Programme and Course Approval Process

Consultations

The Purpose of Consultations

Consultations are a critical part of the approval process as they provide the opportunity for independent review of the proposal, thus confirming that academic standards are appropriate and enhancing the transparency of the process. The external academic consultation also contributes to the confirmation of standards of provision at Glasgow.

Possible consultations that might need to be undertaken:

- External Academics
- Students/Applicants
- Marketing, Recruitment & International Office
- Potential Employers
- Other Contributing Schools/RIs
- Professional/Regulatory Bodies
- Central Timetabling Team
- Academic Services

Not all consultations are compulsory. Some are mandatory but others are required only in particular cases. For instance, if a programme or course is accredited by a professional/regulatory body, that body should be consulted – e.g. the British Psychological Society, the Institute of Physics, the General Medical Council, etc.

Mandatory consultations for programme proposals:

- External academics (all programme proposals)
- Students/Applicants (all programme proposals)
- Marketing, Recruitment & International Office (new/amend programme proposals)

Mandatory consultations for course proposals:

- External academics (all course proposals)
- Students/Applicants (all course proposals except in the case of withdrawal where the course being withdrawn has had no students enrolled for at least one session)

If a proposed course is expected to be taught to more than 150 students, consultation with the Central Timetabling Team is required.

Guidelines for Consultations:

- **External Academics**
  
  An external consultant will normally be the External Examiner where one is in place. If the course or programme is new, and there is no External Examiner yet in place, the external consultant should be a person whom the School might approach to become an External Examiner.
  
  - Documentation: [External Academic Consultation Proforma] – both
sections must be completed **before** the proposal is submitted to the College Board of Studies (or the School/Research Institute, in the case of course change/withdrawal proposals). The course/programme team must provide detailed information on how they have responded to any matters raised by the External Consultant.

### Students/Applicants

Those students participating in a consultation exercise need not be a group of students on that course or programme (previously a problem where there was no similar course on offer), but rather Schools should consult the group of students which is academically closest to the proposal. Any existing applicants should also be consulted.

- **Documentation:** *(Student Consultation Proforma)* – this must be completed **before** the proposal is submitted to the College Board of Studies (or the School/Research Institute, in the case of course change/withdrawal proposals). The course/programme team must provide detailed information on how they have responded to any matters raised by the students/applicants.

### Marketing, Recruitment & International Office

In the programme approval process, MaRIO's judgement of market potential will be a critical factor to be taken into account as to whether a proposed new programme is approved by the College. In situations where a judgement of low market potential (formerly a red light) is issued from MaRIO with regard to viability, consideration has to be given to any actions that can be taken to improve the viability of the proposal. This should normally be done in advance of the formal submission of the proposal to College Board of Studies. It is important to note that College Boards of Studies are required to verify that Schools/Research Institutes have taken appropriate steps to ensure that programmes are robust, viable and deliverable and in the interest of the University. For this reason, any proposal which has received a judgement of low market potential from MaRIO should not proceed to the College Board of Studies until **the College Management Group** (or another body acting on its behalf) is satisfied the proposal demonstrates strategic alignment and is viable in terms of financial and all other resources.

This would need to be demonstrated in the material submitted to the College Board of Studies, not only through a revised proposal itself, but also in the minutes of the meetings of the relevant School/RI committees and the College Management Group (or of the body to which the College Management Group has delegated responsibility for such decisions).

### Potential Employers

Consultation should be undertaken where appropriate. This will apply especially to any programme which is intended (even in part) to prepare students for a particular career or group of careers. *(Employer Consultation Proforma)*

### Other Contributing Schools/ RIs

Consultation must be undertaken if other schools or RIs are affected by the proposal. For example, joint honours or collaborative programmes might require consultations from other contributing school or Research Institute.
- **Professional/Regulatory Bodies**
  This consultation is required if the course or programme is accredited by a specific professional or regulatory body such as BPS, IOP, GMC etc.

- **Central Timetabling Team**
  If the course will be taught to over 150 students, consultation with the Central Timetabling Team is required. Dialogue with CTT is mandatory in some cases and should be reflected in proposal documentation.

- **Academic Services**
  The Learning & Teaching Centre can provide expertise regarding the course design and organisation. The Academic Development Unit in the University's Learning & Teaching Centre can be consulted for advice on curriculum review (including online learning) and evaluation of learning and teaching. For your College's named contact, please refer to:
  
  <www.gla.ac.uk/services/learningteaching/resourcesforstaff/allocatedcollegecontacts>

Information on the process for Continuing Professional Development courses should be obtained from College CPD/PPD Officers.