Quality Handbook

University of Sunderland

Process for Modifications to Programmes and Modules

Minor Modifications from Academic Year 2017/2018

Minor Modifications to programmes can be approved by ADC (see Section A.1) or QMSC (See section A.2) minor modifications to modules are approved by QMSC (See Section B). All Minor modifications should be approved at Faculty level in the first instance through Module Studies Boards or Programme Studies Boards. It is expected that MSBs/PSBs will address issues such as additional resources (staffing, equipment, facilities) and have the necessary approvals in place from within the Faculty before modifications are forwarded to either ADC or QMSC. If the change is associated with modules or the *parent* programme leading from the Integrated Foundation Year then the Process for Modifications to Integrated Foundation Year (IFY) document should be followed.

QMSC approval will be facilitated via a pool of academic staff who will meet to consider minor modifications. Representatives from all Faculties will be nominated by Faculty Senior Managers.

The Quality Support team will where necessary arrange monthly meetings of a QMSC 'Scrutiny Pool' to consider minor modifications. Requests will generally be approved if they meet one or more (*NB not mutually exclusive*) of the following:

➢ response to periodic review / accreditation visit / other external changes (benchmarks, professional / industry standards);
➢ enhance research-related learning / use of VLE / e-learning / employability;
➢ improve content, type or weighting of assessment, balance of contact hours;

   but will be referred to the Academic Dean or nominee if they include:
➢ resource implications – 'kit', AT hours, other;
➢ external examiner not supportive;

Once complete the final documentation is available to internal and external stakeholders, e.g. via SITS and the university website. Changes need to be undertaken in a timely manner and to ensure they happen for the following academic year the following deadlines should be met:

Module modifications 28th February;
Creation of new modules 28th February;
Programme modifications 28th February.

If module/programme leaders are not able to adhere to the deadlines a rationale should be submitted to Quality Support alongside the minor modification paperwork.

A.   PROGRAMMES

1. Minor Modifications Requiring ADC Approval

The following forms of modification must be approved by University Academic Development Committee (ADC):

- Programme title change;
- Where a generic programme is to be split into several specialist programmes, and no change in the overall set of programme learning outcomes i.e. existing outcomes are divided between the resulting programmes without being changed;
- Where several programmes are to be brought together into one generic programme which subsumes the original discrete programmes and no change in the set of programme learning outcomes.

Process:

ADC to receive form Minor Modification Form via Quality Support, including:

- Detail of the change;
- Rationale for the change;
- Date from which it will be effective and which cohorts will be affected;
- Evidence of consultation with external examiner;
- Evidence of consultation with students;
- Information for Unistats
- Arrangements for students on the existing programme, either:
  - transfer to the new programme title;
  - remain on the old programme title until completion of the programme (and therefore, clarify teach-out arrangements);
  - this will result in the termination of the old programme title.
- Minute of PSB recommending approval of the change

ADC will be responsible for **approving the change.**

Approval will be reported to:

Programme Studies Board (PSB) Faculty Academic Committee* (FAC) and Quality Management Sub-Committee* (QMSC).

*Via termly reports.

2. Minor Modifications requiring Quality Management Sub-committee Scrutiny Pool Approval

The following types of modification need University Quality Management Sub-Committee Scrutiny Pool approval and will then be reported to University Quality Management Sub-Committee:

- Minor changes - defined as any changes which do not affect the programme aims or learning outcomes. It allows in particular, for content to be kept up to date in the light of current scholarship e.g.:

➢ New Route
➢ Change/Addition of Mode of Delivery e.g. Part-time, Distance Learning, Independent Study
➢ Change of Faculty Ownership

Process:

QMSC Scrutiny Pool to receive Form for Minor Modifications which includes the following information:

- Detail of the change;
- Rationale for the change;
- Minor Modifications Database Cumulative Change Report, if relevant;
- Information for Unistats, if relevant
- Date from which it will be effective and which cohorts will be affected;
- Evidence of consultation with external examiner;
- Evidence of consultation with students must be provided where changes will affect existing cohorts.
- Minute of PSB recommending approval of the change.

Approval will be reported to:
Programme Studies Board (PSB) Faculty Academic Committee* (FAC) and Quality Management Sub-Committee* (QMSC)

*Via termly reports.

3. Modifications Requiring University Event / Academic Board Approval

The following are not devolved programme modifications:

- Changes to programme learning outcomes, including changes to award type, such as changing from BSc to BA:
  o Must be approved by University panel;
- Changes to academic programme specific regulations:
  o Provide link to Form Programme Regulations Template must be completed and forwarded to Academic Registry : Quality Support;
  o Must be approved by Academic Board.
- Changes to subject specific assessment criteria:
  o Must be approved by QMSC.

4. Updating systems following approved minor modifications

Quality Support will be responsible for:

- updating SITS where the change impacts on a module;
- the Minor modifications database;
- forwarding the SITS form to Planning-MI, if appropriate;
- inform Planning-MI if any changes are required for Unistats;
- circulating the programme specification to Marketing Client Manager for publication on the web.

Planning MI will be responsible for updating SITs when the change impacts on the programme structure and/or programme title.

The programme leader is responsible for

- updating the programme specification
- updating module guides

5. **Short courses**

For all new short courses and short course modifications, please refer to: Short Course Procedure

B   MODULES

QMSC Scrutiny pool has the authority to approve

     a) New modules in an existing programme;
     b) Modifications to existing modules (in an existing programme);

1. Process

a) Quality Support to receive form for Minor Modifications Form which includes:
- Detail of the change;
- Rationale for the change;
- Date from which it will be effective and which cohorts will be affected;
- Evidence of consultation with students must be provided where changes will affect existing cohorts;
- Evidence of consultation with external examiner;
- Quality Support must inform other faculties and/or partners (where applicable) of changes;
- Minutes of Module Studies Board, or Programme Studies Board recommending approval of the change.

Approval will be reported to:
Programme Studies Board (PSB) Faculty Academic Committee* (FAC) and Quality Management Sub-Committee* (QMSC)

*Via termly reports

Updating of systems

Quality Support will provide new module codes, will update the minor modifications database to confirm that a modification has been made to an existing module; when new module/s are created within an existing programme, the programmes section of the minor modifications database will also be updated.