

Processes for the Approval and Review of Joint Honours Subject Strands and Pairings

1 Introduction

All Joint Honours pairings will adhere to the principles of the Academic Honours Framework:

- Each subject will be given equal credit weighting, with the exception of the Dissertation or Capstone module which can be studied in either subject or a combination of both.
- Each pairing will have a programme specification that reflects the specific nature of the pairing award i.e. programme learning outcomes (PLOs) that can be achieved through the specified module diet (rather than a full list of the specialist award's PLOs) and a statement of each subjects approach to learning, teaching and assessment.

2 Pairings

Pairings will comprise subject elements which fall into one of three categories as follows:

- i new subjects which are not delivered as either Joint Honours or Specialist Awards;
- ii existing specialist subjects proposed as new Joint Honours subjects;
- iii existing subjects which have been validated for Joint Honours but wish to form new pairings

3 Criteria

All new Joint Honours subject strands and pairings

The following must be demonstrated before approval to develop the detail of the subject or pairings can be given:

- i that there is a market demand;
- ii that there is evidence that cohorts for new joint honours subject strands or cohorts created through a new pairing will be of a size that is viable and can be offered through the timetable in an economical way;
- iii that there is academic and educational coherence to proposed pairings;
- iv that the proposal for subject strands and / or pairings is integral to the School Portfolio Plan(s) (for both subjects where relevant);
- v that the proposal fits into the University's learning strategy;
- vi that the pairing can be accommodated in respect of funded undergraduate student numbers
- vii that the proposal can be adequately resourced (Library, ICT, specialised accommodation and equipment, staffing, etc).

In addition, it is important to consider whether the Joint Honours curriculum for the individual subject and all its proposed paired subjects can be constructed from existing modules with minimal, and appropriate, re-design. If this is not the case a rationale must be given for the development of substantial amount of new modules and evidence

provided that this can be resourced both in the development of the pairing and in the delivery of the pairing. Timetabling issues will also need to be taken into consideration.

4 Consultation Process

It is advisable that subjects wishing to validate Joint Honours pairings consult with the following personnel before and during the process of putting together proposals:

- i Heads of School
- ii Associate Heads of School
- iii Registry

5 Issues to consider when proposing new pairings

Proposers should consider:

- the impact of assessment deadlines on Joint Honours students when using existing modules that contribute to specialist awards
- the allocation of academic tutors within and cross Schools
- the process for supporting Joint Honours students with module choices e.g. module choice surgery

6 Quality Assurance Procedures

Subjects must first seek approval from the Strategic Portfolio Committee for new subject strands and pairings following the School Portfolio Plan and Business Case stage of the University's programme approval process. This must be completed before moving to a full validation for a new subject or approval of a new pairing. It is essential, therefore, that subjects allow sufficient time to prepare documentation and to consult widely with colleagues and relevant personnel in the University.

Subjects will need to produce documentation for scrutiny by:

- School Quality Panel
- Compliance meetings/Approval events (for Joint Honours Subjects)
- Programme Amendment Scrutiny Panel (for Joint Honours pairings)

6.1 New Subjects

New subjects that are not delivered as either Joint Honours or Specialist Awards:

- Strategic Portfolio Committee approval - to include
 - an indication of proposed pairings and, where applicable, confirmation that other Schools have been consulted.
 - A rationale for the development of a substantial amount of new modules and evidence that this can be resourced both in the development and in the delivery of the pairing
- Type A scrutiny event

- If the Joint Honours proposal is considered at the same event as a specialist programme a Joint Honours 'half' programme specification will be required in addition to shared programme document and modules;
- The scrutiny event will approve the full suite of Joint Honours modules from which pairing combinations will be formed to ensure these are available if needed within the framework design for each pairing.
- Joint Honours subject strand specific Programme Learning Outcomes will be approved.

6.2 Existing Subjects

Existing specialist subjects proposed as new Joint Honours subjects:

- Strategic Portfolio Committee approval - to include:
 - an indication of proposed pairings and, where applicable, confirmation that other Schools have been consulted
 - A rationale for the development of a substantial amount of new modules and evidence that this can be resourced both in the development of the pairing and in the delivery of the pairing.
- Type B scrutiny event
 - a Joint Honours 'half' programme specification will be required. The existing specialist design narrative will be provided for context;
 - The scrutiny event will approve the full suite of Joint Honours modules from which pairing combinations will be formed to ensure these are available if needed within the framework design for each pairing.
 - Joint Honours subject strand specific Programme Learning Outcomes will be approved

6.3 New pairings

Approval of new pairings (where both subject stands have already approved by 5.1 or 5.2 above):

- Strategic Portfolio Committee approval - to confirm the award titles and subject pairings
- Type C scrutiny event:
 - A pairing programme specification will be required, which states the lead School and includes the subject programme learning outcomes applicable to the pairing and the complete module diet.
 - A structure diagram will be required to illustrate how the pairing conforms to the Academic Framework
 - External examiners will act as external subject peers in providing comments on the subject and educational coherence of the proposed Joint Honours award
 - The scrutiny panel will confirm pairings conform to the Academic Framework and consider any issues related to the student experience

6.4 Re-Approval of Joint Honours subject strands

The re-approval of Joint Honours subject stands will be aligned, where possible, with that of the associated single honours subject.

All re-approvals will conform to the programme approval process.

6.5 Re-Approval of Joint Honours pairings

The re-approval of pairings will be required following the re-validation of associated Joint Honours subject strands.

Re-approvals will be subject to consideration by a Type C scrutiny panel (5.3 above)

6.6 Module and Programme Amendments

The approval of amendments to Joint Honours subject strands and modules will align to the Programme and Module Amendment Process.

Minor and Major Amendments

- Module amendments - processed through the School to which the module belongs with confirmation that the pairing subject(s) has been consulted. The Programme Amendment Scrutiny Panel (PASP) to receive confirmation from all subjects involved that the change does not impact the pairings or what action will be taken to address any issues related to the change.
- Joint Honours subject strand amendments - processed through the School to which the strand belongs with confirmation that the pairing subject(s) has been consulted. PASP to receive confirmation from all subjects involved that the change does not impact the pairings or what action will be taken to address any issues related to the change. A full module diet map will be required as part of the documentation to enable PASP to confirm pairings continue to conform to the Academic Framework

6.7 Review

Annual Evaluation

Joint Honours will be considered as part of the University's Portfolio Performance Dashboard and Portfolio Risk Profile process.

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