed.
- Quality and Regulation Team to update the programme specification with the approved delivery site.

5.4 The criteria for approval are:

- That the proposal has been approved to proceed by the relevant Faculty Dean.
- That the arrangements to be provided by colleagues at the proposed delivery site for stewardship of the programme are clear and appropriate, in that they:
 - Will provide a higher education experience for students.
 - Provide confidence in respect of the maintenance of the standard of the award.
 - Offer appropriate learning opportunities and resources to students.
 - Ensure that there will be appropriately qualified staff in place to deliver the programme.

5.5 Additionally, the following minimum expectations will apply:

- The Programme Team at the additional/alternative delivery site will be integrated with the Programme Team for all delivery sites.
- Any change to the Programme Team at the additional/alternative delivery site must be approved by the Dean of Academic Faculty.
- There will be a single programme specification covering all delivery sites. Within the programme specification, if appropriate, the delivery model for each site will be set out separately.
- There will be common Assessment Boards covering all delivery sites.
- The External Examiners will be the same for all delivery sites, where possible.

5.6 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Associate Dean	Oversight of new proposals within their subject area via Programme Leaders.
Faculty Dean	Approval to proceed to the relevant committee for approval. Approval of any proposed changes to the delivery team.
Programme Leader	Completion of forms in collaboration with Associate and Faculty Dean.
Quality and Regulations Team	Updating documentation and records with new site information following approval.
Quality and Standards Committee (QSC)	Approval of new delivery sites for home provision.

6 Modification

6.1 The Process

6.1.1 The definitive programme documentation and programme specification approved through the validation process represents a 'contract' between the University and the Academic Faculty that specifies the terms under which a programme may be delivered, subject to, satisfactory annual monitoring and external examiners' reports, student feedback, and PSRB or other external reviews.

6.1.2 There will be instances where a validated programme and / or module will need to be updated / amended to ensure its currency. These changes are made through the modification process. Modifications require a degree of scrutiny at University level which is commensurate with the nature and scale of the proposed changes.

6.1.3 Where modules are delivered across several programmes, modification proposals are to be supported by all relevant programme leaders and Deans of Academic Faculty.

6.1.4 Minor and major modifications must be considered and approved by the relevant Dean of Faculty and the Quality and Standards Committee. Teams must be mindful of any potential implications arising from the proposed modification, specifically, current students and/or applicants must be informed, and agree to, any change that will affect their studies. A change management guide and FAQ is available in appendix one of this procedure.

6.1.5 In addition to major and minor modifications the University operates an additional category of programme and module changes which is administrative changes (AMOs). Committee approval is not required for these changes. Instead, a proposer completes an online form which is assessed and approved by a Quality Manager.

6.1.6 Following approval, the Quality and Regulation Team will publish revised documents such as programme or module specifications, and programme teams will be advised to access these via the web link.

6.1.7 The Competition and Market Authority (CMA) have produced [guidance for higher education providers related to consumer law](#). Within this guidance document it defines what they consider material information and what instances would require a communication to be sent to applicants and current students.

6.1.8 Informed by this guidance the University have produced the following summary of the different type of changes, whether they would be a major, minor or administrative change and what the appropriate deadline for this change would be.

6.1.9 Where an academic partner wishes to propose a modification, they should discuss the proposed changes with their Academic Link who will advise on next steps.

Figure 3: Programme/module modification process guidance

Change level	Example of Change	Category (Material or Non-material change)	Process to Follow AM0 / AM1 / AM2	Approval by?	Consultation with	Application deadline
Programme	Modify programme Title	Material change	AM2	QSC	EE, students, PSRBs, Planning and Reporting, Marketing / Recruitment / Admissions	1 year prior to the commencement of the recruitment to the new programme title
	Modify entry requirements	Material change	Request to Admissions		Not required	UG: 15 th Mar for recruitment to the Sept Intake of the following year (recruitment starts from 1 st May) PG: 15 th May for recruitment to the Sept intake of the following year (recruitment starts from 1 st Jul)
	Remove a specialism pathway (standalone award)	Material change	Suspension / Withdrawn	Faculty and APDC	Students, Marketing / Recruitment / Admissions	15 th Mar for UG and 15 th May for PG
	Add a specialism pathway	Material change	IPPF	FLT and APDC	Planning and Reporting, Marketing / Recruitment / Admissions, Students, Industry links, External Examiners, PSRBs	15 th Mar for UG and 15 th May for PG for commencement from the following year

