

**PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
BWRDD DILYSU**

**UNIVERSITY OF WALES
VALIDATION BOARD**



UNIVERSITY OF WALES

**VALIDATION HANDBOOK OF QUALITY ASSURANCE:
HEALTH STUDIES**

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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MISSION STATEMENT VALIDATION BOARD AND UNIT

The University's Validation Board and Unit operate in accordance with the University's strategic plan as a Central Service, which seeks to maximise benefits to the University and its accredited and affiliated Institutions.

The remit and purpose of the University's validation work is characterised as follows:-

- to establish validation links with centres of good standing on a national/ international/global basis;
- to ensure that, in matters relating to validation, the University's academic standing and integrity is safeguarded at all times;
- to undertake its duties in co-operation with established international agencies (such as the British Council) and according to guidelines laid down in accepted Codes of Practice (such as those issued by the QAA, CVU, UUK and the University itself);
- to maximise opportunities for development of academically worthwhile programmes, international links and recruitment of high calibre students for the University;
- to channel surplus funds generated by validation activity into strengthening of, and support for, appropriate activities within the University.

Objectives	<p>To provide an international validation service across all subject boundaries by drawing on the University's pool of academic expertise and excellence.</p> <p>To maximise the University's status as a national award-granting University in an international context.</p> <p>To facilitate the development of mutually productive partnerships between the University and appropriate providers of education at centres in the UK and overseas.</p>
Working Philosophy	<p>Demanding excellence by focusing on quality assurance and appraisal mechanisms alongside regard for appropriate course content, whilst maintaining a workable and flexible approach to potential partners.</p>
Strategy	<p>Raising the awareness of the University's powers and potential to deliver validated courses to the highest academic standards.</p>
Plan of Action	<p>Work as an agency providing a worthwhile service of benefit to all the University's component parts.</p>

Seek overseas and UK colleges of good standing as potential long-term partners.

CODE OF PRACTICE

All action taken by the University's Validation Board (and by personnel at the Validation Unit) in relation to validation of courses at UK or international centres shall be in accordance with the Code of Practice (Appendix 1). The Code of Practice is designed to provide University personnel involved in validation with general guidelines for conducting academic business and implementing agreed procedures.

Any specific items or areas deemed to be problematic (or to which the Code does not refer specifically) shall be referred to the Validation Board for action or recommendation.

The Code of Practice is made available to all interested colleges seeking validation as well as to all University personnel involved with the validation process.

