

# Policy for approving modules and programmes

## 1. Context and overview

York St John University has the power to award taught and research degrees. Within the framework of the UK Higher Education system, and its own policy on the management of academic standards, quality assurance and quality enhancement, this document articulates the York St John University policy for approving modules and programmes.

## 2. General

1. Responsibility for the approval of programmes of study (new and amended) and modules (new and amended) is delegated from the Academic Board to the Quality and Standards Committee (QSC).
2. In the development of new provision, Schools consult appropriate external advisers and/or external points of reference, for example:
  - external examiners;
  - subject benchmark statements;
  - professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (where relevant);
  - discipline developments;
  - Framework for Higher Education Qualifications;
  - UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Schools also consult internally with other Schools where this is appropriate.

3. All resource implications of a new module or programme are explored fully as part of the approval process. Heads of School should be able to demonstrate that provision can be adequately resourced. Resources require the approval of the Strategic Portfolio Committee.
4. The development of new provision takes place within the context of York St John's Strategic Plan, in particular its Portfolio Strategy, regulatory and policy frameworks, and takes account of School Operating Plans and approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.
5. In proposing new modules and programmes for approval, Schools take account of relevant legislation and policies, including the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
6. Registry provides advice and guidance on regulations and on the University's policy framework for quality and standards. The Teaching and Learning Enhancement Office provides advice and guidance on the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and sector good practice.
7. The Academic Quality Support (AQS) team in Registry is responsible for managing the approval process, in liaison with colleagues in Schools.
8. Programmes of study and associated modules are submitted for approval using the standard templates.
9. Registry maintains the up-to-date records (in electronic form) of modules and programmes of study. Schools deliver modules and programmes according to the currently approved documents. Proposed amendments are not implemented until formal approval has been given for these.

## 3. Module approval

10. Each module is assigned to a specific School for quality assurance and resourcing purposes, normally that which takes the key development and delivery roles. In the case of a genuinely inter-disciplinary module, the relevant Heads of School agree which School is responsible for the module. In the case of a dispute QSC makes the decision.

#### **4. Programme approval**

11. New programmes of study gain business case approval in order to advertise the programme, and for inclusion in the Prospectus. Programmes that have not been given full approval prior to advertising state 'subject to approval' in any advertising or publicity material.
12. The market for a new programme of study is explored fully prior to submission of a proposal.
13. The Strategic Portfolio Committee (SPC), on behalf of the University's Academic Board, is responsible for giving business case approval, including the consideration of the planning and resource implications of the new programme, and the market demand for it.
14. Students are not registered on a programme of study until full approval has been given.
15. Schools that require accreditation of a programme of study by a PSRB or other external body are responsible for liaising with the external body on the development of the provision and on the detailed requirements for accreditation. Registry is responsible for liaising with the accrediting body in respect of the arrangements for approval. YSJU approval and PSRB approval may be sought at a single, combined event.

#### **5. Amendments and duration of an approval**

16. A programme is validated for a period not exceeding 6 years. Approval events are scheduled to meet this requirement. Any exceptions to this require the explicit approval of QSC. Re-validation ensures that a programme has currency and continues to deliver its stated aims and objectives.
17. The University recognises that it may be necessary to vary the approved specifications of programmes as a result of student feedback, external examiner reports, the annual monitoring reporting process and the external circumstances in which programmes operate. The University requires that a programme continues to be developed and improved throughout the period of validation. Such amendments to programmes of study are distinct from amendments made to a programme as part of the re-validation of that programme, although if the extent of change is more than routine adjustment the programme will require a re-validation.

#### **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

19. The following have particular responsibility in the approval of modules and programmes:
  - Academic Board;
  - Quality and Standards Committee, and its Scrutiny Panels
  - School Quality Panels
  - Registry.