

**HENLEY MANAGEMENT COLLEGE**

**COLLEGE ACADEMIC PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES**

**AP4**

**PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

**FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE RELATING TO**

**PROGRAMMES OF STUDY**

**LEADING TO ACADEMIC AWARDS**

9 March 1999



## AP4

### Procedures and Guidelines for Quality Assurance relating to Programmes of Study leading to Academic Awards

#### AP4.1 General Requirements

##### AP4.1.1 *Procedures and Guidelines*

- (a) These procedures and guidelines are issued in accordance with the Regulations for Quality Assurance relating to Programmes of Study leading to academic Awards, to which they are subject.
- (b) The guidelines are intended to assist those developing and submitting proposals for new programmes of study or for substantially amended existing programmes of study, as well as those formally involved in the validation, approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes.
- (c) The procedures are intended to enable a proposed new programme of study to be progressed without unnecessary barriers, whilst providing the flexibility to allow any proposal to be withdrawn whether for re-consideration, or permanently, at various stages within the two procedures.

#### AP4.2 Validation and Approval

##### AP4.2.1 *Procedure for initiating a new or amended Programme*

- (a) A new programme of study may be initiated by any individual member of Faculty or group of members of Faculty.
- (b) At an early stage, the initiator(s) should seek advice about an outline proposal from the Principal's nominee responsible for the direction of College programmes to determine whether it should be developed further.
- (c) A proposed substantial amendment of an existing programme of study may be initiated by any member(s) of Faculty involved in the delivery of the programme, who should discuss the outline proposal with the Programme Director concerned.

##### AP4.2.2 *Programme Specification*

- (a) If it be decided to develop an outline proposal for a new programme of study, the next stage should be the preparation of the definitive programme document (Regulation AR4.2.2 (a) (i)) in the form of a Programme Specification, which should include:

- (i) the title of the proposed programme of study, the name of the award to which it leads and, where applicable, the name of the external validating body;
  - (ii) the proposed starting date;
  - (iii) the names of the proposed programme director and of the members of Faculty who will be responsible for the delivery of the programme;
  - (iv) the aims and objectives (Regulation AR3.4);
  - (v) the participants for whom the programme is intended;
  - (vi) the admission policy, including the basic entry requirements and exemptions;
  - (vii) the duration of the programme and the mode(s) of study available to participants.
  - (viii) the syllabus and curriculum (Regulation AR3.5.1);
  - (ix) the structure and progression requirements (Regulation AR3.5.2);
  - (x) the requirements relating to any project and/or dissertation;
  - (xi) any innovative features;
  - (xii) the arrangements for the assessment and examination of participants;
  - (xiii) any relationships with professional bodies;
  - (xiv) where a proposed programme of studies will lead to the award of the University or other external validating body, any additional information required by the body concerned.
- (b) For each proposed significant amendment of an existing programme of study, there should be a statement of the reasons for proposing the change(s) envisaged and the Programme Specification (Regulation AR4.2.2 (b) (i)) should be revised, specifying, where applicable, any changes in:
- (i) the title of the programme of study;
  - (ii) the proposed starting date of the changes;
  - (iii) the aims and objectives (Regulation AR3.4);
  - (iv) the participants for whom the programme is intended;

- (v) the admission policy, including the basic entry requirements and exemptions;
  - (vi) the duration of the programme and the mode(s) of study available to participants;
  - (vii) the syllabus and curriculum (Regulation AR3.5.1);
  - (viii) the structure and progression requirements (Regulation AR3.5.2);
  - (ix) any innovative features;
  - (x) the arrangements for the assessment and examination of participants.
- (c) Where a programme of study leads to the award of the University or other external validating body, the format of the definitive programme document (or amended definitive programme document) shall take account of any requirements stipulated by the University or other validating body.

AP4.2.3 *Statement of Resource Requirements*

- (a) In respect of a proposed new programme of study, the statement of the estimated resource requirements (Regulation AR4.2.2 (a) (ii)) for the programme shall cover:
- (i) staffing (academic and support staff);
  - (ii) facilities (such as lecture and syndicate rooms) ;
  - (iii) learning support services (computer, library, materials).