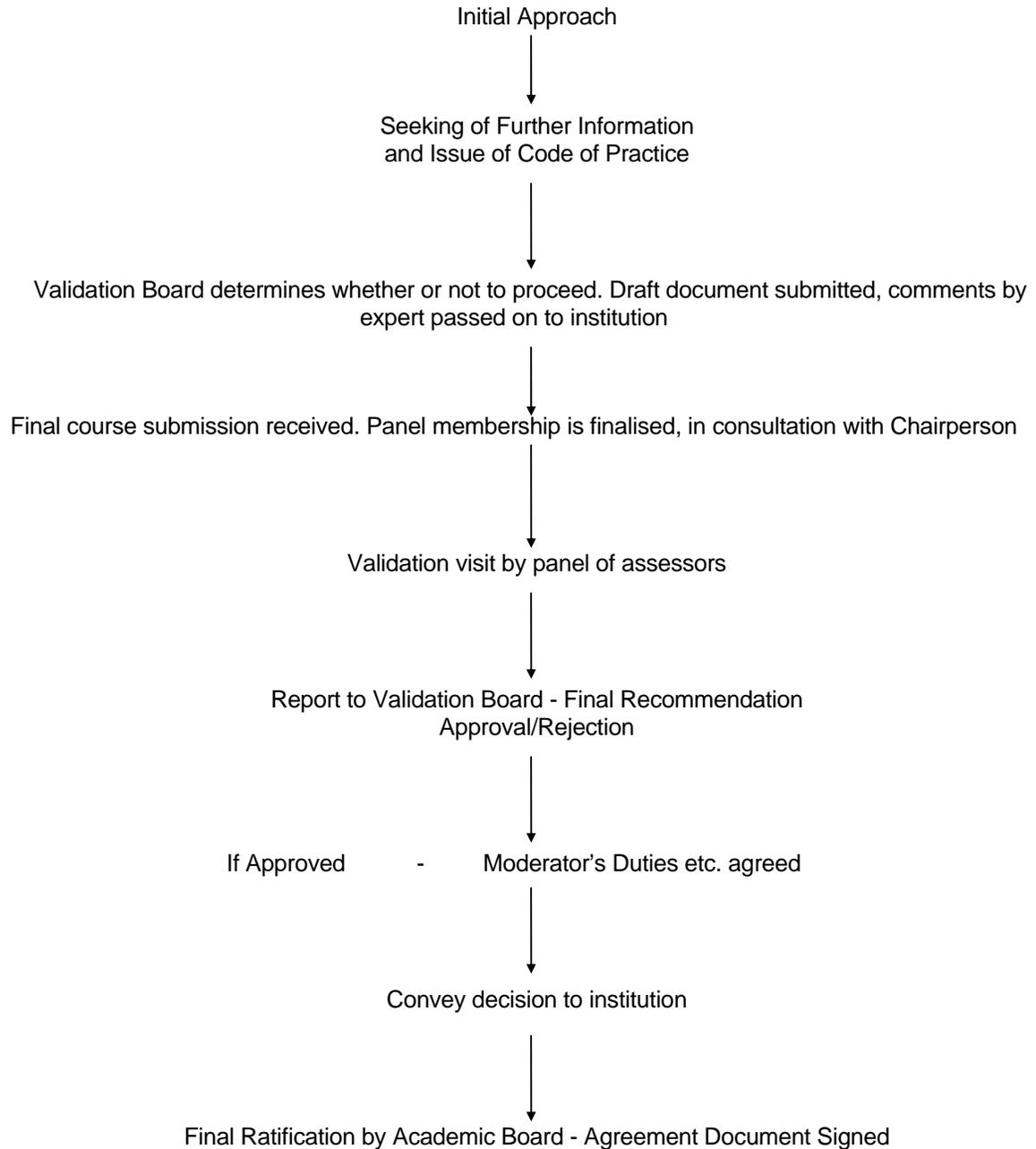
HEALTH STUDIES VALIDATION

The University of Wales validates a number of schemes in the Health Studies field. At the current time we have undergraduate and/or postgraduate degree schemes in Acupuncture, Animal Manipulation, Chiropractic, Herbal Medicine, Integrative Psychotherapy, Osteopathy, Osteopathic Studies, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Regulatory Affairs, both in the UK and overseas.

The University's first involvement in Health Studies validation came in 1990 when the College of Medicine requested the assistance of the Validation Unit in establishing degree schemes in Physiotherapy, Radiography and Occupational Therapy. These disciplines have now been subsumed into Cardiff University, but at the time in question their teaching staff belonged to an organisation known as the Combined Training Institute. External validation represented the most appropriate way forward and a series of tri-partite validation events followed, involving the professional bodies, the CPSM, and the University's own assessors, several of whom went on to form the nucleus of the Validation Board's Committee for Health Studies. A progression to the validation of complementary medicine schemes began in 1993 since which time the disciplines in question have gained greatly in credibility - witness the substantial increase in GP referrals, the regulation of such professions as Acupuncture, Chiropractic and Osteopathy. It is important to note that a University degree does not grant a license to practice as it is purely an academic qualification. Nevertheless, clinical competence is a requirement and for the University Award to be made.

Degrees in the Health Studies field are expected to promote an understanding of the importance of the scientific method and an evidence-base to underpin therapeutic interventions and of research to expand that base. The mission is to promote and require the critical evaluation of the practices, doctrines, beliefs, theories and hypotheses that underlie the taught therapeutic measures of the discipline.

VALIDATION PROCEDURES



INITIAL VETTING OF NEW CENTRES

In order to establish whether or not a centre seeking validation of its courses is "of good standing" arrangements shall be made for a suitably qualified person or persons to visit the centre concerned. The designated person is charged with the remit of establishing whether or not a clear prima facie case exists for the college to be deemed suitable to host a visiting panel of assessors with a view to possible course validation

The designated person(s) will be independent of the institution itself and of any department from an accredited or affiliated institution of the University in any way linked to, or involved with, the institution. Such persons may be drawn from the Validation Board, the Validation Unit, the British Council or any such body or institution deemed suitable by the Validation Board and Unit. . Please note that the costs of the initial visit must be met by the institution seeking validation.

All such initial vetting visits shall involve the production of a written report containing the detailed information listed in Appendix 2, together with a risk matrix form.

All such reports shall be treated as confidential for the use of the Validation Board and Unit (and, for certain sections, the University Registry Finance Department).

The information contained therein shall be used by the Validation Board in determining whether or not to establish a panel of assessors and proceed with a validation visit. A draft submission document should be submitted and comments from a suitably qualified expert (normally the Moderator-designate) passed on to the institution before a final submission document is received. It is worth noting that reaching the stage of a validation visit does not necessarily mean that the outcome of the exercise will be successful – this is for the Panel of Assessors to decide.

In seeking potential partners, the Validation Board and Unit will need to pay close attention to the compatibility of the purpose of the institution and its' aims, and to the potential ability of the proposed partner to meet the University's standards and requirements. The perceived interest of each partner in learning from each other will also be important.

