

Policy on the Approval of New Programmes



Aims

1. The responsibility for the programme approval process rests with University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC), operating under the delegated authority of Senate and reporting to Senate on all programme approvals.
2. The aims of the programme approval process are to:
 - a. Ensure that each proposed new programme contributes towards achievement of the strategic aims and objectives of the University, and the relevant faculty(ies) and academic unit(s) involved in the provision of the programme.
 - b. Ensure that an appropriate business case is in place for each proposed new programme, which demonstrates the viability of proposed new programme and that appropriate staffing and learning resources are in place for the effective delivery of the programme.
 - c. Ensure that each proposed new programme has been designed in such a way as to meet the University's expectations for academic quality and standards (as set out in the University's [Quality and Standards Handbook](#), [regulations](#) and [Qualifications and Credit Framework](#)), and to meet or exceed the expectations of the [UK Quality Code](#) (including the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) and, where relevant, [subject benchmark statements](#)) and where relevant the requirements of the appropriate Professional and Statutory Regulatory Body(ies) (PSRB).
 - d. Ensure that each proposed new taught postgraduate programme is aligned with the commitments of the University's [Statement of the Taught Postgraduate Offer](#).

Scope

3. This policy applies to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes leading to a Newcastle University award (including awards involving Credit Accumulation and Transfer). It also applies to research degree programmes with a taught element (for example MRes, Integrated PhD or professional doctorates).
4. This policy applies to any proposed new programmes delivered through educational partnerships. In such cases programme approval is a distinct and separate process from the approval of educational partnerships. Proposers of new programmes that involve an educational partnership should therefore consult the [Educational Partnerships Policy](#), and follow that process as well as the new programme approval policy.

Overview of the process

5. There are three stages to the programme approval process:
 - a. Strategic Approval.
 - b. Business Case Approval.
 - c. Academic Approval.

Each stage corresponds to one of the three aims of the process.

6. The process should be followed for all new programme proposals, unless the chair of the relevant Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (FLTSEC), or her/his

nominee, believes that there is a strong case for a lighter touch approach due to the low level of risk associated with a proposed new programme. In such cases the Learning and Teaching Development Service (LTDS) must be notified of the chair of FLTSEC's intended recommendation for approval arrangements in order to ensure that a consistent approach is applied across the University. Any variation must ensure that the criteria for approving a new programme set out below are still met.

Relationships between the three stages of the process

7. The normal expectation is that the three stages of the programme approval process are sequential. The Strategic Approval stage is completed. If a proposal is successful the Business Case Approval stage is completed. If this is successful the Academic Approval stage is completed. This normal expectation is based on the fact that success at one stage does not and cannot guarantee success at the next stage, and therefore it is more efficient not to start working on a later stage before the outcome of the preceding stage is known.
8. The development of the Business Case and Academic Case proposals are in a number of ways linked, so that programme proposers may in some circumstances feel that it is necessary to carry out some of the work on developing the Academic Case prior to approval of the Business Case. This is permissible, but in no instance will a meeting of the Programme Approval Committee (PAC) that considers a proposed programme be arranged until after the Business Case has been approved.

Support for proposers of new programmes

9. The following support is available to programme proposers:
 - a. Guidance notes on the completion of each of the forms and other documents required by the programme approval process are available in the online Quality and Standards Handbook, and are regularly revised and updated by LTDS.
 - b. Support and advice on individual programme proposals is available from the relevant FLTSEC chair and Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team (for example informal meetings to discuss potential new programmes, commenting on draft documentation, providing advice in response to specific questions).
 - c. A number of workshops on the programme approval process are provided jointly each year by LTDS and Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Teams, providing an overview of the requirements of the process and how to engage successfully with it.
 - d. Academic units proposing new programmes can contact LTDS to request support on the pedagogic elements of programme design, including support and facilitation of programme design workshops.

In order to ensure the most effective support for developing a new programme, programme proposers are strongly recommended to notify the relevant Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team as soon as practicable when they are beginning to develop a new programme.

10. In addition to general support, specific support is also available in relation to developing the business case (see paragraph 31). The Disability Support Team are also available to support programme proposers to ensure, when undertaking programme design as part of the Academic Approval Stage, that that issues of inclusive curriculum design and assignment are considered (this is also supported by an [Accessible Design Checklist](#) that programme proposers should consult).

