QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

2016 V6.3

Section 7: Module Quality Enhancement and Assurance

Contents

7.   MODULE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND ASSURANCE[1]

This section constitutes the University procedures relating to the Quality Enhancement and Assurance of modules, including their initial approval and continued development. The process of module development and approval adheres to the principles of the Quality Code (B8).

Regardless of the mode of delivery, **GCU is a Programme centred institution. All modules, regardless of whether they are accessed by a single or a number of academic units belong to a host programme.** To ensure consistency, transparency and fairness, all module assessment results are considered at the host Assessment Board and the ratified results reported to the associated academic unit Assessment Boards. In a similar way any proposed module changes should be deliberated and discussed with the other academic units at the host PB and any module changes mediated via the host PB and approved by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent. **All major and minor module changes should be processed by 30th June of each academic year for delivery in the following Academic Year.**

NB. From 2016 all new and major changes must be, approved by the Departmental Learning and Teaching committee or equivalent and signed by the **Departmental Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead** or the ADLTQ before forwarding to the Academic Quality Team.

7.1   Responsibilities for Module Quality Enhancement and Assurance

In accordance with the principle that responsibility for quality enhancement and assurance should rest as closely as possible with those at the point of delivery, each module is strategically the overall responsibility of the **host Programme Board**, but the **operational development** is the responsibility of the Module Leader. With respect to the coherence of the academic content with programme learning outcomes, the Module Leader reports, in the first instance, to the **Programme Leader** and thereafter to the Host Programme and Assessment Board. The host Programme and Assessment Board includes representation from all programmes accessing the module. **Decisions about module changes and the reporting and confirmation of module marks are the responsibility of the host Programme and Assessment Board.**

Any disputes regarding the primary location of modules (i.e. ownership and delineation of the host Programme Board) should be referred to the Department of Academic Quality and Development via the School's Business Partner (Academic Quality) in the first instance.

7.2   Responsibilities of Module Leaders

All the modules in a Programme are owned by the host **Programme Board**. They are the **strategic responsibility of the Programme Leader, in conjunction with the relevant AHoD/HoD including resourcing issues.** Operational responsibility for an individual module lies with the Module Leader (identified within the module descriptor). **Module Leaders, in collaboration with the Programme Leader** and guided by the **Department LTQ Lead** are responsible for the planning, delivery, monitoring,

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[1] http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/quality-code-B8.pdf

standards, and academic development of their modules, and for ensuring that the module descriptor is accurate and up-to-date. **A full description of the role and responsibilities of Module Leaders is provided in Annex 1 of this Handbook.**

7.3 Responsibilities of Schools

Schools shall, through Dean and ADLTQ:

- encourage the development and adoption of high-quality teaching, learning, and assessment strategies for modules within their remit
- ensure (via the PL) that each module within their remit has a suitably qualified Module Leader and that each is allocated to an appropriate External Examiner
- oversee the implementation of the University process for module evaluation.
- consider any problems raised by Module Leaders at the host Programme Board and disseminate instances of good practice within the Department and to the School
- inform all host Programme Boards currently accessing the module(s) of changes to the module descriptor.

7.4 Development and Approval of New Modules and Changes to Modules

The following sections outline the high-level processes for the development and approval of new modules and for major and minor changes to modules. The relevant ISIS (ADS and Curriculum) User Manuals[2] should be read in conjunction with this section, i.e. the system processes for adding/changing a module within ISIS (ADS and Curriculum).

7.4.1 Via Programme Approval/Review Process

1. New Modules

- the School creates the new module(s) in the Maintenance section of ISIS ADS. **N.B. The module(s) must not be submitted to Workflow prior to the approval/review event, but held in Maintenance.**
- the module(s) are approved as part of the approval/review process
- the School completes all required (and, where appropriate, recommended) changes to the module(s) and submits the module(s) to Workflow ensuring that the (Re-)Approval Event box is checked within the User Defined Information section. The School will confirm that this process has been completed in the Programme Development Team (PDT)/Programme Board (PB) response to Programme Approval/Review Panel conclusions.
- the Department of Academic Quality and Development approves and exports the module(s) after PDT/PB response signed off by the Chair of the Programme Approval/Review Panel
- LTSC approves the outcome of the event and the PDT/PB's response