The University will seek appropriate information to ensure that the proposed partner is a financially stable institution with effective and adequate management and administrative systems, adequate and well deployed human and physical resources and appropriate

systems for quality assurance. This includes providing a set of audited accounts for the last financial year. Institutions should also provide details of any current or previous collaborations with other awarding bodies, with (if applicable) the reasons for rejection, termination or proposed transfer of programmes. If a programme has previously been rejected or terminated, the University will normally contact the awarding body previously involved.

Following a validation event and (if required) the submission of any additional documentation, Panel members are required to confirm, by means of a pro forma, whether or not they are satisfied that the conditions set at the validation event have been met and that the scheme(s) can be validated and can commence.

COURSE VALIDATION - PROCEDURES

All centres seeking course validation shall be required to submit a comprehensive submission document containing full information as detailed in the Addendum to the Code of Practice (Appendices 1, 4 & 11). Guidelines on the Preparation of submission documents appear in Appendix 8.

Where the proposed scheme of study is to be offered on a distance learning mode then the Guidelines in Appendix 5 should be used in drafting the submission document.

Upon receipt of a satisfactory proposal the membership of a visiting panel of assessors will be established to include:-

- + A Chairperson drawn from the Validation Board
- Appropriate subject experts
- An expert representative external to the University of Wales (to provide written comments or join the panel as appropriate)

The final composition / membership of the visiting panel shall be approved by the Chairperson using a pro forma (Appendix 9). In order to encourage association between the University and accrediting bodies, as recommended in the House of Lords Select Committee Report on Complementary and Alternative Medicine (November 2002), a member of the Regulatory Body or largest accrediting body might be invited to attend the validation event as an observer/adviser.

Having spent sufficient time at the submitting institution to meet senior management, discuss the submitted document with teaching staff, meet (where possible) students and having viewed buildings and resources the panel shall make a final report, containing its recommendation and any appropriate requirements and conditions, to the Validation Board.

In the event of lack of unanimity amongst panel members the views of further expert assessors may be sought in assisting the Validation Board to reach a fair conclusion.

Prior to the validation visit, the panel of assessors shall be issued with Notes of Guidance for members of the Panel of Assessors (Appendix 10).

One member of the Panel will be asked to assume the role of learning resources scrutineer, and be asked to assist in completing (with the relevant staff at the institution) a questionnaire as part of the validation event (see Appendices 13 & 14).

With respect to a proposal for extending the provision of an existing Validated Scheme to be offered at an additional centre, then the procedures as described in Appendix 37 shall be followed.

“Hybrid” Relationships

Hybrid relationships refer to a model whereby the centre seeking validation is initially provided with details of a scheme of study which is already being offered by one of the University of Wales’ accredited institutions.

The centre in question may then either re-present the same curriculum or may use this as the basis for its own scheme of study for validation.

In all such instances, the administration and procedures for the hybrid relationships will follow those set out in this Handbook.

- + The Chairperson, drawn from the Validation Board, shall be independent of any nominated department/institution which may benefit from the proposed validated scheme(s) and representation by any such department/institution on the panel shall be in a minority. In exceptional circumstances (where no Board member is available to Chair an event and the date cannot be changed), an ex-member of the Board or experienced Moderators/former Moderators may be approached to act as Chairperson. In such cases the executive approval of the Chair of the Validation Board should be sought.

