

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 19 May 2017

**Proposed Amendments to the Programme Approval (Validation)
Process for The Glasgow School of Art**

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A) Background

The GSA degree programmes are approved (validated) by the University through a procedure outlined in the Code of Practice for Validated Provision (December 2015) which spans two academic sessions. A Statement of Intent (or equivalent) is submitted in one academic session and, if approved, the validation event (or equivalent) takes place in the following academic session. The validation event would be managed by an Accredited Institution and the panel would consist of University¹; external; and student representatives. Academic Standards Committee (ASC) input is required at both stages.

As outlined in the current Memorandum of Agreement with GSA, changes to the process are possible subject to the approval of the University, specifically ASC. In academic session 2014-15, GSA requested an amendment to the process to enable a new programme to be approved within a one-year period. ASC approved this change at its meeting on 14 November 2015.

With the exception of one or two initial teething difficulties, the amended programme approval process has been working well. However, it has now been identified that a further review of the process is appropriate in light of the recent review of the University's Course and Programme approval process in session 2015-16, and in light of the maturity of the relationship with GSA (a validated institution with accredited status). These discussions have been taking place in the context of the renewal of the Memorandum of Agreement with GSA which is due to expire at the end of September 2017.

B) Summary of key changes for the University of Glasgow Programme and Course Approvals Procedure

For ease of reference the key changes for the University's process are outlined below. These changes have been implemented in session 2016-17 on a pilot basis. ASC will monitor the changes with a view to introducing full implementation from session 2017-18.

a) Programme Approval

- Approval of new and amended programmes has been delegated to College. Non-standard² can be referred to ASC.
- All collaborative programmes and proposals spanning more than one College are considered by ASC.
- College Boards of Studies now include members external to the College.
- College Board of Studies membership has been augmented to include experienced PAG/ASC members.

¹ Normally the University has one representative on a validation panel, however, in the case of Joint Programmes (where the validated partner is the Administering Institution) the University would have two representatives.

² An example of a non-standard proposal is one where there is concern that it complies with University policy.

- The financial element has been removed from the Board of Studies' consideration.

b) Course Approval

- Approval of new, amended (and withdrawn) courses has been delegated by the College to the School/Research Institute (non-standard proposals can be referred to College Board of Studies).
- School L & T committee (or equivalent) includes members external to School/RI.
- School L & T membership has been augmented by experienced Board of Studies members.

c) General

- Definitions of major and minor have been reworked with a view to adopting a more proportionate approach. (ASC will review criteria to determine when full process is triggered).
- Senate Office will audit the process at programme level and report to ASC.
- Board of Studies will audit the process at course level and report to ASC.

C) Recommendations for changes to the Programme Approval (Validation) procedure for Glasgow School of Art

Following discussion with GSA, the following changes to the current programme approval (validation) process are proposed. Subject to approval of the changes by the Academic Standards Committee (ASC), the intention would be to introduce the new process, on a pilot basis, in academic session 2017-18.

a) Programme Approval

- To seek approval within one academic session, GSA will continue to provide ASC with a Programme Proposal³ or Major Programme Amendment Proposal, at its November meeting.
- Subject to in principle support of the proposal by ASC, GSA's Academic Council would assume responsibility for the approval of the new or amended programme and would be permitted to advertise the new programme or major programme amendment as being "subject to validation".
- Where ASC indicates that the proposal may be non-standard⁴ the current process will be followed, specifically ASC will be invited to consider and approve the Programme Approval Report, recommended by GSA's Academic Council following a validation event⁵ at GSA.
- The University will continue to be represented on Academic Council (2 representatives) and on the validation panel (1-2 representatives).
- There will continue to be External and Student representatives on the validation panel.
- Collaborative programmes will continue to be referred to ASC in the normal way.
- Financial consideration will remain the responsibility of GSA.

³ Statement of Intent

⁴ An example would be where the programme has a non-standard structure or it involves a collaborative arrangement.

⁵ In the case of GSA this is referred to as a UPC Programme Approval meeting.

b) Course Approval

- Approval of new, amended (and withdrawn) courses will remain the responsibility of GSA, however, a lighter touch approach will be suggested to GSA.

c) General

- GSA will continue to comply with the University’s reworked definitions of “major” and “minor” as amended from time to time.
- The Academic Collaborations Office (ACO) will monitor the process at programme level and report to ASC.
- The GSA Annual Report to Senate will continue to include a re/validation/subject review timetable and, where known, information on proposed major programme changes. GSA will continue to provide a summary of any changes at Course level.
- GSA will provide the ACO with a list of approved programmes and major programme amendments in April each year. This will inform the ACO monitoring process; the report to ASC; and the University Calendar.
- Where concerns with elements of the programme become known post approval of the Programme Proposal (Statement of Intent) by ASC, the Clerk of Senate will be entitled to require any appropriate amendments.

