



Nottingham Trent
University

Academic Development and Quality

Process for the approval of course changes for 2021/22

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1. The Process

This process applies to situations where Schools need to make further changes to the currently approved temporary arrangements which were made last academic year in a response to the Covid pandemic. The University's goal for learning and teaching in 2021/22 is to develop high quality learning and teaching that builds on lessons learnt in 2020/21 and is flexible enough to adapt to potentially changing delivery models should the need arise.

We intend to return to a position of no social-distancing for the start of the autumn term. However, a blended approach is our aspiration as our future delivery model, and we will continue to use this opportunity for its development. A revision of the Learning and Teaching Planning Principles will be published to support Schools in determining the best course of action for the first term. Bearing this in mind, course teams should be considering whether there is likely to be a need to make changes made to the currently approved (temporary) versions of their courses for delivery in 2021/22.

The outcome of this consideration, and the required action is summarised in the table below:

Decision	Action
a. Continue in 2021/22 with the temporary version of the course which is already approved	No further action
a. Make further temporary changes to the course which will apply only in 2021/22 (and not beyond)	Schools approve using the same mechanism as agreed last year (repeated in section 1.1 below for ease of reference). ASQC oversight achieved via a collated report summarising changes in July 2021.
a. Make permanent changes in the light of what we have learned this year for roll out in 2021/22	Normal course change process applies.

It is assumed that the majority of cases will fall into categories (a) and (b). This gives the University time over the course of academic year 2021/22 to reflect and approve any permanent course changes for start 2022/23 and beyond.

1.1 Key deadlines for making changes

The final date for Marketing to reissue Course Information (CMA documentation) to new students when material information about a course is affected: **28th May 2021**. *Note: this is the last opportunity and all changes should be communicated as soon as possible.*

For any changes that may have timetabling implications, Registry should be informed as soon as possible. Clearly the decision about social distancing measures may affect timetabling decisions. Further information about timelines associated with this decision will be forthcoming.

1.2 Approval of further temporary changes (b)

As agreed in June 2020, SASQCs are empowered to make temporary changes to currently approved modules and courses for the academic year 2021/22, including those that would normally be considered higher impact changes.

Type of change	Description of change	Process for formal approval of change	External consideration requirements	Documentation requirements (minimum)
Temporary (Covid-19) – 2021/22 only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to existing modules and courses to enable courses to be delivered, and manage the student experience during 2021/22 year; Changes to material information provided to <i>prospective</i> students (see appendix of Course Change Form 2020/21 version) 	SASQC (notified to CADQ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External examiner; PSRB (where appropriate); Degree Apprenticeship Manager (where appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change form (2020/21 version); Revised course structure diagram or revised list of modules per level (2021/22); Revised assessment Schedule Revised Assessment and Feedback Plan; Revised Curriculum Map; Revised Course Information Document (CMA document) if change applies to prospective students; List of additional student-facing documents which will need to be updated (for example on learning rooms, handbooks etc)

Schools are also responsible for liaising with School-based collaborative partners in order to ensure changes to teaching, learning and assessment for courses delivered with, or at, partner institutions are also approved for 2021/22 delivery.

Process

SASQCs will receive and consider the proposed changes and will be required to record the changes approved. Each School will send the record of the changes to CADQ and a summary will be prepared by CADQ and presented to ASQC for information at its July meeting. Business Evaluation will not be needed, but the course team should keep the Head of Department up to date with the proposals to maintain an overview of the provision in each department. There will inevitably be resource implications, and these should be considered and agreed at a departmental level (or as appropriate). The Head of Department should confirm agreement prior to SASQC consideration.

Documentation

The Course Change Form was revised last year to support approval of temporary measures. The completed form provides SASQC with information about the extent of the changes and about who has been involved in making the decision. This revised Course Change Form should be used again this academic year for temporary changes. Only one course change form is required for each course; all changes will be recorded on the single form. Where there are courses which have shared modules, and it would be sensible to record the

changes at 'portfolio' level, then this form can be used to cover changes to more than one course.