POST VALIDATION FOLLOW-UP

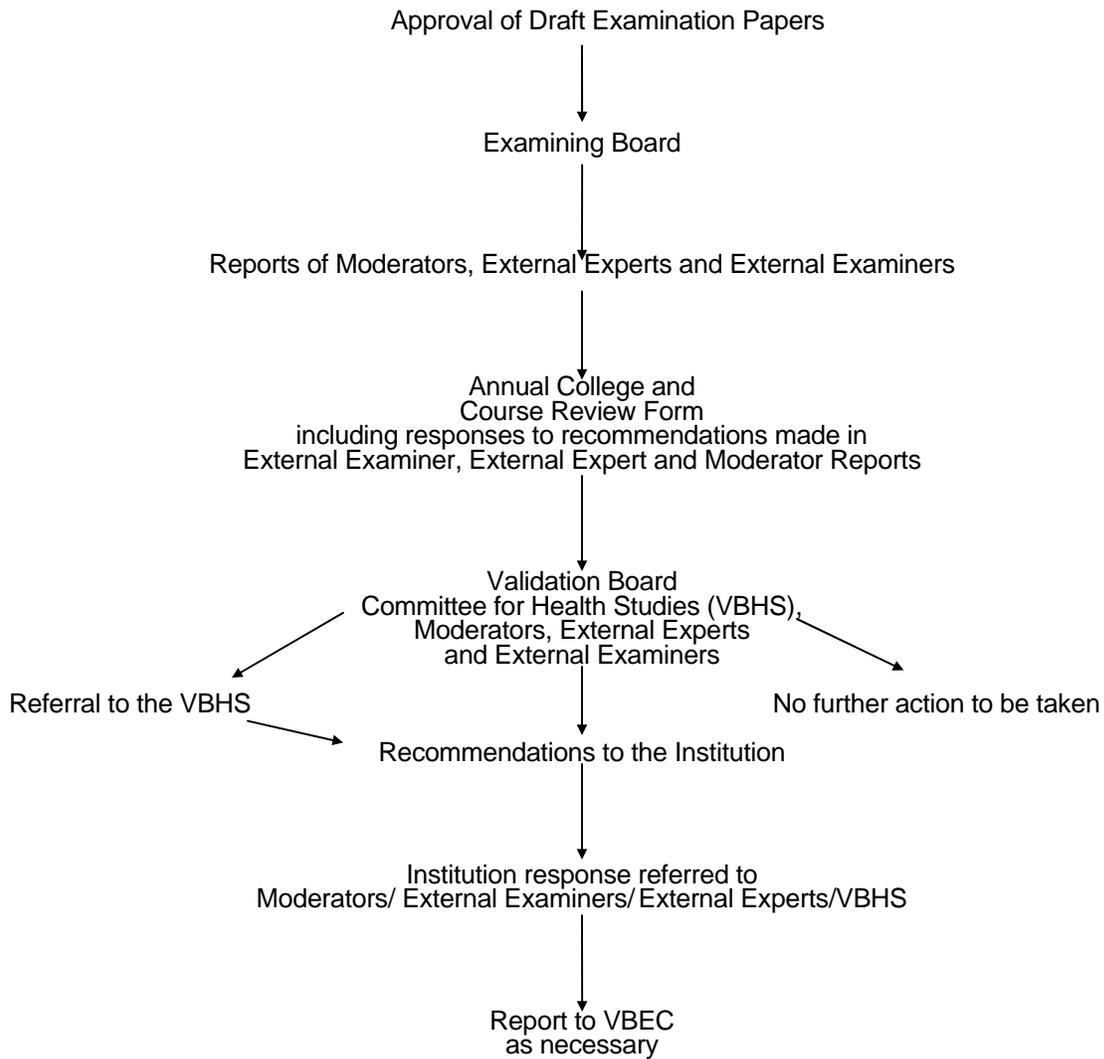
In most instances, the granting of validation for a programme will entail the meeting of specified recommendations and conditions. Whether or not the conditions have been met and the course can commence is confirmed by the Panel of Assessors by means of completing a pro forma after revised documentation is received.

In order to ensure that these requirements are met in full and to ensure that the University's procedures (for assessment, monitoring and quality assurance) are understood a post validation follow-up visit is normally arranged.

The results of this visit are documented according to the pro forma in Appendix 15. Confirmation that conditions have been met (or a highlighting of any particular problem areas) is monitored by the Moderator (Appendix 29) and Validation Unit and, where necessary, reported to the Validation Board.

The conditions set at validation may often be related to issues of resourcing, and the panel of assessors and moderator(s) shall use the Guidelines on Resources (see Appendices 13 & 14) in establishing appropriate minimum criteria etc.

COURSE MONITORING MECHANISMS



Every Five Years

Preparation of documentation by validated Institution



Visit of Review Panel to conduct Quinquennial Review



Report to Validation Board



Monitoring of conditions set at Review

ANNUAL MONITORING OF COURSES

- A** It is incumbent upon all centres enjoying course validation to provide the University with a detailed annual report for consideration (Appendix 33), in conjunction with reports by Moderators (Appendices 29 & 30), External Experts (Appendix 32) and External Examiners (Appendix 25), by the Validation Board's Committee for Health Studies (Appendix 3).

Any areas of concern noted by the Validation Board's Committee for Health Studies shall be reported to the Validation Board and appropriate action taken (including possible withdrawal of validation) with a view to maintaining high academic standards.

In particular the Health Studies Committee shall ensure that the comments and recommendations of Moderators, External Experts and External Examiners are acted upon, that appropriate staffing and resources are maintained and the terms of the University's Agreement with the validated college are properly fulfilled.

- B** External Examiners (and in certain instances Moderators) shall review draft examination papers and subsequently visit the validated centre (normally accompanied by Validation Unit staff) to attend meetings of the Board of Examiners at which candidates' final results are determined in accordance with University procedures (Appendices 16 to 21). The Validation Board has established criteria for holding Examination Board meetings and ensuring they are quorate (see Appendix 21). The Board also issues Guidelines for Translation Requirements where validated programmes are taught and assessed through the medium of languages other than English (see Appendix 35). Prior to signing final pass lists External Examiners shall be given full access to candidates' examination scripts and coursework material including project reports and dissertations where these form part of the assessed work (with an agreed proportion being translated into English for schemes taught or assessed in another language).