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[2] http://www.gcu.ac.uk/isis/training/usermanuals.html

2. Current Modules: Major Changes
Refer to Appendix 7(a) for definitions

- the School amends the module(s) as required in the Maintenance section of ISIS ADS. **N.B. Major changes to a module will require the allocation of a new module code. The module(s) must not be submitted to Workflow prior to the approval/review event, but held in Maintenance.**
- the module(s) are approved as part of the approval/review process
- the School completes all required (and, where appropriate recommended) changes to the module(s) and submits the module(s) to Workflow ensuring that the (Re-)Approval Event box is checked within the User Defined Information section. The School will confirm that this process has been completed in the PDB/PT response to Programme Approval/Review Panel conclusions.
- the Department of Academic Quality and Development approves and exports the module(s) after PDB/PT response signed off by the Chair of the Programme Approval/Review Panel
- LTSC approves the outcome of the event and the PDB/PT's response

3. Current Modules: Minor Changes

- the School amends the module(s) as required in the Maintenance section of ISIS ADS and submits the module to Workflow
- the Department of Academic Quality and Development approves/exports the module(s) onto the Curriculum section of ISIS ADS. **N.B. These modules should be included in programme approval/review submission documentation as 'Currently Running'.**

The School must indicate within the programme approval/review submission documentation which modules are being presented to the Panel for approval (i.e. those which are completely new and those which have undergone substantial or major changes) and those which are 'Currently Running'. A list of the modules approved by the Programme Approval/Review Panel will be produced by the Panel Secretary and included in the programme approval/review report.

7.4.2 Independent of Programme Approval/Review Process

1. New Modules

- the School creates the new module(s) in the Maintenance section of ISIS ADS
- the module(s) are scrutinised by an external expert
- the School Quality process confirms approval of the *work in progress* module descriptor(s)
- the School submits the new module(s) to Workflow
- the School submits the signed Module Approval Proforma (Appendix 7(b)) to the Department of Academic Quality and Development
- the Department of Academic Quality and Development approves and exports the module(s).

From session 16/17 Schools are required to indicate which programme board has ownership of the new module.

2. **Current Modules: Major Changes**

   Refer to Appendix 7(a) for definitions

   - the School amends the module(s) as required in the Maintenance section of ISIS ADS. **N.B. Major changes to a module will require the allocation of a new module code**
   - the module(s) are scrutinised by an external expert, normally the External Examiner
   - the School Quality process confirms approval of the work in progress module descriptor(s)
   - the School submits the new module(s) to Workflow
   - the School submits the signed Module Approval Proforma (Appendix 7(b) to the Department of Academic Quality and Development
   - the Department of Academic Quality and Development approves and exports the module(s).

From session 16/17 the Programme Board is required to provide evidence of consultation with other programmes accessing the module and that the proposed changes do not impact on programme learning outcomes (see section 6.8) Any disagreement that cannot be resolved by the School should be referred to the Department of Academic Quality and Development.

3. **Current Modules: Minor Changes**

   - the School amends the module(s) as required in the Maintenance section of ISIS ADS and submits the module to Workflow
   - the Department of Academic Quality and Development approves/exports the modules onto the Curriculum section of ISIS

7.5 Monitoring and Enhancement of Existing Modules

It is recognised that the monitoring of modules is an inherent part of programme review and module delivery. All modules, however, must be formally monitored and reviewed via the **host Programme Board** every year. **A template and guidance notes for module monitoring process is shown in Appendix 7(d).** The Module Leader is responsible for monitoring the module In accordance with University policy and procedures. **The Module Leader reports the outcomes to the Programme Leader via the host Programme Board**

The School must ensure that monitoring has taken place and that an enhancement plan is in place. The enhancement plan should clearly state the locus of responsibility for the actions contained within the plan. Progress will be monitored by the by School Board following approval by the Head of the Department/AHOD/LTQ Lead within the Department in which the module is located, and reported on through the Annual Programme Monitoring process.