11. Support is also available in relation to developing the marketing plan/strategy for new programmes. The Marketing and Student Recruitment Directorate/Faculty Marketing Team are notified of all approved Strategic Approval Forms. During the Business Case and/or Academic Approval stage(s), MSRD/Faculty Marketing Team will contact the programme proposer to discuss the development of a marketing plan/strategy that will be recorded in the New Degree Promotion and Launch Planning Template (this template will be completed by MSRD/Faculty Marketing Team in order to minimise the demands made on the time of programme proposers). This process may take place at a meeting or through correspondence, as agreed by the programme proposer and MSRD/Faculty Marketing Team.
12. The completed Template is not subject to formal approval, either within programme approval or elsewhere. Programme proposers should note that proposed new programmes should not be advertised prior to their final approval, unless permission to do so is granted (see paragraphs 37 and 38).

Externality

13. External advisers are appointed by the University in relation to all proposed new programmes. They play an important role in supporting the University to discharge its responsibility for ensuring that proposed new programmes meet the expectations of the [UK Quality Code](#), and that the academic quality and standards of proposed programmes are at least comparable to those in similar subjects in other UK universities. External advisers act as 'critical friends' by providing informed, independent and impartial judgments, and the University gives serious and active consideration to their comments and advice.
14. External advisers are nominated by the academic unit proposing a programme, and appointed by the chair of the relevant FLTSEC. The process of nomination and approval is embedded within the Strategic Approval Form. If a nomination is approved the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team is responsible for confirming with an external adviser that they have been appointed; that they are willing to accept this appointment; and providing the external adviser with the information they need; and obtaining the external adviser's report.
15. In order to be appointed, a proposed external adviser must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Possess appropriate and substantial levels of relevant and recent teaching and/or research expertise and experience in relation to the proposed programme.
 - b. Command authority in their field, and the respect of colleagues.
 - c. Not be a recent student or member of staff of the University (i.e. at least five years must have elapsed since, respectively, their studies or employment at the University ended).
 - d. Not be a current or recent (i.e. the last five years) external examiner in the academic unit proposing the programme.
16. If the circumstances of an external adviser change after they have been appointed in such a way that a conflict may arise (for example due to a change of job) they should notify the University of this change.
17. An external adviser must be appointed for each proposed new programme. Where a group of cognate programmes have been proposed together a single external adviser may (at the discretion of the Chair of the relevant Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee, or her/his nominee) be appointed to consider and comment on all programmes in that group.

18. All external advisers should be provided with the following information. This will be provided by the relevant Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team once they have received the documentation from the programme proposer:
 - a. The approved Strategic Approval and Business Case forms (for background information only).
 - b. The draft programme specification.
 - c. The draft programme regulations.
 - d. The proposed programme assessment criteria.
 - e. Module Outlines for the proposed programme (which may be online access).
 - f. If the programme involves an educational partnership, a completed Student Lifecycle Table.
19. All external advisers must complete and submit a completed External Adviser Report Form to the academic unit proposing the programme. This sets out a number of key issues relating to academic quality and standards (including alignment with the [UK Quality Code](#)) on which all external advisers must comment, and give external advisers the opportunity to comment on any other issues they wish to raise.
20. All programme proposers are required to consider any comments made by the external adviser, and respond to these as part of the Academic Approval stage.
21. External advisers are paid a fee of £100 (£250 for programmes involving an educational partnership). This is borne by the academic unit proposing the programme. Where a group of cognate programmes are being considered by a single external adviser, an additional £50 fee should be paid for each additional programme the external adviser has been appointed to comment on. The fee is payable on receipt of the signed report from the adviser.

Strategic Approval Stage

22. Strategic Approval requires programme proposers to prepare and submit a Strategic Approval Form. The purpose of this form is to set out the strategic rationale for developing the new programme, in order to gain approval to allocate the time and resource needed to develop a fuller proposal.
23. The Strategic Approval Form is intended to be a summary of the key elements of the proposed new programme, which will allow the Faculty Steering Group to come to a decision on whether the potential strategic benefits of the proposed programme are sufficient to justify the use of staff time to develop a fuller proposal. Given this focus on the strategic issues raised by a proposed new programme completed Strategic Approval Forms should be no longer than three sides in length, Calibri 12 pt with 2cm margins on all sides. Completed forms that exceed this length will be referred back to proposers for revision to meet this limit.
24. All Strategic Approval Forms must be approved by the head of the academic unit proposing the programme, and by the chair of the relevant board of studies. If the proposed programme involves more than one academic unit, then written confirmation of support from the heads of the other academic unit(s) involved must also be obtained.
25. Completed Strategic Approval Forms should be submitted to the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team of the Faculty in which the proposed programme will be based. All Strategic Approval Forms are considered by the Faculty Steering Group, which may consult with other individuals with relevant expertise, as it deems it necessary. Chairs of Faculty

Steering Group may designate a member of the Group to consider Strategic Approval Forms on behalf of the Group.

