Academic Handbook
Section 4D
Guidance on Approvals for New Proposals

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

1. The University's course portfolio changes over time, for example, new courses may be validated and existing courses closed and no longer offered. Depending on the nature of the change, different approval processes are used.

2. The tables below cover most proposals that are likely to arise in managing the course portfolio. Any proposals not covered should be referred initially to the Quality Operations Team for advice. mailto: qa@solent.ac.uk

Guidance on APRC/approval requirements

TABLE 1: NEW AWARDS			
Proposal	*Process Requirement*	*Notes*	*1st Contact for advice*
New course	Full course approval process, including costings and market research. Stage 1 docs to APRC for approval.	Full process to meet external regulatory (eg. QAA/CMA) and internal/systems approval requirements.	Quality Ops Team for forms and guidance
Professional Development Awards titles (not individual units)	APRC approval via school APRC paper	There are no costings or additional documents required.	APRC Clerk

TABLE 2: CHANGES & ADDITIONS TO EXISTING COURSES			
Proposal	*Process Requirement*	*Notes*	*1st Contact for advice*
Re-approval of course	The Academic Registrar's approval to proceed followed by full course approval process, including costings and market research. Stage 1 docs to APRC for approval.	Full process to meet external regulatory (eg. QAA/CMA) and internal/systems approval requirements.	Quality Ops Team for forms and guidance
Title change	APRC approval via school APRC paper. External Relations to carry out market research and approve title change. If offers have been made under old title and/or there are existing students, there are CMA implications- confirm actions to APRC.	Existing course information remains relevant; additional action limited to marketing (but possible CMA implications for School to address).	Quality Ops Team for guidance

Add existing foundation year	APRC approval via school APRC paper, including costings. APRC paper must clearly cover resource/costing information (any additional delivery/group etc).	There is an existing course/units etc so only relevant additional information required re costs/resourcing.	Quality Ops Team for guidance
Add new foundation year	Full course approval for the new FY including costings and market research. Stage 1 docs to APRC for approval - courses using new FY listed in docs.	Full process to meet external regulatory (eg. QAA/CMA) and internal/systems approval requirements.	Quality Ops Team for forms and guidance
Add placement year (inc study abroad)	APRC approval via school APRC paper, including costings and an updated marketing template form. Paper to cover impact on existing course and recruitment, support arrangements for students and highlight any additional costs/resources. Stage 2 & 3 not required, but subsequent course modification approval to add "P" credit unit and for course structure.	There is an existing course/units etc so only relevant additional information required. (A placement version of the course handbook should be in place, at least before the first cohort attends the placement year.)	Quality Ops Team for forms and guidance
Add PT mode of study to existing FT or vice versa	Stage 1 docs to APRC for approval, including costings. Stage 2 & 3 not required unless changes proposed to course content. Market scanning to be carried out by ER.	Full Stage 1 process required as costs, delivery model and target market will differ from existing course; existing information and/or previous APRC documentation is not, therefore, likely to be relevant.	Quality Ops Team for forms and guidance
Add a distance learning (DL) mode of delivery	For DL delivery of a course, treat as for a new course proposal. Stage 1 docs to APRC for approval, with costings. Market scanning may be used instead of full market research if deemed appropriate by ER. In some circumstances this may require a full validation (Stages 2 and 3). (To add a DL unit only to an existing course use the course modification process.)	Full process as costs, delivery model and teaching, learning and assessment strategies will differ from existing course; existing information and/or previous APRC documentation may not, therefore, be relevant.	Quality Ops Team for forms and guidance
Add a flexible mode of attendance	No APRC approval is required. At the University's discretion, a student on a FT	Approval exists in S2 AH & programme specifications.	Quality Ops Team for guidance

	course may transfer to a flexible mode of attendance and study between a minimum and maximum number of credits as agreed with the course leader (regulations apply). Schools to liaise with Quality Ops Team to initiate systems & records set up.	Systems/records are set up only where a delivery is to take place. Schools to consider student requests. Unit delivery dates are not bespoke-students fit into the FT timetable for the units they are taking.	
Add a further (2nd or more) cohort eg add a January start to a Sept start	APRC approval via school APRC paper, including costings and delivery pattern for the additional course start.	There is an existing course/units etc so only relevant additional information required re cost/resourcing/delivery pattern.	Quality Ops Team for guidance
One annual delivery, variable start date eg could start Sept/Nov or Jan, on demand	Except for UCAS courses, start/finish dates can be any time throughout the year when the University is open. No APRC approval/reporting required for variable course start date- school operational decision each year in consultation with AS to agree support arrangements.	School/AS operational discussions to implement delivery and ensure appropriate admin support, including systems set up, to assure the student experience.	School Director/PGL
Withdraw a course (all or specified modes of delivery) from University portfolio	Course Withdrawal Proposal form to APRC Clerk (containing detailed information for departments to implement post approval). APRC approval via school APRC paper. APRC paper must clearly state what is to cease recruiting/close and the arrangements for any students.	AS departments will use the form to monitor/administer the closure. There may be CMA implications (eg. offered students) that schools should take into account. APRC receives a summary of the information for approval.	Quality Ops Team for forms and guidance
Suspension of course delivery for new applicants (e.g. due to low applications/enrolment) -all deliveries under the award title or a specific delivery only	Due to low demand, short-term operational issues, adverse course review or periodic review outcomes, the School Director, ER Director or the Academic Registrar may request (by 1st July at the latest, via the APRC Clerk) APRC Chair's action to suspend course delivery for the next academic year. Reported to APRC via the Chair's report. (Suspension is for a year at a time, and can be applied for no more than 2 years max.) *this type of	Unless otherwise specified by Director/AR, all modes/deliveries will be suspended. Schools must ensure the position of any suspended/repeat level students is protected if a level/year does not run following the approved suspension. APRC Clerk completes the formal request process and	APRC Clerk

	suspension requires the course record on Quercus to be amended.	advises outcome to departments for action.	
Ceasing <u>further</u> recruitment due to meeting recruitment target	This is an Admissions/External Relations process. Recruitment updates are reported at APRC meetings. *this type of action does not require any change to the course record on Quercus	Schools may request that a course that is to run should cease to recruit where a maximum operational limit on student numbers has been reached.	Director of ER/Admissions & Enrolment Manager

TABLE 3: UNITS			
Proposal	*Process Requirement*	*Notes*	*1st Contact for advice*
New units, including Professional Development Units (PDUs), and modifying units	No APRC approval required. Approving and modifying units is delegated to the Unit Approval and Course Modification Group, which reports annually to LTSAC. Units may also be approved/modified via the course approval process.	APRC is generally not involved with the management of units. APRC may, from time to time, request information on PDUs as part of its strategic overview of the University portfolio.	Quality Ops Team for guidance
Withdrawing units, including Professional Development Units (PDUs)	No APRC approval required. Withdrawing units is delegated to the Unit Approval and Course Modification Group, which reports annually to LTSAC. (In line with courses, PDUs that have not run for 2 years should normally be closed to maintain the currency and suitability of the University's provision and systems; they may be closed earlier if appropriate.)	APRC is generally not involved with the management of units. APRC may, from time to time, request information on PDUs as part of its strategic overview of the University portfolio.	Quality Ops Team for guidance