
2 Approval for programme validation and review events

Planning approval for new, and review of existing, in-house, campus and collaborative programmes is the overall responsibility of Portfolio Development Committee (PDC). PDC acts on behalf of the University Academic Board.

2.1 Approval process

2.2.1 Purpose

Planning approval allows both the Faculty and the University to ensure that any proposed new provision or scheduled review to the current portfolio of academic provision, for both in-house and collaborative provision, makes business sense. This is in terms of student demand, income generated and the resources required to run the programme, and its 'fit' within the University Strategy and its themes, and alignment with the University regulations, before proceeding to Validation or Review. A programme cannot proceed to Validation or Review until all Portfolio Development Committee (PDC) or Faculty Academic Planning and Quality Committee (APQC) conditions have been met.

2.2.2 Responsibilities

Faculty

The Faculty where the programme(s) is located, is responsible for approving all new or reviewed programmes, including collaborative programmes with external partners. In the case of a programme involving more than one Faculty, the lead Faculty is responsible for holding the event, working with the collaborating Faculty. The Academic Quality Service (AQS) will co-ordinate this process at Faculty level. Proposals for In-house and collaborative partner reviews must be submitted as per the normal six yearly cycle and with a one-year lead time.

Director of Programmes (DoP)

The DoP (or nominee) must ensure that initial discussion have taken place with Learning Resources and other relevant stakeholders with regard to the specific requirements of the programme. The DoP (or nominee) also confirms that all affected students have been consulted and agree to the proposed changes in the case of Review, as per APS28 (Making changes to published information) <https://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/policies>. Where students do not agree, appropriate arrangements must have been made for students to continue with their existing programme.

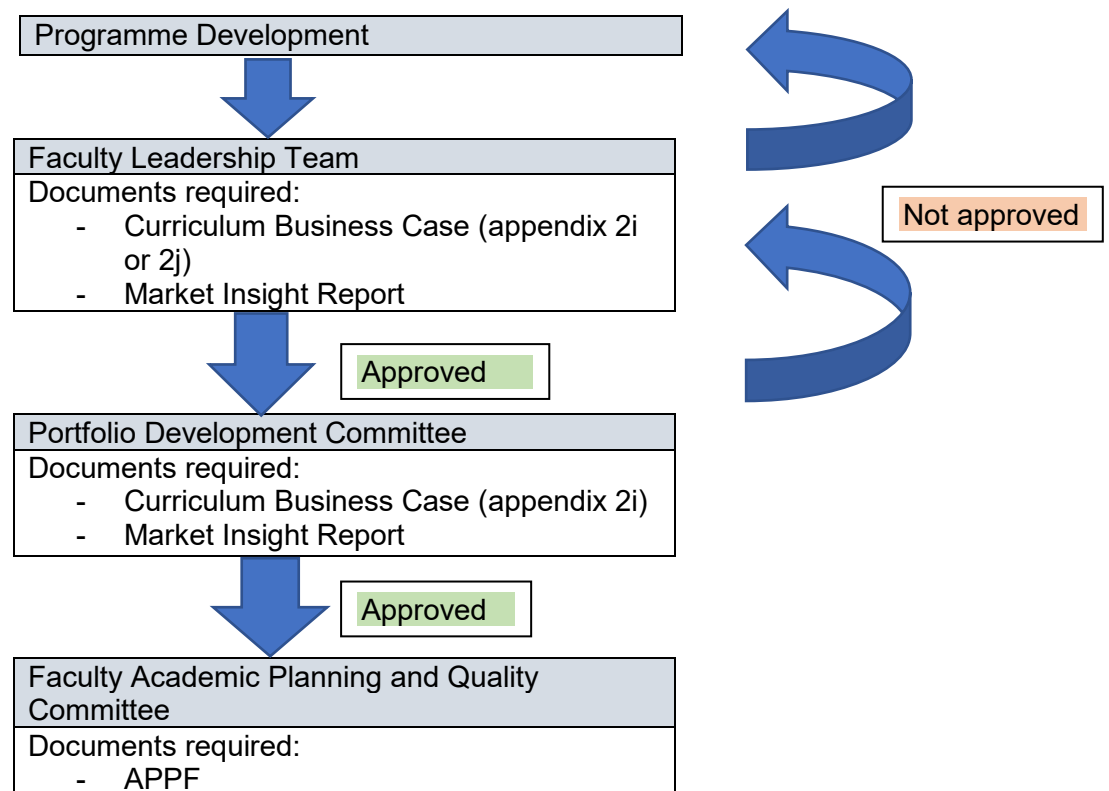
Approval by PDC does not constitute an approval to release funds from any central University budget, nor does it constitute approval for any additional funds. The ability to meet/secure the various resource demands such as teaching accommodation, provision for learning resources, staff and the like rests with the Faculty making the proposal and included within the Curriculum Business Case. Cases for investment should be presented to the Infrastructure Investment Appraisal Board IIAB before coming to PDC. In the case of collaborative provision, the actual financial arrangements and terms and conditions governing the collaboration between the University and Collaborative Partner(s) are agreed in the Partnership Agreement and subsequent Programme Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC).