Change level	Example of Change	Category (Material or Non-material change)	Process to Follow AM0 / AM1 / AM2	Approval by?	Consultation with	Application deadline
	Add a placement year	Material change	AM2	QSC	Planning and Reporting, Industry links, PSRBs	15 th Mar for UG and 15 th May for PG
	Remove the placement year pathway	Material change	Suspension / Withdrawn	Faculty and APDC	Students, Marketing / Recruitment / Admissions	15 th Mar for UG and 15 th May for PG
	Change mode of attendance, remove PT or add PT route	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE, Industry links, Recruitment / Admissions, SITS (framework check)	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Programme duration change	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE, SITS (framework check)	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Change (add/remove/replace) core module(s) (not exceeding 50% of total module credits)	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE, PSRBs	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Change programme structure significantly (more than 50% modules)	Material change	IPPF	Faculty and APDC	Planning and Reporting, Marketing / Recruitment / Admissions, Students, Industry links, External Examiners, PSRBs	15 th Mar for UG and 15 th May for PG for commencement from the following year
	Remove or replace an optional module	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Add an optional module	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	Students	15 th Mar for Sept implementation

Change level	Example of Change	Category (Material or Non-material change)	Process to Follow AM0 / AM1 / AM2	Approval by?	Consultation with	Application deadline
	Mode of delivery change, from campus-based delivery to blended (campus and online)	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE, PSRBs, Recruitment / Admissions	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Programme aims/learning outcomes change (substantial change, not just rewording for clarity)	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE, PSRBs	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Change programme level assessment strategy (introduce or remove an assessment type)	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE, PSRBs	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
Module Module	Module title change	Material change	AM2	QSC	Students, EE, Recruitment / Admissions, PSRBs	15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Change module hours (L&T hrs or Placement hrs) or amend the hours allocations which do not change the credit size or total hours	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	Students	15 th Mar for Sept implementation

Change level	Example of Change	Category (Material or Non-material change)	Process to Follow AM0 / AM1 / AM2	Approval by?	Consultation with	Application deadline
	Change the wording of the module learning outcomes which do not affect programme learning outcomes	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	EE	15 th July for Sept implementation?
	Change individual module Learning and teaching strategy which does not alter the overall programme level L&T strategy	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	EE	15 th July for Sept implementation?
	Module indicative syllabus update without changing module learning aims and learning outcomes	Non-material change	AM0	Q&R	None	15 th July for Sept Implementation
	Change individual module assessment type (remove/add/replace an assessment) which does not affect the overall programme level assessment strategy		AM2	QSC	Students, EE	15 th July for Sept Implementation

Change level	Example of Change	Category (Material or Non-material change)	Process to Follow AM0 / AM1 / AM2	Approval by?	Consultation with	Application deadline
	Change the weighting of assessment elements	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	Students, EE	15 th July for Sept Implementation
	Change the grading system of assessments (from percentage to pass/fail)	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	Students, EE	15 th July for Sept Implementation
	Change the LOs aligned with assessment elements	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	EE	15 th July for Sept implementation
	Change word count or exam duration	Non-material change	AM1	QSC	EE	15 th July for Sept implementation
	Change the delivery semester for a module	Non-material change	AM1	QSC		15 th Mar for Sept implementation
	Change or remove a pre-requisite	Non-material change	AM1	QSC		15 th July for Sept implementation

6.2 Timescales

6.2.1 Detailed timescales can be found in the above table next to each type of change. Modifications must be made in a timely manner, ensuring sufficient time for the approval process to be concluded before the proposed modification is implemented.