AP4.2.4 *Guidance on the Nature of a substantial Amendment of an existing Programme*

- (a) When determining whether any proposed change(s) in an existing programme of study should be treated as substantial, changes in any of the following should normally be regarded as constituting a substantial amendment of an existing programme:
- (i) the title of the programme of study;
  - (ii) the name of the award to which the programme leads;
  - (iii) the fundamental arrangements and scheme for the assessment and examination of participants;
  - (iv) radical amendment of core elements of the programme, the syllabus, the curriculum and the structure of the programme;

- (v) addition or deletion of major elements of the programme and/or replacement of major elements of the programme by new elements and the introduction of new options;
  - (vi) fundamental change(s) in admission policies and requirements;
  - (vii) fundamental change(s) in the delivery and/or operation of the programme.
- (b) Where there is uncertainty as to whether a proposed particular change would constitute a substantial amendment, the proposed changes should be submitted in accordance with the following procedures.

Note: Minor modifications to programmes should be identified in the Annual Report (see AP4.3.1 below).

#### AP4.2.5 *Procedure for preparing and submitting a proposed new or amended Programme*

- (a) Each proposed new programme of study, or proposed substantial amendment of an existing programme of study, shall be considered by the appropriate members of Faculty.
- (b) The members of Faculty concerned shall submit the proposed new programme of study, or substantially amended programme of study, to the Principal's nominee responsible for the direction of College Programmes (or that person's nominee) for initial consideration.
- (c) The Principal's nominee, after consulting the College Management Team, shall evaluate the proposed new programme of study, or the proposed substantial amendment of an existing programme of study, to determine that the programme satisfies, or continues to satisfy, the following key criteria:
  - (i) that there is appropriate market demand and opportunity;
  - (ii) that the aims, content and learning methods are appropriate;
  - (iii) that the assessment and quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory and appropriate;
  - (iv) that the estimates of resource requirements are realistic;
  - (v) that, where appropriate, innovation is a feature of the programme.

#### AP4.2.6 *Preliminary Consideration*

- (a) The Academic Approvals Committee (for taught programmes) or the Research Committee (for research programmes) will give preliminary

consideration to the proposal to determine that the authors have fully investigated the potential of the programme.

- (b) If the Academic Approvals Committee or Research Committee, as appropriate, is satisfied that the proposal meets the criteria for operating a new or amended programme of study, it shall normally constitute a scrutiny panel to consider and evaluate the proposal (Regulation AR4.2.3).

AP4.2.7 *Confidentiality*

- (a) Each proposal for a new programme of study or substantial amendment of an existing programme shall be treated as strictly confidential to the College.
- (b) Unless express written permission has been given by the Principal, external advice shall not be taken in connection with preparing and submitting a proposal for a new programme of study, or substantial amendment of an existing programme.

AP4.2.8 *Appointment of a Scrutiny Panel*

- (a) The membership of the scrutiny panel should be such as to bring appropriate expertise, impartiality and experience (Regulation AR4.2.3) to the evaluation of the proposal.
- (b) Each member and independent external expert shall normally be familiar with the standards of comparable awards of universities and other institutions of higher education in the United Kingdom, and with the requirements and current developments relating to similar programmes of study, and shall normally be cognisant of current best practice in management development and education.
- (c) As far as is practicable, within the membership of a scrutiny panel and the independent external experts there should be:
  - (i) familiarity with current pedagogical practice;
  - (ii) where appropriate knowledge of the needs of programmes delivered through distance learning;
  - (iii) awareness of current policies and practices in respect of quality assurance at institutional and national levels, particularly in respect of the validation and approval of programmes of study.
- (d) The chairperson shall normally be a member of the Academic Board.

AP4.2.9 *Scrutiny Panel Briefing*

- (a) Each scrutiny panel established to scrutinise and evaluate a submission for a new programme of study, or a substantial amendment of an existing programme of study, shall be fully briefed.