2.2.3 Process

To initiate either a new Validation or a Review of an existing programme(s), a Curriculum Business Case (CBC) (appendix 2i or appendix 2j for collaborative programmes) should be

completed and submitted to Faculty Leadership Team (FLT) for initial approval, along with a Market Insight Report. The Department of Strategy and Insight should be contacted to provide the Market Insight Report (for in-house programmes including UK-based joint programmes). Confirmation from Finance also needs to be obtained as part of the Curriculum Business Case (for in-house programmes). Once both the Curriculum Business Case and Market Insight Report have been approved by FLT, these should be submitted to PDC for approval. For collaborative programmes, the Market Insight Report should be provided by the collaborative partner and Finance Information should be provided by Academic Partnerships.

The diagram below shows the approval process:



a. The Faculty must ensure that a strong case has been made for the proposal via the Curriculum Business Case using evidence from the Market Insight Report. Both FLT and PDC will assess the proposal on:

- Target audience and market demand
- Competitor analysis
- Financial Analysis
- Risks
- Curriculum performance (for reviews)

b. The proposing Team submits the Curriculum Business Case and Market Insight Report to FLT for consideration, and via the ULT for collaborative programmes. ULTs should check in with FLT at an early stage to explore any cross-faculty implications of proposals. If so, DDs will liaise with their respective DD. If approved, the FLT nominee will send the Curriculum Business Case and Market Insight Report to the PDC Officer for submission to PDC.

c. The PDC considers the proposal. The following outcomes are possible:

- approved
- approved with conditions
- not approved

Once fully approved, the PDC Officer will communicate the outcomes to Faculties and relevant Professional Services via the Communications Process.

d. Completion of the Academic Provision Proposal Form (APPF) (Appendix 2a) by the Programme Leader/Link Tutor and submission to the Faculty APQC Officer.

e. The APQC considers the proposal. The following outcomes are possible:

- approved
- approved with conditions
- not approved

Once fully approved at APQC, the programme may move towards Validation or Review as appropriate.

If a Validation or Review event is not held within two academic years of PDC approval, PDC /APQC re-approval must be sought.

Within a week of unconditional/full approval, the Marketing department (in-house programmes only) will send the Marketing Course Template (Appendix 2b) to the Programme Leader for completion. Following satisfactory completion, the programme(s) will go live on the website within a week as 'Subject to Validation/Review'.