6.2.2 Advice on document submission deadlines can be obtained from Quality and Regulation team at quality@wrexham.ac.uk.

6.2.3 Late modification requests will not be considered by the QSC and may instead be recommended for implementation in the subsequent academic year. However, in exceptional circumstances where the programme team can provide a valid justification for the delay, and demonstrate that a timely change is crucial to prevent adverse effects on students' experiences, the programme team may request special approval from the Dean for the QSC to consider the late submission. In such cases, the proposing team must outline the reason for the late submission and how the delay on implementation would negatively impact the student experience.

6.3 Roles and Responsibilities

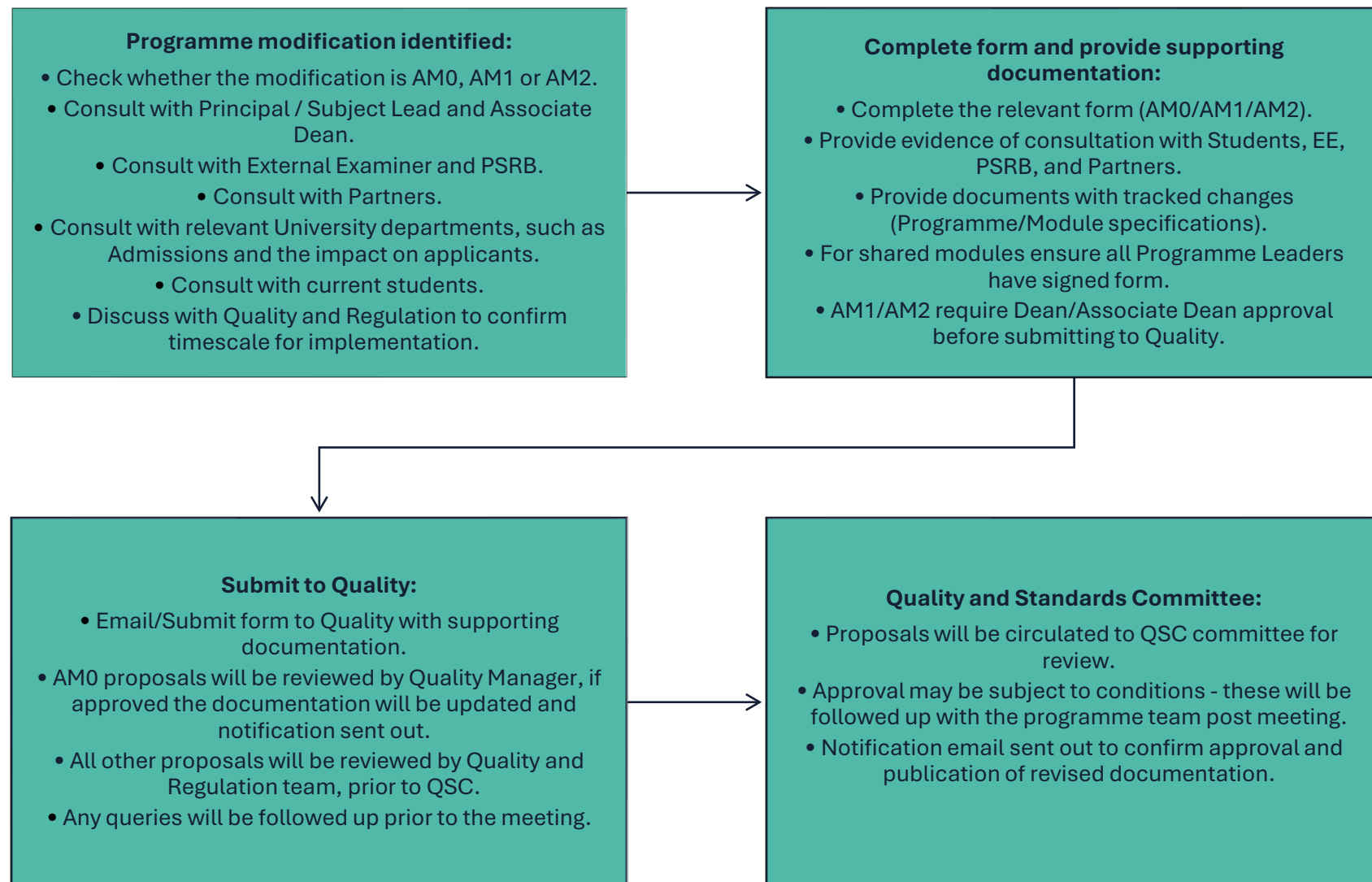
Role	Responsibility
Academic Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising partners on the modification process. Provide support in completion of modification forms. Send completed forms to Dean of Faculty for approval and then to the Quality and Regulation team for processing.
Quality and Standards Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for approving proposals to modify existing programmes / modules.
Dean of Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and where appropriate approve minor and major modifications.
Programme Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and where appropriate approve minor and major modifications.
Quality and Regulation Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all modification submissions to ensure that they are accurate and in line with the University's regulations, policies and procedures. Ensure amended programme and module specifications are uploaded to the programme and module catalogue pages.