26. Faculty Steering Group (or designated individual) will consider Strategic Approval Forms against common criteria. Strategic Approval Forms must demonstrate that:
 - a. There is a clear and appropriate academic rationale for the proposed programme.
 - b. The proposed programme will support the achievement of the University's, Faculty's and academic unit's strategic objectives.
 - c. The prima facie evidence of likely student demand for the programme is sufficient to merit carrying out further market research.
27. Following consideration of a Strategic Approval Form, Faculty Steering Group(or designated individual) will reach one of the following decisions:
 - a. Permission is granted for the programme proposer to develop Business Case proposal for the programme(s).
 - b. The request for permission to develop Business Case and Academic Case proposals for the programme(s) is rejected.
 - c. The request for permission to develop Business Case and Academic Case proposals for the programme(s) is referred back to the programme proposer for revision.
28. Where permission has been granted to develop Business Case and Academic Case proposals, Faculty Steering Group(or designated individual) will also make and record on the Strategic Approval Form the following decisions:
 - a. Whether it requires that the development of the Business Case proposal should include a market analysis (paid for by the Faculty) by the MSRD/Faculty Marketing Team.
 - b. Which if any professional services (in addition to the Library and NUIT) should be consulted by the programme proposer during the development of the Business Case and Academic Case proposals.
29. The Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team is responsible for communicating to the programme proposer, and relevant stakeholders in faculty support teams and professional services, of the outcome of the consideration of the Strategic Approval Form. This notification should include LTDS, who will report to ULTSEC on Strategic Approvals granted, in order to allow ULTSEC to retain an overview of the overall development of the University's portfolio of programmes.

Business Case Approval Stage

30. Business Case Approval requires programme proposers to prepare and submit a Business Case Approval Form and the Teaching Costing Model (in exceptional circumstances the Faculty may choose to waive the requirement for the latter). The purpose of this stage of the process is to set out a detailed business case for the proposed programme, and demonstrate that the programme will be viable in relation to its likely recruitment and the resources needed to deliver the programme (including ensuring that appropriate learning resources are in place to support the delivery of the proposed programme).
31. In addition to the general support set out in paragraph 9 above, support on completing the business case is also available to programme proposers from the relevant Faculty Accountant. Programme proposers must also consult with the Library and NUIT when developing business cases and include evidence of this in their completed business case. Where the Faculty has

required at the Strategic Approval stage that a programme proposer to consult with other professional services when developing their business case (see paragraph 28c.), the completed business case must include evidence of this consultation.

32. All Business Case Approval Forms must be approved by the head of the academic unit proposing the programme, following consideration by the academic unit's executive. If the proposed programme involves more than one academic unit, then written confirmation of support from the heads of the other academic unit(s) involved must also be obtained (for example by attaching emails from the other head(s) of academic unit(s) stating their support).
 33. Programme proposers should submit the following documentation to the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team of the Faculty in which the proposed programme will be based.
 - a. A completed Business Case Approval Form.
 - b. Where required, a completed Teaching Costing Model.
 - c. Where required, the market research report produced by MSRD/Faculty Marketing Team.
 - d. A completed planned fees form.
 34. Programme proposers do not need to re-submit their Strategic Case Approval form, as the Faculty will already have access to this. However, if there have been significant changes to the proposed programme that materially affect the Strategic Case then the programme proposer should submit an updated Strategic Case Approval form with all amendments clearly flagged as tracked changes.
 35. All Business Case Approval Forms are considered by the Faculty Steering Group, which may consult with other individuals with relevant expertise, as it deems it necessary). Chairs of Faculty Steering Group may designate a member of the Group to consider Strategic Approval Forms on behalf of the Group. Faculty Steering Group (or designated individual) will consider Business Case Approval Forms against common criteria. Business Case Approval Forms must demonstrate that:
 - a. The academic and strategic rationale for the proposed programme approved during the Strategic Approval phase remains valid.
 - b. There is a clear estimate of projected student numbers, and sufficient evidence of sustainable market demand, or there is a compelling non-monetary strategic reason.
 - c. Appropriate resources are in place to support the delivery of the programme and provide a high quality student learning experience.
 36. Following consideration of a Business Case Approval Form, Faculty Steering Group (or designated individual) will reach one of the following decisions:
 - a. Permission is granted for the programme proposer to develop/finalise and submit for consideration the Academic Case proposal for the programme(s).
 - b. The Business Case for the programme(s) is rejected and no further development of the Business Case or Academic Case should take place.
 - c. The Business Case is referred back to the programme proposer for revision.
 37. As part of the Business Case Approval form, programme proposers can make a request for permission to advertise a new programme prior to its final approval, with a 'subject to approval' flag. Exceptional reasons need to be given to justify such a request (for example if it has been externally commissioned, or it will be composed predominantly of existing modules). If such a request has been made and the Faculty Steering Group (or designated individual) has
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approved the business case, the Faculty Steering Group (or designated individual) will also state whether the case for early advertising has been approved or rejected. Given greater complexity of programmes delivered through an Education Partnership, and request for early advertisement of such a new programme must also be considered for approval by the PVC – Learning and Teaching.