All newly appointed External Examiners shall undergo a formal induction process (undertaken by the moderator and / or member of the Validation Unit staff). Induction procedures are detailed in Appendices 23 & 24. (See also appendix 22 for the Code of Practice for External Examiners). Newly appointed Moderators and External Experts shall also be given appropriate induction advice and support as per the details in Appendices 27 & 28.

In addition to attending meetings of the Examining Board (in an advisory capacity) referred to above, Moderators and External Experts shall ensure that appropriate meetings take place with staff and management at the validated college to review progress made during the year and undertake necessary staff development etc. Moderators should also hold meetings with students enrolled on the validated programme wherever possible. Moderators, External Experts and External Examiners shall submit a full annual report (and where applicable a mid term visit report) for the consideration of the Health Studies Committee (see Appendices 25, 29, 30 & 32).

The institution's responses to recommendations made in External Examiner, External Expert and Moderator's reports are provided in their Annual College and Course Review Form. A copy of the Annual College and Course Review Form is sent to the appropriate Moderator, External Expert and External Examiner to keep him/her fully informed of the Institution's response. All Moderators and External Examiners are issued with Guidelines for Assessing and Examining Students at Validated Centres (Appendix 16).

- C** Joint Boards of Studies shall also be held, at least once per annum, at each Validated Centre.

These meetings shall normally be arranged to coincide with Examination Board Meetings.

The minutes of Joint Board of Studies meetings shall form part of the Validated Institution's Annual Return to the University. (Appendix 33)

The requirements for holding Boards of Studies are detailed in Appendix 34.

PROCEDURES FOR DISTANCE-MODE SCHEMES

With respect to a proposal for the delivery of distance-mode schemes, then the procedure as described in Appendix 5 shall be followed.

PROCEDURES FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

With respect to a proposal for offering research degree schemes, please see the criteria described in Appendix 7.

PROCEDURES FOR EXISTING VALIDATED CENTRES TO HAVE APPROVAL OF AN ADDITIONAL CENTRE OR CENTRES

With respect to a proposal for extending existing provision for an existing Validated Scheme to be offered at an additional centre, then the procedures as described in Appendix 37 shall be followed.

UPGRADING OF VALIDATED DEGREE SCHEMES

Validated degree schemes may be considered for upgrading either from Ordinary to General level or from General to fully classified Honours level at an appropriate stage.

In such instances the processes described in Appendices 38 & 39 are employed.

AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING SCHEMES OF STUDY

Amendments to existing schemes of study shall be considered and approved in accordance with the guidelines specified in Appendix 40.

WITHDRAWAL OF VALIDATION

Appendix 45 contains guidelines for use at centres where validation has been withdrawn or come to an end for other reasons.

QUINQUENNIAL REVIEWS

All validated centres are subject to a full review at least once every five years. Where deemed appropriate by the Validation Board, a scheme may be reviewed at an earlier date within the five year period (in addition to the Quinquennial Review).

As a major undertaking, the Quinquennial Review is critical to monitoring the academic health and quality of a Validated Institution and its validated course(s) and to deliver a detailed report for guidance and action.

The Review will focus on the following in order to ensure that course quality is being maintained according to established criteria and procedures:-

Staffing and Staff Development

Students

Resources

Course Rationale, Structure and Content

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Assessment

Course/College Management

Relationship with the University of Wales

The Quinquennial Review will be conducted by a review panel composed of the following:-

Member of the Validation Board (Chairperson) +

External Examiner(s)

Additional Expert Assessor from a UK University other than Wales.

+ Independent of the Moderator's Department. In exceptional circumstances an ex member of the Board or experienced Moderator/former Moderator may be appointed as Chairperson.

Whilst not appointed as a formal member of the Review Panel, the Moderator(s) shall play an important part in the exercise and in the following up of any conditions set as a result of the Review exercise. The panel will hold formal meetings with him/her as appropriate. One of the reasons for holding such meetings shall be to determine whether or not the Moderator is discharging his/her duties in a satisfactory manner (and should have his/her appointment extended for the next permissible two year period). (Appendix 26)

Wherever possible the timing of a Quinquennial Review visit shall coincide with the period of the Examining Board meeting at the college concerned. Review Panel members shall be issued with Notes of Guidance prior to undertaking the exercise (Appendices 42 & 43).

The Review Panel shall submit a detailed report to the Validation Board or Executive Committee. In turn the Executive Committee shall present a synopsis of recommendations concerning each Quinquennial Review to the Validation Board.

In conducting its review and drawing its conclusions the Review Panel shall enter into a fair but rigorous appraisal with the aim of identifying strengths and weaknesses and making recommendations upon which action shall be taken.