6.4 Forms and guidance

6.4.1 All modification forms must be accompanied by an amended programme / module descriptor with the changes made using track changes and highlights.

- Administrative change form (AM0)
- Minor modification form (AM1)
- Major modification form (AM2)

Figure 4: Modification Process map



7 Programme Suspension, Reinstatement and Withdrawal

7.1 The Process

7.1.1 A programme suspension occurs when recruitment to a programme of study is suspended for a set period of time for example to evaluate the performance of a programme before making a formal proposal for major changes to the programme. Programme suspensions should only be considered in exceptional circumstances, where there is the intention to reinstate the programme for the following recruitment cycle.

7.1.2 A programme can only be suspended for a maximum of two Academic Years, any longer than this and the programme shall be deemed outdated and not viable. Following two suspension periods a programme will need to be withdrawn or go through the pre-validation and validation process.

7.1.3 A programme withdrawal is the complete withdrawal of a named programme of study from the University's portfolio. Normally a programme withdrawal will involve the immediate cessation of recruitment activity with a phased-out teaching of the programme to afford current registered students (including those on suspended studies) the opportunity to complete the programme.

7.1.4 The decision to withdraw or suspend a programme is an executive matter which should be taken with due regard to the interests of any students who may be enrolled on the programme and any applicants. When considering the timing of the withdrawal or suspension, consideration should be given to the cycle for publication of the prospectus and programme advertising and the recruitment and admissions cycle. Where possible, requests to withdraw or suspend a programme should be avoided once the application cycle for that year has commenced. The University's legal obligations in relation to consumer legislation should also be considered.

7.1.5 Programmes which are not being put forward for re-validation during the expected cycle should be withdrawn as part of the re-validation proposal approval process, by completing the programme withdrawal form.

7.1.6 It is expected that consultation with a range of relevant stakeholders, such as staff, students, Partnerships Office, external examiners, employers, admissions etc., will take place prior to withdrawal or suspension of a programme.

7.1.7 Once approved by the faculty, proposals should be submitted to Quality and Regulation Team for submission to APDC for consideration and approval.

7.1.8 Arrangements must be made to enable students who are already enrolled on a programme (including the four-year programme including Foundation Year) that is planned to be withdrawn or suspended to complete their studies in an appropriate learning environment, and no new students may be recruited once withdrawal or suspension has been approved. An exception can be made for students who apply for direct entry to a level of the withdrawn or suspended programme being taught out and this is approved by the Dean of Faculty; the student

should be made aware that the programme is on teach out and any implications to delivery that this may have. A programme may not be closed unless arrangements to manage the educational experience of students on other programmes sharing modules are in place.

7.1.9 Once approved by APDC an e-mail notification will be sent to the proposal and relevant University departments to complete the process, the documentation will be provided as links within the e-mail. Following approval, Faculties must liaise with the following offices to ensure that appropriate processes are followed so that current and potential students are not disadvantaged:

- Admissions Office
- Communications, Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions
- Finance
- Students' Union
- Partnerships Office (where an Academic Partner is linked to the programme)

7.2 Timescales

Context	Deadline (last day of the month)	Timescale
Planned programme suspensions, re-suspensions and withdrawals must have been approved	18 months prior to the start of the suspensions/withdrawal	For example: for an October 2024 suspension the deadline would be the end of March 2023.
In-year programme suspension/withdrawal – this includes informing applicants	6 months prior to the start is the suspension/withdrawal	