7.6   Withdrawal of Existing Modules

Schools are responsible for making decisions to withdraw existing modules. Such decisions must be documented so as to confirm that all interested parties, particularly Programme Boards, have been consulted, and that any concerns have been dealt with sensitively. Assurances must have been received that the achievement of the learning outcomes of affected programmes is not threatened by the proposed changes. Where issues have arisen that the Schools have been unable to resolve this should be referred to the Department of Academic Quality and Development.

7.7   Module Handbooks

All modules must have an associated Module Handbook for circulation to students. The content of a Module Handbook is shown in Appendix 7(c). Guidance on the development of new modules in terms of SfL requirements will be provided by the Department of Academic Development Team and the School's (LTQ).

CHANGES TO MODULES: MAJOR AND MINOR

1. As a guideline, changes of the following nature would be regarded as *major* and will require the allocation of a new module code:

   - major changes to the learning outcomes
   - major changes to the syllabus
   - **all** changes to the mode of assessment
   - **all** changes to the weighting of assessment
   - major changes to the learning and teaching strategy
   - a change to the module title
   - a change to the credit level
   - a change to the credit value.
   - changes to activity hours
   - changes to pre/co requisites that impact on programme learning outcomes.

2. Proposed major changes to modules *must* be discussed **via the host Programme Board** with all programmes currently accessing the module. Where interested parties have expressed serious concerns over the proposed changes, particularly where there is a potential impact on the achievement of programme learning outcomes, a process of negotiation may be necessary. If the parties themselves cannot resolve the issues, they should be referred to the Department of Academic Quality and Development. Major changes to modules must be approved by the mechanisms outlined in Section 7.4.1 or 7.4.2 above. The School must give all programmes currently accessing the module formal notice of the changes at this stage. All elements of the approval process (including ADS Workflow) for changes and updates to modules to be delivered in the next academic session must be **completed by 30th June of the preceding academic session.**

   NB. From 2016 all new and major changes can be signed by the **Departmental Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead/AHoD** nominated by the ADLTQ (following approval by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent.

   The Template for Module Approval/Change is provided in Appendix 7(b).

3. Any proposed changes to modules not falling into the categories specified in 1 above will normally be regarded as *minor.*

4. Modules will have the following status on the catalogue:

   - Work in progress
   - Current
   - Archived (i.e. withdrawn)

MODULE APPROVAL/CHANGE PROFORMA

NEW MODULE			
Module Title/Programme ownership		Module Code	
External Examiner or Subject Specialist Approval by		Date of Approval	
School Approval by		Date of Approval	
MAJOR CHANGE(S) TO AN EXISTING MODULE			
Module Title		Module Code	
External Examiner or Subject Specialist Approval by		Date of Approval	
Programme Board/*School Approval by		Date of Approval	
NEW Module Title	(if applicable)	**NEW** Module Code	(always required for major changes)
Details of change(s) to module			
Evidence of consultation			

I confirm that the above new/major change(s) to existing module has been processed in accordance with the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook.

Signed _____   Date _____

NB. All new and major changes must be signed by the **Departmental Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead/ADLTQ**

*extract from Programme Board minutes

PREPARATION AND CIRCULATION OF MODULE HANDBOOKS

Every student registered on a module should receive a copy of the relevant Module Handbook. It is the responsibility of Module Leaders to prepare, maintain, and update the Module Handbook.

Module Handbooks *must be provided to students at the start of each trimester*[3] as soon as the students commence their studies. It is the responsibility of the Module Leader for each module to *ensure* that each student has been provided with a Module Handbook.

Each Module Handbook will contain the current module descriptor and the following information for students:

- module timetable *(i.e. scheduling of classes)*
- the assessment methods *(including timing, type of assessment, description, duration, weighting, and (where applicable) components of the assessment)*
- marking criteria specific to the module
- details of how to access past exam papers
- details of how to access GCU Learn
- details of student performance feedback
- name and position of all approved External Examiners.