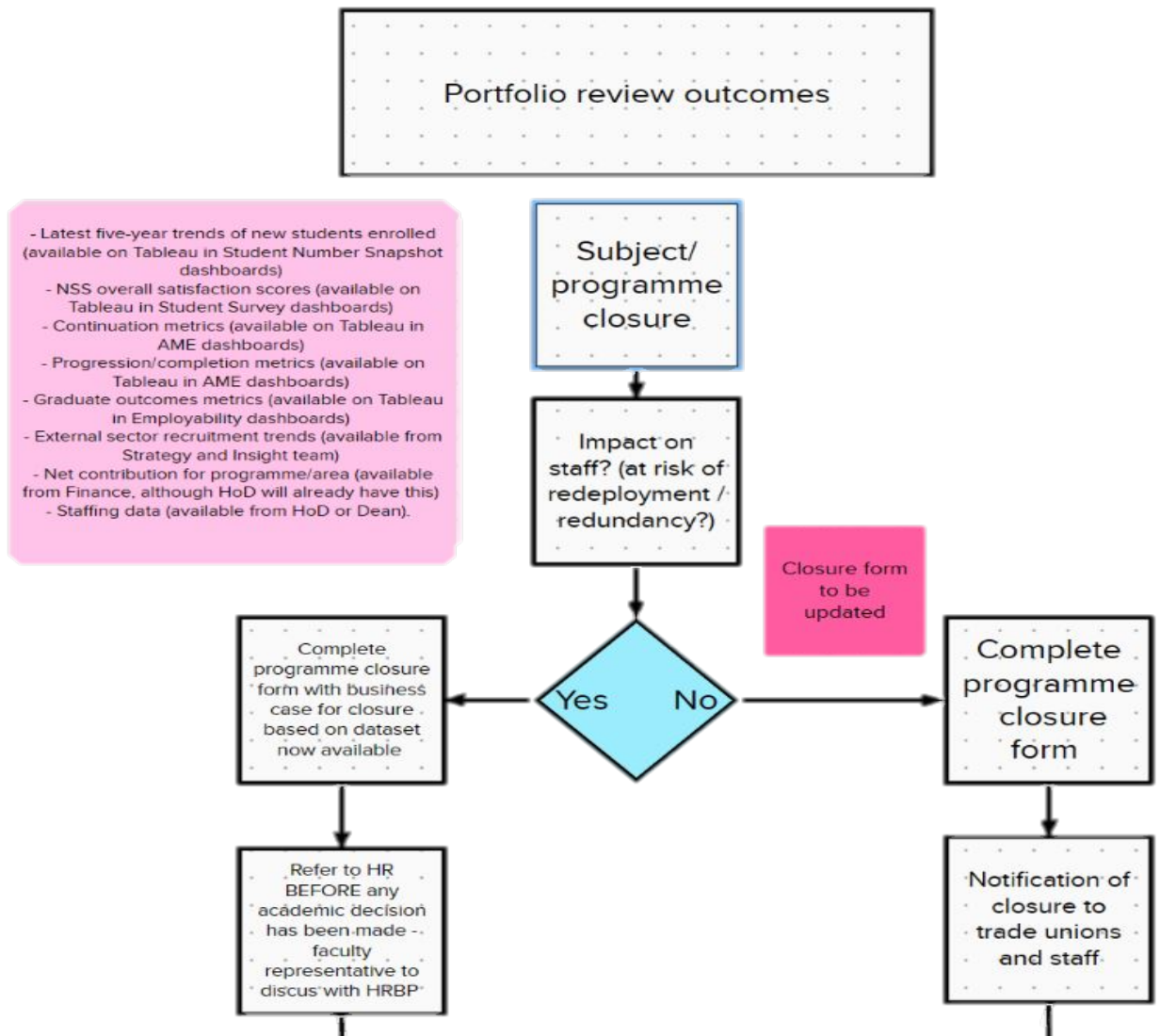
2.2.4 Post APQC and the Memorandum of Cooperation

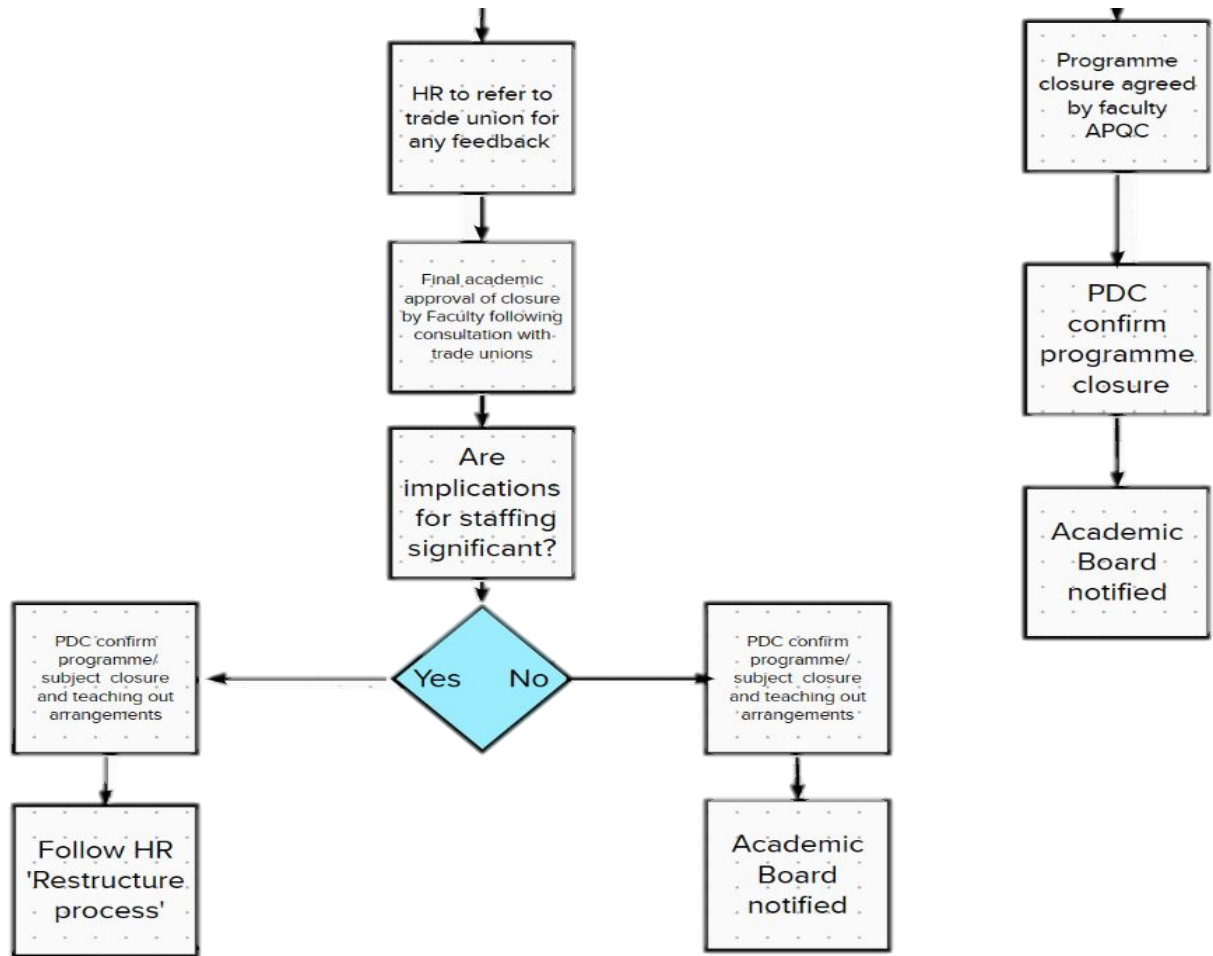
A programme cannot start delivery until the validation or review process as outlined in Section 3 has been followed. For collaborative programmes this includes signing of the Programme MoC by the appropriate member of the University Executive or nominee and the collaborative Partner. This must be signed no later than one calendar month before the start of the programme.