Additional documentation requirements focus on the student experience and should be student-facing. These requirements are:

- Revised course structure diagram or revised list of modules per level (2021/22);
- Revised assessment schedule;
- Revised Assessment and Feedback Plan;
- Revised Curriculum Map;
- Revised Course Information Document (CMA document) if change applies to prospective students;
- List of additional student-facing documents which will need to be updated (for example on learning rooms, handbooks etc)

Changes to the actual Module Specifications should be made only if the 2021/22 versions are to be shared with students and it should be made clear that these are temporary versions of the module specifications for the academic year 2021/22 only.

An updated Course Specification will not be required for the approval of a temporary change. A Course Operational Document will also not be needed for approval, although course teams might find it useful to update this document in order that all staff understand how the revised course will operate.

Externality

Where possible the course team should seek feedback from the External Examiner(s) for the course. It may also be appropriate to consult a PSRB and, in the case of a degree apprenticeship course, the Degree Apprenticeship Manager.

Duration of temporary approval

Changes can be made by SASQC for the 2021/22 academic year. Course teams may wish to make additional changes part-way through the year to reflect changes in social distancing rules for example, or for half-year modules. These additional changes for 2021/22 should be taken back to SASQC for approval and recorded as before.

Communication to students

Current students

The OFS has made it clear that providers need to ensure broad equivalence of provision for current students compared with what they would have expected prior to the pandemic. This is an important benchmark for SASQCs, and applies to any further temporary changes being made for 2021/22 just as it did when temporary changes were made for 2020/21. Where there is a prospect of substantial aspects of a course, (e.g. placements, study trips, practical projects, modules, opportunity for research) not being provided at all for a cohort of students at any time in the course, Chairs of SASQCs should take advice from Marketing to understand the risks before proceeding with the approval. Changes should be discussed with the School Marketing Manager who can seek advice as necessary. Enough notice should be given of the proposed change to enable this to happen.

It is also imperative to consult current students about any planned (or possible) changes in a timely fashion and inform them of the outcome. Please note that if a student is not satisfied with the changes proposed then in accordance with the student regulations they can be offered the opportunity to withdraw from the course and, if required, provided with reasonable support to transfer to another provider.

The School Administration Team will be responsible for communicating with current students. It is recommended that the change be communicated via email to affected current students and also that the NOW learning room is updated with this information.

Prospective students

There is also a requirement to give clear and timely information to prospective students about changes to their course. The course information that has been sent to prospective 2021 entry students has been the permanent (non-Covid) versions, and a statement has been included on each of the course pages to confirm that there may have to be some temporary amendments to the course due to Covid restrictions.

However, any material change will require a resend of our Course Information Document (CMA document). Marketing have agreed the following dates for this, if it is required:

- 7th May
- 28th May

Marketing will be responsible for communicating with prospective students. Schools must ensure that their School Marketing Manager is kept fully informed of the communications that will be needed.

1.3 Approval of permanent changes (c)

It is strongly advised that any permanent changes to pre-Covid versions of courses only apply to cohorts from 2022/23 to enable early communication to students, particularly if these changes are considered high impact (see Quality Handbook Supplement 5b). Where Schools consider permanent changes do need to be approved for the academic year 2021/22 then this needs to take place as soon as possible, and should follow the normal approval routes.

Communication of permanent changes to current students should proceed in the same way as outlined above: Chairs of SASQCs should take advice from Marketing to understand the risks before proceeding with the approval and students should be consulted.

For prospective students, any changes made will require a reissue of the Course Information Document (CMA document), and we will work to the same dates for reissue as articulated above:

- 7th May
- 28th May

If changes that affect the material course information later than 28th May, then these would need to be additionally approved by UET.

Marketing will be responsible for communicating with prospective students. Schools must ensure that their School Marketing Manager is kept fully informed of the communications that will be needed.