Prior to preparing its submission for the Quinquennial Review the centre concerned is issued with detailed instructions including Notes of Guidance (See Appendices 41 & 44).

Prior to undertaking the review visit the Panel will be issued with the following documentation:-

- (i) Validation Board Handbook of Policies and Procedures.
- (ii) Annual Moderator/External Examiner/External Expert Report Forms for the previous 5 years.
- (iii) Annual College and Course Review Forms for the previous 5 years.
- (iv) An overview paper drawn up by the Course Director.
- (v) An up to date course document.
- (vi) An up to date student handbook

Following a Review and (if required) the submission of any additional documentation, Panel members are required to confirm, by means of a pro forma, whether or not they are satisfied that the conditions set at the Review have been met and that the scheme(s) should continue to be validated.

APPENDICES

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR VALIDATION OF COURSES AT INTERNATIONAL AND UK CENTRES

- 1** The Validation Board, in considering applications for validation, will give priority to the following categories of application:-
 - (i) submissions made by well-established institutions, with a good number of suitably qualified students (possibly with potential for some of these students to complete their courses, or further study, within the University of Wales);
 - (ii) requests made by Departments or Schools within the University's accredited institutions for validation of courses within centres identified and approved by themselves.

- 2** In considering any application, in the first instance, information may be sought from such responsible bodies as the British Council concerning the standing and status of the applying institution, and whether or not they have been granted recognition or approval, where necessary, by the governmental body concerned or its equivalent. This will particularly be the case where the applying institution is situated within a country where the Validation Board has not offered courses previously.

- 3** A preliminary visit to the institution shall be undertaken by an officer of the Unit, an independent member of the Board, a suitable local representative from the British Council or any other nominated person. The purpose of the visit shall be to make an initial assessment of the institution in terms of its ambience, facilities, staffing, governance and financial status (financial information should be provided). (Appendix 2).

- 4** A report shall then be made to the Validation Board with a recommendation as to whether or not to proceed with an application.

- 5** If it is decided to proceed, the Board shall invite the institution to submit a document which will include the information as noted in Appendices 4, 8 & 11. This document will normally be considered by an appropriately qualified member of the academic staff from within the University and any comments made available to the institution prior to conducting the full validation exercise.

- 6** At the same time the Board shall normally appoint a panel of specialist assessors to visit the institution and to consider the document submitted. The Chairperson of the panel will normally be drawn from the membership of the Board and will approve the final constitution of the Panel of Assessors.

- 7** Wherever possible, the involvement of bodies or institutions external to the University shall be sought (e.g. British Council).

- 8** The costs of an initial visit and full validation visit shall normally be the responsibility of the institution seeking course validation. Payment should be received in full prior to the visit taking place.
- 9** The subsequent report of a visit shall be presented for the approval of the Validation Board (or, if necessary, its Executive Committee).
- 10** A validated course shall be subject to all the normal examining procedures of the University.
- 11** In addition to 10 above, the institution offering the validated course will be linked to an appropriate Moderator or Moderators from a Department at an Accredited Institution of the University and also an External Expert.
- 12** The major functions of the Moderator are described in Appendix 26.
- 13** Approval will initially be given for a period of five years and extension of this period will be subject to the outcome of a major Quinquennial Review.
- 14** All validated courses will be subject to an appropriate University-based course monitoring system.
- 15** In agreeing to validation, the University shall require, from the outset, that all matters shall be regarded as confidential, and in particular that all advertisements and press releases relating to validation shall only be issued with the express permission and the advance approval of the University. See Procedures for Advertising and Publicity Materials in Appendix 36.
- 16** Failure to comply with the conditions outlined in 15 above may result in financial penalties or the withdrawal of validation.
- 17** The provisions detailed in 15 and 16 above will apply equally when Accredited Institutions are either involved in or responsible for overseeing advertisements relating to University validated courses at an overseas/UK location.

INITIAL VETTING OF NEW CENTRES

CONFIDENTIAL

Please note that this form is used to help gather accurate information as part of the University's validation and due diligence procedures. It is vital that the information contained therein is accurate and verifiable (including information on your institution's financial status). Failure to abide by these requirements will lead to the termination of the Initial Vetting and validation process.

