QH Supplement 5I: Requirements for the approval and quality management of different categories of course

The majority of University courses lead to an NTU award. However, some courses also lead to an award of, or recognition by, a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB). In a few cases, a course may solely lead to a PSRB award with no attached NTU award. Examples also exist of courses that lead to NTU credits rather than awards, or, in the case of some short courses, to no award at all. This supplement sets out the varying University requirements for the approval and quality management of these different categories of course.

1. Category 1: Courses (including apprenticeships) solely leading to a University award

1.1 Approval of these courses is achieved via the Course Design and Approval process as set out in Quality Handbook (QH) Section 5.

1.2 Apprenticeships must also follow the requirements outlined in QH Section 10F and associated Supplements.

1.3 Course monitoring must follow the University procedures as set out in QH Section 6.

1.4 A School's arrangements for the quality assurance and enhancement of Category 1 courses will be an item at Periodic Review (PR) – see QH Section 7 for the complete PR process.

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1.5 The University's External Examiner Appointments Panel (EEAP) must approve all external examiner nominations in accordance with the criteria set out in QH Section 9.

2. Category 2: Courses solely leading to a PSRB award, accreditation or some other form of recognition

2.1 The PSRB must approve these courses under its prevailing procedures and regulations. The outcome of the approval should be reported to the relevant SASQC.

2.2 Course monitoring must follow the PSRB's procedures. The annual report or equivalent should normally be 'signed off' by the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee (SASQC) before submission to the PSRB. SASQC should also use the report as evidence in periodic course review.

2.3 A School's arrangements for the quality assurance and enhancement of Category 2 courses may be an item at PR – see QH Section 7 for the complete PR process.

2.4 External examiners, or assessors (as appropriate) should be appointed by the PSRB and need not be approved by the University's EEAP. When the PSRB asks the University to appoint the external examiner, the University's criteria and processes will apply.

3. Category 3: Courses (including apprenticeships) jointly leading to a University and PSRB award, accreditation or some other form of recognition

3.1 These courses must be approved via the ASQC Academic Course Approval Sub-Committee according to the University's approval procedures and by the PSRB under its prevailing regulations.

3.2 Apprenticeships must also follow the requirements outlined in QH Section 10F and associated Supplements.

3.3 Dual awards are permitted – a candidate may receive both the University and PSRB award.

3.4 Course monitoring and reporting must follow the University's standard procedures and that of the PSRB. Wherever possible the University's reporting requirements will be met through the production of a PSRB report, but a suitable template may be agreed between CADQ and SASQC for reporting on any key points not covered by that report.

3.5 A School's arrangements for the quality assurance and enhancement of Category 3 courses will be an item at PR – see QH Section 7 for the complete PR process.

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3.6 All external examiners must be approved by the University's EEAP but the Panel will take due account of any PSRB scrutiny before making its decision.

Further information

- Courses in categories 1, 2 and 3 above must also complete the University's Business Evaluation process.
- Courses in categories 2 and 3 must also be recorded on the University's PSRB register.

4. Category 4: Courses (typically short courses) leading to neither a University or PSRB award but carrying NTU credits

4.1 These courses should be approved by the relevant SASQC on the basis of a brief document that sets out the:

   a. course title, duration, aims and outcomes;

   b. proposed credits and academic level (referred to as Levels 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 respectively in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ));

   c. intended participants;

   d. course content, methods of delivery and assessment methods;

   e. staffing and physical resources.

4.2 SASQC will need to ensure that the academic level and number of credits are appropriate and that the outcomes are satisfactorily assessed.

4.3 In many cases, a course may be derived from existing modules in which case the definitive module information in CourseLoop will provide much of the information.

4.4 SASQC should receive an evaluation report (based upon participant and other feedback) within 2 months of the completion of the course.

4.5 Successful participants may receive a certificate of achievement that sets out the credits and academic level achieved, which is produced by the School.

4.6 Normally, the minimum credit rating should be 5 credits (equivalent to 50 notional learning hours).

4.7 A School's arrangements for the quality assurance and enhancement of Category 4 courses may be an item at PR – see Section 7 of the QH for the complete PR process.

4.8 There is no need to appoint an external examiner, however, in the case of extended short courses - of 40 credits or more - it may be necessary to have a form of external verification. SASQC and CADQ will agree appropriate arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

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5. Category 5: Courses (typically short courses) leading to neither awards nor credits

5.1 These courses should be approved by the relevant SASQC on the basis of a brief paper that sets out the:

    a. course title, duration and aims;

    b. intended outcomes (although these will not be assessed);

    c. intended participants;

    d. course content and methods of delivery;

    e. staffing and physical resources.

5.2 It is hoped that such information can be stated on one side of A4.

5.3 As the course will not contain assessed outcomes or lead to an award / credits, approval should be 'light of touch'. SASQC should primarily check to ensure that the course is satisfactorily organised for an external audience.

5.4 Where a team offers a portfolio of short courses, approval may be sought from SASQC for the portfolio by adapting the requirements as specified in 5.1 above.

5.5 All short courses of a half-day or longer - and designed for external participants - will need checking in this way.

5.6 Short courses offered by Central Services or other non-School units should link with the most appropriate School for the purposes of SASQC approval.

5.7 Participants may receive a record of attendance or similar testimonial produced by the School but not a certificate of achievement or award.

5.8 SASQC should receive a short evaluation report (including participant feedback) within 2 months of course completion or - in the case of a portfolio of courses - at an agreed time.

5.9 A School's arrangements for the quality assurance and enhancement of Category 5 courses may be an item at PR – see Section 7 of the QH for the complete PR process.

5.10 External examiners will not be appointed to these courses.

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Policy owner
CADQ

Change history			
Version:	Approval date:	Implementation date:	Nature of significant revisions:
Sept 2016	30.09.16	01.10.16	Reference to external examiner appointments on behalf of PSRBs
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	None
Sept 2018	12.09.18	01.10.18	None
Sept 2019	11.09.19	01.10.18	Included reference to Apprenticeships under categories 1 and 3 Removal of requirement for a DAG for approval of category 2 courses Added explanatory note regarding the inclusion of category 2 and 3 courses on the PSRB register
Sept 2020	16.09.20	01.10.20	None
Oct 2021	21.10.21	21.10.21	Reference to Design Sprint to replace Development and Approval Group (DAG)
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
Nov 2023	02.11.23	23.11.23	Removal of references to design sprints
Sept 2024	19.09.24	01.10.24	None

Equality Impact Analysis		
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Sept 2015	20.07.16	CADQ