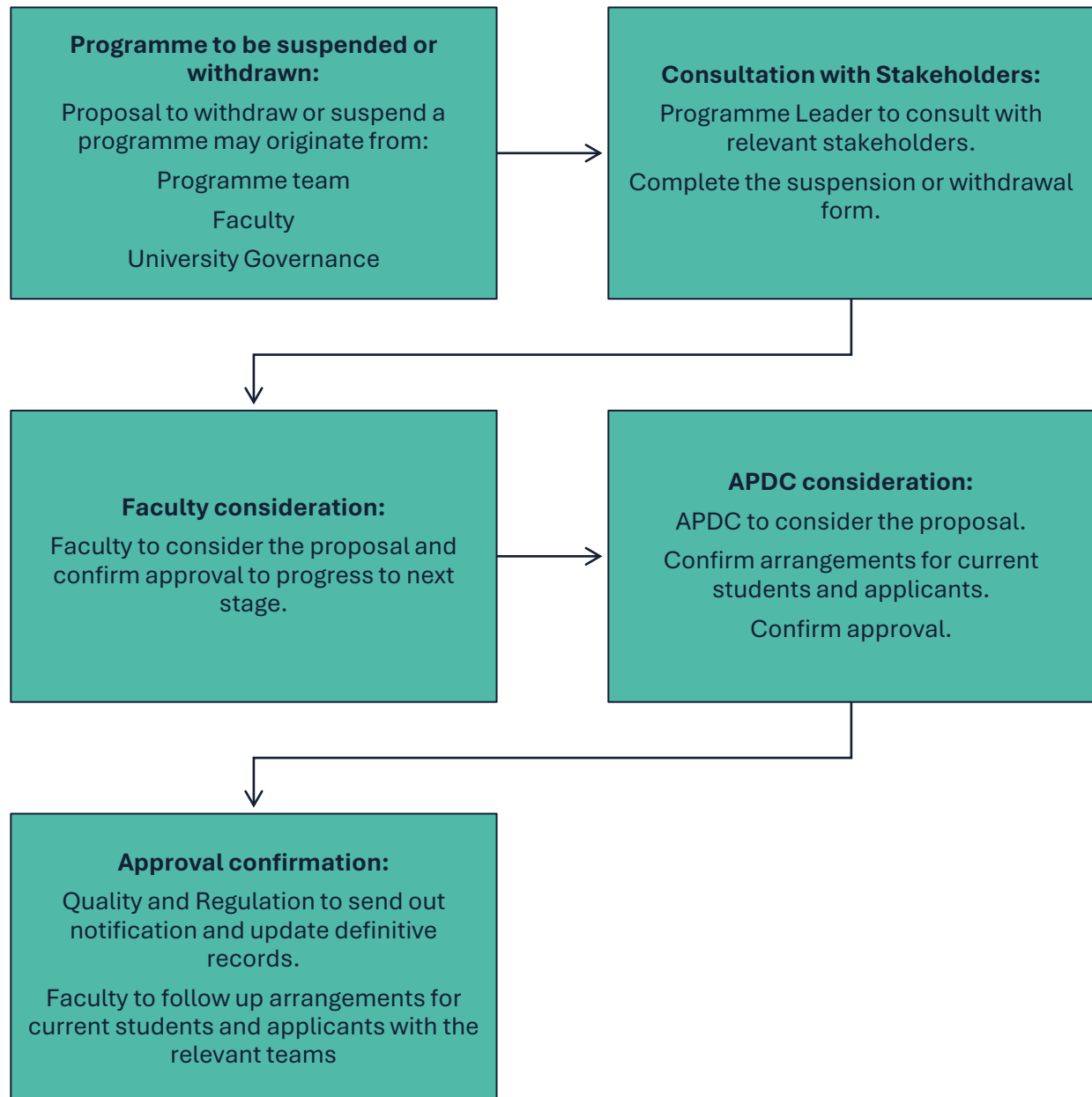
7.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
APDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of proposal. • Impact on current students and applicants. • Confirm approval.
Associate Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of proposal and impact on current students and applicants. • Recommend for approval or identify other actions required. • Post approval liaison with relevant teams to maintain current student experience.
Programme Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out consultation with stakeholders. • Completion of paperwork.
Quality and Regulation Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise on procedure. • Progress to relevant committees for consideration and approval. • Maintenance of definitive records, and communication of the final decision.