Name of Institution:

Proposed Course(s):

1 GENERAL DETAILS OF THE INSTITUTION

- (i) Mission Statement or brief description of the Institution's main functions and objectives
- (ii) Date of Foundation
- (iii) Methods of Funding (a set of audited accounts for the last financial year must be submitted – these will be treated in strict confidence. Failure to submit these will result in a delay to the validation process)
- (iv) Private or Public Sector
- (v) Size of Institution
- (vi) Academic and Management Structure
- (vii) Links with other organisations
- (viii) Development Plans, if any

2 FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Library

Clinic (if appropriate)

Laboratory (if appropriate)

IT

Classrooms

- (v) Staff
 - (a) Numbers
 - (b) Balance of full-time and part-time
 - (c) Staff development policy
 - (d) Technician and Administrative support
(to include facilities for the electronic collection and transmission of student data)
- (vi) Budget for sustaining these facilities
- (vii) Access to facilities for disabled students

3 ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

- (i) Number of Courses
- (ii) Level of Courses
- (iii) Number of students
 - (a) full-time
 - (b) part-time
 - (c) qualifications on entry
- (iv) Relationships with other institutions/bodies in locality
- (v) Relationships with other awarding bodies

Please provide details of any current or previous collaborations with other awarding bodies, with (if applicable) the reasons for rejection, termination or proposed transfer of programmes.
- (vi) Relationship with accrediting/regulatory bodies
- (vii) Q.A. Procedures
- (viii) Committee Structure

4 RECOGNITION/APPROVAL

If applicable, please provide details of the process for obtaining formal recognition/approval of the validated award(s). Please note that it is normally the institution's responsibility to seek such recognition/approval.

5 JUSTIFICATION OF PROPOSAL

Please provide a brief statement underlining the rationale for the validation proposal with details of why the Institution is seeking validation of its programme(s); what benefits validation will bring to the Institution and its students; what potential benefits you believe may accrue for the University of Wales from the validation.

6 ANY FURTHER INFORMATION/COMMENTS

PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of the institution seeking validation to disclose any material facts that you are aware of regarding any legal issues or publicity related issues which have arisen at your institution. The Institution should also make it explicit if the proposed scheme of study will lead to an additional award by another body.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

PLEASE RETURN TO:
MR H F HUGHES, HEAD OF VALIDATION SERVICES,
THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES VALIDATION UNIT, THE REGISTRY,
KING EDWARD VII AVENUE, CATHAYS PARK, CARDIFF, CF10 3NS
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FAX NUMBER: 00-44-(0) –29 – 20- 376984
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VALIDATION BOARD'S COMMITTEE FOR HEALTH STUDIES

1 MEMBERSHIP

The Validation Board's Committee for Health Studies shall be constituted as follows:-

- (i) Designated member of the Validation Board as Chair
- (ii) Moderators for validated Health Studies schemes

2 DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

The Validation Board's Committee for Health Studies shall report all its actions and recommendations promptly, in full to the Validation Board. The Committee's main duties shall be:-

- (i) Advising the Validation Board on matters of policy.
- (ii) Annual monitoring of all validated health studies courses including scrutiny of annual reports of Moderators, External Experts, Research Advisor and External Examiners together with annual reports of Joint Board of Studies meetings.
- (iii) Consideration of nominations for the appointment of External Experts and External Examiners.
- (iv) (In appropriate circumstances) giving preliminary consideration to requests for validation made to the University.
- (v) (In appropriate circumstances) deciding whether or not to establish a specialist panel of assessors to give detailed consideration to a full submission.
- (vi) (In appropriate circumstances) to receive and approve, or otherwise, the reports of such specialist panels.
- (vii) To consider, advise and report on any matters referred to it by the Validation Board.

HEALTH STUDIES VALIDATION AT INTERNATIONAL & UK CENTRES

Documentation should be prepared and submitted according to the following format: and with reference to Appendix 8:

1 A brief note on the educational system within the country concerned

This should include information relating to the procedures for the recognition/approval of any validated awards, if applicable.

2 General Aims and Objectives of the Institution

- (i) Brief history of the Institution, with particular reference to recent developments;
- (ii) reference to any institutional plans;
- (iii) academic and management structure;
- (iv) quality assurance policy and procedures;
- (v) links with other organisations (if any).

3 The Scheme

A General Outline

- (i) For degree courses, a brief statement outlining the essential qualities and attributes expected of an Institution's graduates, together with a programme specification using the attached pro forma (see Appendix 11);
- (ii) a single page summary providing basic information about the scheme - title, proposed award, length, pattern of attendance (e.g.: full/part-time, weekend, periodic full-time, residential periods, distance mode);
- (iii) rationale, including aims and learning outcomes (to include information on appropriate employer and/or industrial/professional input);
- (iv) the basic course structure (including coherence, progression, pathways); - diagrams and / or tables are helpful;
- (v) a clear statement regarding any qualifications which successful students will receive in addition to the University of Wales degree.
- (vi) an indication as to whether the course in question or one substantially similar has been previously validated by the University of Wales in relation to another institution.

B Module Descriptors

- (i) The full syllabus will be articulated through module descriptors and will include the following information:
 - Module title;
 - Module leader;
 - Credits and level;

- Students' learning hours (staff contact hours + independent learning hours)
- Details of module aims and learning outcomes;
- Assessment;
- Proposed methods of teaching, e.g.: lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, practical sessions, including the balance between the various modes;
- Bibliographies for each individual syllabus; presented in the form of a required and recommended reading list.