- (b) In particular, each member of a scrutiny panel shall be sent:
  - (i) the full submission;
  - (ii) background information about the work of the College, its academic policies and mission;
  - (iii) current validation procedures and quality assurance arrangements;
  - (iv) where applicable, information about the specific requirements of the University or other external validating body.
- (c) With regard to the scrutiny and evaluation of a substantial amendment of an existing programme of study, the documentation sent to members of the scrutiny panel, including any independent external experts, may be more limited, depending upon the circumstances.

#### AP4.2.10 *Meeting of a Scrutiny Panel*

- (a) A scrutiny panel, normally including any independent external experts, shall either hold a meeting with the authors of the proposed new programme of study or substantial amendment and with other relevant members of Faculty to discuss the issues and any concerns arising from the documentation, or be given the opportunity to hold an in depth discussion through electronic means.
- (b) Whilst the scrutiny panel shall determine the agenda for the meeting or discussion, the authors should be consulted about issues they may wish to raise.
- (c) The meeting or discussion should be conducted as an opportunity for an exchange of views and perceptions between peers.

#### AP4.2.11 *Report and Recommendations*

- (a) A scrutiny panel shall submit its findings and recommendations (Regulation AR4.2.5) in a report to the Academic Approvals Committee or Research Committee, as appropriate.
- (b) Subject to the requirements of the University or other external validating body, final approval on academic grounds shall rest with the Academic Board.

### **AP4.3 Annual Monitoring**

#### AP4.3.1 *Annual Reports*

- (a) Reports should normally be submitted to the Academic Reviews Committee by the Faculty Group Leaders, Directors of Studies and/or any other members of staff identified by the Academic

Reviews Committee or Academic Board. Inter alia, they should provide an overview of the subject area/programme of study during the previous session, covering:

- (i) a critical self-appraisal on the operation of the programme;
- (ii) data relating to participants - numbers, qualifications on entry, age, sex, countries of residence, nominators, latest positions held;
- (iii) statistical analysis of participants' feedback and a commentary thereon;
- (iv) matters arising from information provided by, and discussions with, tutors and other staff relating to programme elements, learning support facilities, teaching accommodation, and administrative arrangements;
- (v) performance of participants, including: attainment and achievements; successful completion and failures; completion and non-completion rates; assignment and project grades; and progression results;
- (vi) appeals - statistical and descriptive information;
- (vii) action taken in response to issues raised in the previous year's report;
- (viii) any publications arising wholly or partly from participants' work on the programme in the year being monitored, or in previous years;
- (ix) external examiners' reports;
- (x) relevant information relating to changes in participants' employment after completing the programme of study;
- (xi) staffing, resourcing and any other relevant issues.
- (xii) any minor modifications in the programme of studies, not involving radical or fundamental change, whether implemented during the year under review or proposed for the ensuing year.
- (xiii) reference to any established 'good practice' already established within the College, or externally, which is deemed appropriate for adoption as general College policy or for procedural extension elsewhere in the College. Such good practice may arise from a variety of sources including recommendation by the external examiner, College Faculty, visiting Faculty, students or observation of practice at other institutions.

- (b) In compiling reports, the Faculty Group Leaders and the Directors of Studies should seek relevant information from:
  - (i) tutors and members of staff responsible for delivering the programme;
  - (ii) participants;
  - (iii) support staff;
  - (iv) nominators and sponsors.
- (c) Where statistical information is presented in the annual report, comparative data from the previous two annual reports should also be provided. Any discernible trends revealed by such comparative data should be noted in the Director of Studies' commentary on the year.

#### **AP4.4 Periodic Review**

##### *AP4.4.1 Procedure for initiating a Periodic Review*

- (a) The Chairperson of the Academic Board (or nominee) shall be responsible for ensuring that a periodic review of a particular programme of study is initiated at the appropriate time.
- (b) The Director of Studies and the members of Faculty concerned with the delivery of the programme of study shall be responsible for preparing the documentation and collecting and analysing the statistical data required.