7.4 Forms and Guidance

- Programme suspension form
- Request to reinstate programme
- Programme withdrawal form

Figure 5: Programme suspension and withdrawal process map



8 Reporting

8.1 Quality and Regulations will provide an annual report on Programme Lifecycle activities to Academic Board, to provide assurance and recommend enhancements to this procedure.

9 Accessibility

9.1 Wrexham University strives to be a supportive and trauma-informed university in the design and operation of all our processes and procedures. If you need adjustments to access this procedure or have any other comments to make on the accessibility, wording or any part of this procedure, please do email us on quality@wrexham.ac.uk.

Appendix 1 – Change Management Guidance and FAQ

If changes to a programme are approved mid-cycle, and these changes will affect applicants who will be joining the programme in the new intake, these changes must be communicated to the affected applicants as soon as possible. Changes are only communicated to applicants following QSC approval. Several external agencies set out requirements the University must follow to ensure that information for current students and applicants is clear and accurate, for example, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

The act covers students and aims to ensure that the information they receive before entering their contracts is fair, accessible, and transparent and the terms of the contract are brought to the consumer's attention before the contract is entered into (i.e., before the offer of a place has been accepted by an applicant). The CMA's guidance to universities states that a student is a 'consumer' and must be able to make an 'informed choice' when deciding which institution's services to 'buy' – and that to make an informed choice, 'clear and honest information' must be made available by the University before such a decision is made.

This document has been created to act as a guide and provide context, to assist when changes are being made to programmes and modules. This includes actions that are carried out within through the modifications, programme suspension and programme withdrawal processes. This guide will act as a reference point to ensure that any changes that are made are aligned to the University's expectations in relation to programme and module changes and ensure compliance with external regulators.

Am I allowed to suspend entry to my programme?

Yes, programmes can be suspended for one year at a time through the programme suspension process (see section 7). At the end of each suspension period the programme can either be re-suspended, re-instated or permanently withdrawn. Programmes should not be suspended for more than two years in a row. Deadlines for programme suspensions can be found within section 7 of this procedure. The deadlines are in place to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to notify applicants and students at the earliest opportunity.

Am I allowed to permanently withdraw my programme?

Yes, programmes can be withdrawn through the programme withdrawal process (see section 7). Programmes should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the students and the University. Where a programme is withdrawn the interests of continuing students must be safeguarded and appropriate measures taken to notify applicants at the earliest opportunity. Deadlines for programme withdrawals can be found within section 7 of this procedure.

Am I allowed to make changes to my programmes and modules?

Yes, changes can be made to programmes and modules through the modification process (see section 6). Modification deadlines are defined for each type of change, please see section 6 of this procedure for further information. It is the University's expectation that there will be a continuous improvement to programmes and modules to guarantee the best possible student experience. It is important to recognise where change is needed and to make sure there are no unnecessary barriers to enable programmes and modules to stay relevant, current, viable and competitive. However, we must also ensure that students and applicants are given sufficient time to consider / be informed of any proposed changes. It is important to be clear when making a change who that change applies to. Typically changes should only apply to incoming students, but there will be occasions where change needs to apply to both new and existing students.

Can I change the title or structure of my programme?

Yes, although any changes to programme titles or new programme structures should only apply to new students. In exceptional circumstances these changes may apply to existing students, in these instances all students must be given a choice to transfer to the new programme or remain on the existing programme. Where a programme is to be taught out due to changes brought in the student experience of those students on the programme being taught out must remain comparable of active programmes and of a high standard.

I want to make an in-year change, can I do this?

We recognise that an in-year change may be necessary in exceptional circumstances. Exceptions may include:

- Where the only staff subject expert has left the University, meaning there is no one to carry on the delivery of a module's content
- A PSRB requirement that must be implemented with immediate affect
- Where a programme is in breach of the University's regulations

Do I have to consult students on any changes I make?