2.3 Other changes to academic provision for FLT and PDC approval

2.3.1 Closure of an in-house / collaborative Subject/Programme

To close a programme/subject, the Faculty should follow the procedure below:





Following approval, the PDC Officer communicates the outcome of PDC via the AQS Communications Process and to the Secretary of Academic Board, Faculty Quality Enhancement Managers / Officers in AQS. The outcome clearly states the decision reached including any conditions of approval.

2.3.2 Termination of a Partnership

- a. A proposal to terminate a partnership is discussed and agreed by the Faculty, University Executive and the partner. A Partner Exit Plan is completed by Academic Partnerships.
- b. Academic Partnerships produces a termination letter, to be signed by the University Executive.
- c. The termination letter and Partner Exit Plan is submitted by Academic Partnerships to PDC for noting and to Collaborations Sub-Committee (CSC) for oversight of the partnership. A copy is also provided to the relevant Quality Enhancement Manager / Officer for noting at the relevant APQC.

2.3.3 Programme Suspension

Requests to suspend a programme are submitted to FLT for consideration. Any associated modules to be suspended, should be noted on the programme suspension form. Final approval is granted by the APQC.

PDC retains oversight of closure, suspension and modification of programmes.

2.4 Other changes to academic provision for approval

2.4.1 Extension of Validation Period

Requests to extend the Validation Period are submitted to APQC (Appendix 2c) for consideration and must include a full rationale if approval is to be received, for example as a result of changes to PSRB requirements. Final approval is granted by the Director of Academic Quality.

2.4.2 Collaborative Partner campuses and sites

Any proposal to work in collaboration with an institution for the first time needs to follow the procedure outlined in Section 5.2, Institutional Approval.

After Institutional Approval has been granted, the partner institution may wish to use a site or campus as part of a programme proposal, which was not considered as part of the original Institutional Approval. The proposal should be made to APQC using Appendix 2a.

For existing partners who wish to run existing programmes at a new site(s), they should complete Appendix 2f for approval by APQC and CSC, and before the site visit can take place. The CSC Officer to communicate outcomes to relevant parties.

For existing partners who wish to run existing programmes at an already approved site(s), they should complete Appendix 2g for approval by APQC and CSC, and before the site visit can take place. The CSC Officer to communicate outcomes to relevant parties.

For existing partners that wish to close an entire study site, Appendix 2h should be completed for approval by APQC and CSC. The CSC Officer to communicate outcomes to relevant parties.

2.4.3 Provision by University Services

Occasionally University Services bring forward programmes for validation. Normally the planning process is co-ordinated via a lead Faculty.

2.4.4 Joint or Dual Awards, or Double Degrees

See Guidance 5(viii) – Programme Planning Leading to Joint or Dual Awards, or Double Degrees.

Dual awards

Dual awards should be approved for all validation events with new partners who are proposing dual award programmes.

Validation event documentation to include: (a) Extract of PDC minutes, which confirms approval of dual awarding powers, (b) APPF and (c) letter confirming dual awarding powers.

Validation event documentation to provide link to Guidance 5(viii) – Programme Planning Leading to Joint or Dual Awards, or Double Degrees.