38. If the case is approved any advertising material for the proposed programme must state that the programme is subject to full University approval. Additionally if the Academic Approval documentation has not been submitted to the relevant Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team within three months of the approval of the business case, permission for early advertising is rescinded and all advertising must stop immediately.

Academic Approval

39. Academic Approval requires programme proposers to prepare and submit a full academic proposal, which demonstrates that the proposed programme will meet internal and external requirements and reference points for academic quality and standards. The development of the full academic proposal normally takes place after the Business Case stage of the process has been completed (see also paragraphs 7 and 8 above).
40. Programme proposers must develop the following documentation for the Academic Approval stage:
- a. A programme specification, including a curriculum mapping template.
 - b. A statement of the admissions requirements for the proposed programme.
 - c. Programme assessment criteria.
 - d. Draft programme regulations.
 - e. Module outlines for any new modules included in the proposed programme.
 - f. If the programme will request an exemption from the University's regulations or policies , a [Regulations/Policy Exemption Request Form](#).
 - g. For programmes involving an Educational Partnership:
 - i. A completed [Student Lifecycle Table](#).
 - ii. If the programme will lead to a joint taught award with the partner, a completed [Joint Taught Awards – Programme Approval Checklist](#).
 - iii. CVs of staff from partner organisation teaching on the programme, if relevant.
 - h. For programmes that include a placement year organised by the Academic Unit, a completed [Work-based and Placement Learning Checklist](#).

NB. All undergraduate programmes should allow students the option to undertake a 9-12 month placement, managed either by the Academic Unit or by the Careers Service. If the programme will request an exemption from this requirement, a [Regulations/Policy Exemption Request Form](#) must be submitted.

In some cases the Faculty may feel that in order to assure itself of the academic quality and standards of a proposed programme, it requires further information from a programme proposer. The chair of the relevant FLTSEC, or her/his nominee, has the discretion to require such additional documentation.

41. Additionally, programme proposers must:
- a. Consider and respond to any issues raised in the completed External Adviser Report Form.

- b. Consult with current students to obtain their views on the proposed programme, and document this consultation. There is no single, prescribed way in which this must take place. Potential methods include (this list is neither exhaustive or prescriptive):
 - i. Discussion at a Student Staff Committee meeting.
 - ii. Discussion at a Board of Studies meeting at which student representatives are present.
 - iii. An online survey of relevant groups of current students.
 - iv. Discussion of the proposed programme at a student focus group.

In exceptional circumstances it may not be possible or appropriate to consult with current students. If a programme proposer believes this to be the case, s/he should consult with the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team. The decision on whether to waive the requirement for student consultation rests solely with the chair of the relevant FLTSEC.

42. The documentation set out in paragraphs 40 and 41 constitutes the full academic proposal. The responsibility for completing this documentation and submitting it to the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team sits with the programme proposer.
43. The timescale for the submission of the full academic proposal to the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team will be agreed by the programme proposer and Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team at an early stage in the development of the full academic proposal. All full academic proposals should be considered and approved by the relevant Board of Studies prior to their consideration by the PAC.
44. The PAC secretary is responsible for circulating this documentation to members of the PAC. In addition the PAC Secretary will give members of the PAC with the following information for reference:
 - a. The criteria for approving new programmes.
 - b. MOFs for any existing modules included in the proposed programme (at the discretion of the PAC Chair, these may be provided in hard copy, electronic copy or through a link to the relevant online information).
 - c. The approved Strategic Approval Form.
 - d. The approved Business Case Form.
 - e. The University's [Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).
 - f. For taught postgraduate programmes, the University's [Statement of the Taught Postgraduate Offer](#).
 - g. For proposed programmes involving an Educational Partnership (both to be supplied by LTDS):
 - i. The approved Initial Proposal Template.
 - ii. The report from the approval visit to the Partner (if a visit was required by EPSC).
45. The full academic proposal shall be considered by a PAC convened by the Faculty that will be responsible for the proposed programme. The membership of the PAC shall be:
 - a. The chair of the FLTSEC of the Faculty or her/his nominee that will be responsible for the proposed programme.
 - b. At least one member of academic staff from an academic unit within the Faculty that will be responsible for the proposed programme, but not from the host academic unit for the programme.