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[3] The module handbook can be in hard and/or electronic copy (on GCU Learn)

Module Monitoring Report

Notes on Module Monitoring (please read the following notes before completing the template on the next page)

The Module Leader works with the Programme Leader and the Department Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead to review or develop a module that is congruent with the overall programme aims and philosophy, and adopts and reflects the programme approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

Module monitoring is completed for every Trimester that the module runs and is tabled at the appropriate Programme Board. Modules may be accessed by a number of programmes but the Module is owned by the **Host Programme Board**[4]. To ensure consistency and transparency of practice; all decisions regarding module changes and assessment of marks are made by the **host Programme and Assessment Boards** and the decisions are then fed back to the accessing Programmes. **In order to gain feedback that reflects all programmes accessing the module, it is expected that there will be cross programme representation at host Programme and Assessment Boards.**

When monitoring individual modules it is important to consider the ongoing fit of the module with the host programme and therefore consideration should be given to this as part of the overall programme approaches to and development of learning, teaching and evaluation strategies (section 4 below). The report should underpin the process of **Annual Module Review** (section 7 below), feeding into overall decisions about the forward direction of the Programme and informing the APA.

All elements of the approval process (including ADS Workflow) for **changes and updates** to modules to be delivered in the **next academic session** must be **completed by 30th June of previous academic session.**

NB. From 2016 all new and major changes can, following approval by the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent, be signed by the **Departmental Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead/AHoD** nominated by the ADLTQ prior to submission to the Department of Academic Quality & Development for approval in accordance with the process outlined in section 6.8.

The Template for Module Approval/Change is provided in Appendix 7(b).

NB. For an overview of all the monitoring roles and responsibilities please see Programme Monitoring Manual (Appendix 5(b), section 15).

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[4] **The host Programme Board is the owner of all the modules that make up the programme regardless of the number of programmes that may access an individual module.**

Module Monitoring Report

School: **Department:**   **Programme:**

Module Title: **Module Code:**   **Academic Session:**

Trimester: **Module SCQF Level:**   **Module Credit:**

Module Leader: **Students Registered:**   **Programme Board Date:**

Pass Rate and Progression (1st Diet):   **Pass Rate and Progression (2nd Diet):**

Overall Module % Progression:

Section 1. Student Performance

- Comment on the pass rate at **1st diet** and any actions that may be required to enhance the 1st Diet result going forward, include consideration of non-submissions and comment generally on any trends identified
- Comment on the overall performance of any other programmes accessing this module

Commentary:

Section 2. Student Feedback

- Comment on the key challenges and good practice arising from an analysis of Module Questionnaires, SSCG's, and any implications (if relevant) arising from the of NSS/ISB results for the module

Commentary:

Section 3. External Examiner Feedback

- Comment on the feedback from the External Examiner Reports, in particular detail any challenges and areas of good practice identified

Commentary:

Confirmation of response to any issues raised in the External Examiner Report
Yes/No

 If no please detail:

Section 4. Approaches to Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- Comment, (based on module pass rates and Student and Module Team feedback) on the overall approaches to learning, teaching and assessment utilised in the module and consider the **ongoing overall fit with the host Programm**e. This can include actions for consideration including development of digital delivery (online and blended learning) and evaluation of the

effectiveness of the modes of delivery and assessment.
Commentary:
Section 5. What is working well? • Based on the narrative above provide a concise overview of areas of success that will inform the **Annual Module Review** **Commentary:**
Section 6. What needs to be changed? **Commentary:**
• Based on the narrative above provide a concise overview of areas of challenge that need to be addressed as part of the **Annual Module Review** **Commentary:**
Section 7. Module Enhancement Plan (Annual Programme Analysis) • Based on **sections 5 and 6,** comment on any proposed actions and activities to be undertaken that will inform the **APA.** **Commentary:**

NB. All elements of the approval process (including ADS Workflow) for changes and updates to modules to be delivered in the **next academic session** must be **completed by 30th June of each academic session.**

NB. From 2016 all new and major changes can be signed by the **Departmental Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead/AHoD** nominated by the ADLTQ

*The Template for Module Approval/Change is provided in **QEAH Appendix 7(b).**