You must ensure that applicants and students have adequate notice of any forthcoming changes to their programmes and / or modules. It is important that students are consulted on changes before the change is made and informed once the change has been approved. Student consultation could take many forms but must be meaningful and provide an appropriate opportunity for students to express their views. Student consultation should take place through established governance channels such as Student Voice Forums, where student representatives are present, or alternatively via email. Change requests through the modification process should clearly detail the extent of the consultation with students. The detail needs to include any concerns expressed by the students and the actions taken by the programme team to address these concerns.

Why must applicants be informed of changes to programmes?

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) requirements mean that if the university makes changes to any advertised provision that results in a different offering to what the applicant originally signed up for, we must fully inform affected applicants of these changes and offer them alternative options should they require them.

In addition to this, UCAS guidelines state that if there is 'a modification of the course itself, such as to content, length or location of the course, you should be prepared to offer the applicants the choice of that course, a different course [at your institution] or, if nothing suitable is available, a choice at another provider'. (UCAS Undergraduate Admissions Guide).

The Wrexham University Terms and Conditions of Offer similarly state that 'we...reserve the right to make variations to the entry requirements, contents or methods of delivery of courses, to discontinue courses and to merge or combine courses, if we consider such action to be reasonably necessary. In the event of any such changes being made, we will inform you as soon as possible.'

Therefore, once a change to a programme is approved by the Quality and Standards Committee (QSC), this change must be communicated to the applicants who have applied for, been offered a place on, or have accepted our offer to study on that course. This communication will be sent by the Admissions Office, directly to the affected applicants.

What is required before applicants can be informed of changes to their programme?

In order for the Admissions Office to effectively communicate with any affected applicants, the programme team responsible must set out the changes taking place, the rationale behind the changes, and the consequences for the applicants. The quality assurance templates utilised to make changes to programme have been designed to capture all of the information the Admissions Office will require in order to communicate effectively with any affected applicants. The salient points are to understand, what is changing, the rationale for the change and what the impact will be to current students and applicants.

In all communications, Admissions will indicate that if the applicant is happy with the change, they do not need to do anything. If they are not happy, then they have the option to select another course with us or to be released to find an alternative course at an alternative provider.

In line with our responsibilities to UCAS and to our applicants, the Admissions Office will actively help the applicant find a course at another provider if they decide they do not wish to stay with us due to the changes we have made to their programme.

Why do we need an audit trail?

By documenting changes, we make to programmes and modules we create an audit trail that evidences when and why changes are made. This is important as it shows that due process has been followed. By following the process guidelines, it will ensure that students are kept informed,

and this is clear to external auditors through reviewing our audit trails. Audit trails may also be used in cases of student complaints and appeals.

What should I do if a student does not agree to the change?

Students must be consulted prior to a change being approved; they must also be given sufficient time to consider the change. Where concerns are raised these should be addressed before a change is approved. The timelines for the approval of modifications also provides an opportunity for individual students to liaise with academic support and their programme team to consider options before the modifications are implemented.

Students can be consulted through Student Voice Forums as well as other student meetings organised by the programme team. In these instances, it is important to record the consultation and report it within the modification documentation.

If a student objects, can I ignore these objections and proceed with my change?

If a student objects to changes a relevant member of staff should meet with the student to better understand the objection and help them understand the reasons behind the change. If the student still objects, then alternatives should be explored and discussed with the student. This may involve making an additional change to ensure that all students benefit from the initial change. If a significant number of students object to the change, then it would be appropriate for the programme team to seek an alternative course of action to the proposed change.

What is the key message I need about programme/module changes and CMA?

Information to students must be clear, transparent, and accurate.

Students should be consulted before a change is approved and informed after its approval. Changes must not be made after the 30th April for the following academic year, unless it meets with our exceptional circumstances listed above.

Changes should only be made where they are needed, and the process should be followed to ensure that the University remains compliant with CMA requirements.

Who can I contact if I have any questions about the CMA?

You can contact Academic Quality Services on quality@wrexham.ac.uk and someone will assist you.