##### *AP4.4.2 Programme Specification*

- (a) The definitive Programme Specification should be brought fully up-to-date, covering all the headings required (Procedure 4.2.2 (a) above) and presented as the current Programme Specification.
- (b) Changes in the programme of studies made since it was first validated or last reviewed should accompany the Programme Specification (Regulation AR4.4.2 (a) (ii)).

##### *AP4.4.3 Guidance on the Documentation*

- (a) The other documentation and information required should form part of the submission (Regulations AR4.4.2 (a) (iii), (vii) and AR4.4.2 (b)).
- (b) Any information given to participants in the programme, including any brochure and programme organiser, should be submitted. In addition, records of any evaluation discussions held with participants and copies of any proformas which participants are asked to complete should be included as part of the submission.

- (c) The documentation covering any aspect of the operation of the programme should normally cover at least the preceding two or three years. Analyses of any discernible trends or patterns should be prepared. Particular attention should be paid to:
- (i) the way(s) in which admission policy and criteria are applied;
  - (ii) information on the backgrounds of participants (such as qualifications on entry, previous employment, and country of normal residence);
  - (iii) the ways in which programme content is kept up-to-date and informed by research and scholarship;
  - (iv) how the comments of participants are used to inform the delivery and content of the programme;
  - (v) any arrangements for ensuring that those responsible for delivering the programme maintain appropriate knowledge and standards;
  - (vi) statistical and other information about the progression of participants and attainment on assessed modules and other assessed elements, including the meeting of deadlines;
  - (vii) action taken in response to external examiners' annual reports and any appraisal of those reports;
  - (viii) completion rates and any action which may have been taken to improve them;
  - (ix) post-programme employment and former participants' perceptions of the benefits gained from the programme;
  - (x) any surveys undertaken of employers' views on the programme.

AP4.4.4 *Procedure for Submission*

- (a) The members of Faculty concerned shall submit the documentation relating to the programme of study being reviewed to the Chairperson of the Academic Board (or nominee) for initial consideration.
- (b) The Chairperson of the Academic Board (or nominee), after consulting the Principal and College Management Team, shall establish a review panel.

AP4.4.5 *Confidentiality*

Unless express written permission has been given by the Principal, external advice shall not be taken in connection with preparing the submission relating to a programme of study being reviewed.

AP4.4.6 *Membership of the Review Panel*

- (a) The membership of the review panel shall satisfy the same criteria for expertise, impartiality and experience as a scrutiny panel established in connection with a proposed new programme (Regulation AR4.2.3 (c) and Procedure AP4.2.8 above).
- (b) Whilst normally no member of a review panel shall have acted or have been appointed to act as an external examiner for the programme, any such person may be included as an additional external expert.
- (c) Where practicable, amongst the membership of the review panel or the independent external experts there should be at least one person who was a member of the scrutiny panel or an independent external expert when the programme was first validated or of the review panel (or an independent external expert thereto) when the programme was last reviewed.

AP4.4.7 *Review Panel Briefing*

Each review panel shall be fully briefed and each member, including any independent external expert, shall be sent the complete documentation (AP4.4.3 above).

AP4.4.8 *Meeting of a Review Panel*

- (a) A review panel, normally including any independent external experts, shall either hold a meeting with the members of Faculty responsible for the delivery of the programme of study to discuss the issues and any concerns arising from the documentation, or be given the opportunity to hold an in depth discussion through electronic means.
- (b) Whilst the review panel shall determine the agenda for the meeting, the members of Faculty should be consulted about issues they may wish to raise.
- (c) The meeting or discussion should be conducted as an opportunity for an exchange of views and perceptions between peers.
- (d) An opportunity should be provided for the review panel either to meet participants in the programme and, if practicable, participants who have recently completed the programme of study, or to have a discussion with them through electronic means.
- (e) The review panel should meet the Principal and members of the College Management Team.

AP4.4.9 *Report and Recommendations*

- (a) A review panel shall submit its findings and recommendations (Regulation AR4.4.5) in a report to the Academic Reviews Committee.
- (b) Subject to the requirements of the University or other external validating body, final approval relating to any action recommended by the review panel on academic grounds shall rest with the Academic Board.