- c. One member of academic staff from another Faculty, representing ULTSEC (from a pool of such staff co-ordinated by LTDS, liaising with Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Teams in relation to specific PACs). This applies to programmes that are approved by the Faculty. For programmes that require approval by TPSC or ULTSEC, this member of the PAC should be replaced with a second faculty-nominated member (as approval by TPSC or ULTSEC is sufficient institutional involvement without also needing an institutional representative on the PAC).
- d. Where a proposed programme involves an Educational Partnership, a member of LTDS.

A member of the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team will serve as secretary to the PAC, and the FLTSEC chair has the authority to co-opt further members should they deem this necessary.

46. No PACs will be held in August each year for any programme that will start at the beginning of the standard academic year in the autumn. For such programmes the PAC must have taken place before 1 August. PACs may be held in August for programmes due to start in the January or later the following calendar year.
47. The PAC will meet to consider the full academic proposal as specified in paragraphs 40 and 41 above. The programme proposer will be invited to the PAC to discuss their proposed programme. They may be accompanied by other colleagues involved in the proposed programme, if they feel this would support the consideration of the proposed programme.
48. The PAC will consider the full academic proposal, in relation to the following criteria which must be met for a proposed programme to be approved:
 - a. The academic standards of the proposed programme meet those defined by the [Framework of Higher Education Qualifications](#); relevant subject benchmarks; where appropriate the requirements of PSRBs; the University's [Qualifications and Credit Framework](#); and for taught postgraduate programmes, the [University's Statement of the Taught Postgraduate Offer](#).
 - b. The programme design is coherent in terms of design, delivery and structure.
 - c. The programme design has taken account of equality and diversity issues, and any necessary provision has been made for all potential students.
 - d. The content and level of the curriculum of the programme is designed to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes; promotes intellectual progression during the course or the programme; and is up to date.
 - e. The programme's curriculum:
 - i. Is informed by research and scholarship, and the links between these are explicit.
 - ii. Integrates an international, intercultural or global dimension as much as possible.
 - iii. Where appropriate, incorporates features/practice that relates to the University's Societal Challenge themes.
 - f. The programme's modes of learning, teaching and assessment are designed to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes, and allow measurement of student achievement against the intended learning outcomes.
 - g. There are assessment criteria in place that are clear, and which discriminate between different levels of student achievement.

- h. The programme has appropriately considered the employability of students on completion of the programme, including the opportunities to acquire and develop the values and skills in the University's [Graduate Skills Framework](#).
 - i. Appropriate arrangements are in place for obtaining feedback from students, and informing students of the outcome of consideration of this feedback.
 - j. Appropriate resources are in place to support the programme.*
 - k. For programmes involving an Educational Partnership, that the partner is able to deliver the programme, in terms of infrastructure, learning support and staffing, taking into account the nature of the partnership and the evidence provided.
 - l. For programmes involving placement learning that:
 - i. The design of the placement enables students to achieve specific intended learning outcomes, at the appropriate FHEQ level given the timing of the placement within the programme.
 - ii. Where the placement is assessed:
 - the proposed methods of assessment and feedback are appropriate to the intended learning outcomes and the structure of the placement;
 - mechanisms will be put in place to ensure the security and consistency of assessment and marking procedures;
 - resit opportunities are appropriate;
 - all staff involved, whether based at Newcastle or the placement provider, are suitably trained.
 - iii. There are appropriate management and communication structures in place with the placement provider and students.
 - iv. Where appropriate, any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements have been taken into consideration. Programme developers must explain any PSRB requirements in Part 1 of the programme approval process.
49. The PAC must reach a judgment as to whether the proposed programme meets these criteria, recording its discussion and its judgment in a report of the meeting. This report should include one of the following recommendations:
- a. The proposed programme meets the criteria for approval of new programmes, and should be approved.
 - b. The proposed programme does not meet the criteria for proposed programmes, and that further work should take place to revise the full proposal for re-submission to the PAC for consideration (at a further meeting, through consultation or by chair's action as agreed by the PAC) for approval.
 - c. The proposed programme does not meet the criteria for proposed programmes and should be rejected, with no opportunity for resubmission.
50. The PAC report can also contain conditions and recommendations relating to the proposed programme:

* Resourcing decisions are taken as part of the Business Case stage. In considering this criterion the PAC is confirming that the detailed programme design submitted to the PAC does not require significant additional, or different resources, at variance with the approved business case. If the PAC reaches the view that significant additional/different resources are required, it will refer the matter to the Faculty Steering Group for consideration.

- a. *Conditions* are requirements that must be met before a programme can receive final approval.
- b. *Recommendations* are issues that the academic unit proposing the programme should consider or keep under review, but do not need to be met before final approval can be given.

No programme can receive final approval until the approving body is satisfied that all Conditions have been met.

51. The authority to approve programmes rests with Senate, which has in turn delegated this authority to ULTSEC. The location of the authority to grant final approval of a proposed programme differs according to the complexity and risk associated with a programme:

Category	Definition	Level of approval
A	Programmes made up of existing modules or new modules totalling no more than 60 credits (for undergraduate programmes) or 40 credits (for postgraduate programmes).	Approved by the Faculty
B	Programmes that involve new modules totalling more than 60 credits (undergraduate) or 40 credits (postgraduate) or that involve an articulation agreement or that are requesting an exemption from University regulations/policy.	Approved by Taught Programmes Sub-Committee
C	Programmes in new subject/curriculum areas or that involve an Educational Partnership other than an articulation arrangement or involve an award not already included on the University's Qualifications and Credit Framework.	Approved by ULTSEC

52. For programmes in :

- a. Category A, the relevant Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team for informing LTDS of the Faculty's decision, and making the full academic approval documentation (including the PAC report) available to LTDS.
- b. Category B, the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team is responsible for submitting the recommendation and supporting documentation to LTDS. LTDS will progress the final approval and inform Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Teams of the outcome.
- c. Category C, the Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Team is responsible for submitting the documentation to ULTSEC, copied to LTDS.

53. Faculty Learning and Teaching Support Teams are responsible for informing programme proposers and relevant professional services of the outcome of all. For all programmes, LTDS is responsible for obtaining programme codes and setting up new programmes on the Student Lifecycle Management system.

Timescales

54. The timeline for the approval of each new programme will be negotiated and agreed between the relevant Faculty and the programme proposer, taking into account both the needs of the academic unit and Faculty/University business planning requirements.

55. The table below sets out the timescales recommended for full-impact marketing support to be made available (although it is accepted that many programmes will be launched on shorter timescales):

Programme type	Date of final approval
Undergraduate (new subject area)	Mid-October two years in advance of the September programme start (i.e. 10 months prior to the opening of the UCAS admissions cycle)
Undergraduate (existing subject area)	1 December 21 months in advance of September programme start (i.e. eight months prior to the opening of the UCAS applications cycle)
Postgraduate (new subject area)	1 May 16 months in advance of the September programme start
Postgraduate (existing subject area)	1 May 16 months in advance of the September programme start (for inclusion in the postgraduate prospectus) 15 August 13 months in advance of September programme start (for online marketing)

56. The University’s use of UCAS for undergraduate admissions means that the following timescales must be followed in relation to the approval of, and recruitment to, undergraduate programmes. All new undergraduate programmes must have received final approval (as set out in paragraph 51 above) no later than 31 May of the calendar year prior to the first admission to the programme (for example an undergraduate programme admitting its first students in September 2017 must have received full approval by 31 May 2016).

57. Any undergraduate programmes advertised on a subject to approval basis that have not received full approval by 31 May will be pulled from recruitment and will not be able to recruit for a further year (for example if a programme has been advertised on a subject to approval basis prior to 31 May 2016 and full approval has not been obtained by 31 May 2016, recruitment for September 2017 will cease immediately and the first permissible admission will be September 2018).

58. Exemptions to the timescales set out in paragraphs 56 and 57 will only be considered in truly exceptional circumstances, where there is a compelling strategic case. Requests for such exemptions must be fully supported by the Faculty in which the proposed programme will be based. Final decisions on whether to approve such an exemption rests solely and entirely with the PVC – Learning and Teaching.

This document is primarily intended for:	Staff in academic units supporting Learning and Teaching Review; Learning and Teaching Review Team members
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