Academic Policy

A12 Academic Review Procedure

1.   Purpose and Scope

This policy is intended to inform and assist SAE staff to ensure effective implementation of Middlesex University (MDX) regulations after the granting of Enhanced Validated Status to SAE Institute in 2015, and it replicates those MDX regulations and procedures.

An Academic Review may be held as part of the usual six yearly cycle for review; or it may be specially convened:

- as a result of major restructuring to the programme structure/content – in these cases the Review focuses on the reasons that caused the review to take place and any requirements of external bodies;

- as a result of serious problems in relation to a programme (e.g. an adverse External Examiner report or other feedback). The issues need to be fully discussed in advance at the appropriate level of seniority and a proposed solution brought to the review;

- in response to a requirement laid down by the original validation – this review should focus on the particular issues identified (e.g. those associated with an experimental mode of delivery), or the review is intended to consider:

  o changes to external reference points such as subject benchmark statements;

  o changes in student demand, employer expectations and employment opportunities;

  o the continuing validity and relevance of aims and outcomes in relation to research in the area, professional practice, etc.

  o the effect of incremental change to the programme(s) during their period of validation;

  o the extent to which the curriculum continues to support the achievement of outcomes and assessment continues to demonstrate achievement of outcomes;

  o the extent to which the use of e-learning is appropriately embedded within the curriculum to support student achievement of the learning outcomes;

  o the extent to which resources are appropriate to enable students to achieve learning outcomes;

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- o the effectiveness of mechanisms for quality assurance that seek to optimise the student learning experience (including student recruitment and admissions; student feedback; student issues; academic and pastoral support; peer observation; staff development plans);

- o the effectiveness of mechanisms to assure standards;

- arrangements for APL/APEL in line with the procedure set out in the SAE/MU accreditation document;

- administrative communications between the University and the institution;

- University support of the staff of the institution including staff development and exchanges;

- the Link Tutor liaison;

- statistics on: application rates; offers and acceptances; cohort analysis; non-completion and deferment; pass and failure rates (by module); progression and final awards; first destination statistics;

- comparative performance of students across Degree Centres;

- students' understanding of the link;

- students' views on the accuracy of promotional material;

- students' academic and social experience;

- student feedback and the programme's response to it;

- the language of programme delivery and assessment (if applicable);

- External Examiner moderation of the programme;

- the handling of, and follow-up to, any complaints or problems encountered on programme delivery;

- the question of value-added – what do students gain from a University collaborative programme?

Review processes must be carried out with a 1 year lead time.

2. Procedure

Before developing and putting new programmes forward for validation the following should be carefully considered and scrutinised:

- Assessment of industry / market demand,
- Scope and time dependencies,
- Alignment and synergies with existing portfolio of programmes,
- Resource and facilities needs,

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- Staffing requirements.

Proposals for new programmes must be put though the MDX Academic Provisions Approval Committee (APAC) 22 months in advance of the programme launch date, in accordance with MDX regulations.

Validation and review events will be Chaired by the University and the panel will be set up according to University processes. The event will be managed and administered by SAE, or with substantial administrative input from the SAE.

An Officer is identified by the Institute or the University to coordinate and manage the review process, including documentation, printing, organising the event, the panel, officering and reporting. The Officer (or nominee) acts as officer for the event and is responsible for follow-up to it.

The procedure for review is the same as that for validation, but with a change in focus. If the review is for a distance education programme the relevant requirements as set out in the validation documentation should also be followed.

2.1. People Involved in a Review

Panel membership of review events is as required for validation including an Officer, Chair, University representatives, one or two External Assessors and with the addition of a student representative.

Arrangements for review events are as required for validation with the addition of:

- a meeting with students who should represent a cross-section of the current cohorts;
- where possible, meetings with graduates of the programme;
- a meeting with student support staff.

Institutions make use of external participation at key stages for the review of programmes, as independence and objectivity are essential to provide confidence that the standards and quality of the programmes are appropriate.

In addition the panel will meet with:

a) Senior Staff at the Institute,
b) Programme Teams, including Programme Leaders and representatives from Library and Student Services,
c) Student groups representing a cross-section of current cohorts and campues.

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2.2. Documentation

A review should include all the documentation detailed in the validation procedure document and the following additional documentation:

- the overview paper should contain: details of changes proposed to the programme concerned (e.g. new modules, change of pathways) and these should be described fully. It should include an appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals based on quantitative and qualitative evidence, of the learning opportunities available to students and of any changes in resources required;

- the programme handbook should include the full proformas for all modules;

- examples of teaching materials and module handbooks to illustrate how teaching, learning and assessment strategies, plans and policies are implemented;

- the Annual Monitoring Reports for the last two years including all appendices years including all appendices covering student feedback, external examiner reports and responses, KPI data sheets, Board of Study minutes, Boards of Study action/outcome tables, and QAA reports to include information from all campuses;

- the most recent validation or review report and compliance report;

- views of former students (where possible).

2.3. Circulation of Documentation

The SAE LTCC Chair, the SAE Registry Officer and the MDX representative attending the event must be sent a full set of review papers and a copy of the confirmed report of the validation.

The MDX Link Tutor and the University Assistant Academic Registrar (Collaborative Programmes) must be sent a copy of the confirmed report of the validation.

Monitoring and review processes will be clearly communicated to those who are involved in them.

In the event of a decision to discontinue a programme, measures will be taken to notify and protect the interests of students registered for, or accepted for admission to, the programme.

3. Associated Documents

- Section-3-Programme-validation-review-and-modifications-NEW

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http://www.mdx.ac.uk/__data/assets/word_doc/0017/206414/Section-3-Programme-validation-review-and-modifications-NEW.doc

- guidance-3xx-Guidance-for-the-completion-of-an-Overview-Paper
http://www.mdx.ac.uk/__data/assets/word_doc/0034/187864/guidance-3xx-Guidance-for-the-completion-of-an-Overview-Paper.doc

- guidance-3xxix-Documentation-required-for-a-validation-or-review
http://www.mdx.ac.uk/__data/assets/word_doc/0039/187869/guidance-3xxix-Documentation-required-for-a-validation-or-review.doc

4.   Document Version Approval

Last Review: March 2016

Policy Review Date: 1 December 2017

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