4 Assessment

- (i) Detailed assessment pattern including the structure of examinations and including, where appropriate, an assessment pattern for each unit/module and detail of course progression; credit ratings for modular schemes of study;
- (ii) the weightings to be given to such elements as examinations, course work, practicals, projects, dissertations;
- (iii) compensation pattern;
- (iv) specimen question papers, if possible;
- (v) referrals procedure;
- (vi) appeals procedure;
- (vii) unfair practice procedure;
- (viii) reference should be made to the appropriate University of Wales Regulations and Academic Protocols.

5 Students

- (i) Student market and sources of students;
- (ii) admissions process;
- (iii) actual entry requirements, including any specific 'A' level requested or their local equivalent, specified language requirements¹ etc.;
- (iv) recruitment target.

6 Resources

- (i) Full CVs of the teaching staff;
- (ii) staff development policy;
- (iii) library provision, especially journals, and hours of opening;
- (iv) annual budget for the library;
- (v) IT provision, budget and access;
- (vi) details of laboratory and workshop facilities where appropriate;
- (vii) adequacy of classroom space and tutorial\seminar facilities;
- (viii) technician and administrative support;
- (ix) proposed overall budget for maintenance and development of these facilities;
- (x) access to resources for disabled students;
- (xi) the funding of the course.
- (xii) a fully costed and dated resource development plan (covering learning resources, classroom facilities and staffing) must be submitted as part of the documentation. Failure to submit an appropriate development plan may result in the validation event being delayed.
- (xiii) if the proposed programme involves delivery away from the proposed institution, please include full details regarding the facilities to be used (plus information regarding additional staff to be used).

¹ In general the University requires an IELTS score of around 6 at undergraduate level and 6.5 at postgraduate level. However, there should be permitted variances where, for example, students had undertaken an additional English language foundation course or where the particular entry requirements of a degree scheme (e.g. in areas such as Art & Design) might not necessarily be determined by an IELTS score alone.

7 Clinical Provision (if appropriate)

- (i) Location/resources;
- (ii) number and type of clinical hours throughout the programme
- (iii) clinical supervision and clinical tutors (induction, training, continuity and uniformity)
- (iv) patient numbers, recruitment and assignment to students (including continuity of care);
- (v) insurance for staff and students;
- (vi) record keeping/data base, including details of data protection and security/confidentiality
- (vii) procedures for continuous and final assessment

8 Quality Assurance

- (i) Internal validation procedures;
- (ii) arrangements for course monitoring and methods of evaluating and improving the quality and standards of learning;
- (iii) student evaluation of courses to include a specimen questionnaire issued to students, if available, pastoral care, student support and academic counselling systems available to students;
- (iv) staff appraisal scheme.
- (v) the Validation Board expects the following course management systems to be in place for each validated programme:
 - Regular course team meetings to discuss all aspects of a programme's health, including consideration of previous reports (should be minuted, with details of follow up action taken)
 - Regular staff student liaison meetings (should be minuted, with details of follow up action taken)
 - Meetings between the Moderator and students (wherever possible)
 - Annual meeting of the Joint Board of Studies (as per guidance in Appendix 34)
 - Student feedback questionnaires, accompanied by a mechanism whereby students are informed of the action being taken in response to the questionnaires
 - UW to be informed of all staff changes at the appropriate time

9 Student Handbook

It should be noted that once a course is validated it will be necessary to transfer information in section 3 and 4 above into a Student Handbook. The Student Handbook should also include the following information:

- (i) appropriate timetables and dates for delivery and assessment of the scheme;
- (ii) detailed information on the assessment and examination of the scheme, including regulations on the late submission of work, mitigating circumstances;
- (iii) information on student feedback, complaints, pastoral care provision and student support;
- (iv) information on the University of Wales including Validation Unit contact details and the University's Unfair Practice, Appeals and Student Complaints Procedures.

VALIDATION OF DISTANCE-MODE SCHEMES AT INTERNATIONAL & UK CENTRES

Documentation should be prepared and submitted according to the following format:-

1 A brief note on the educational system within the country concerned

This should include information relating to the procedures for the recognition/approval of any validated awards, if applicable.

2 General Aims and Objectives of the Institution

- (i) Brief history of the Institution, with particular reference to recent developments;
- (ii) reference to any institutional plans;
- (iii) academic and management structure;
- (iv) quality assurance policy and procedures;
- (v) links with other organisations (if any).

3 The Scheme

3A General Outline

- (i) For degree courses, a brief statement outlining the essential qualities and attributes expected of an Institution's graduates, together with a programme specification using the attached pro forma (see Appendix 11);
- (ii) a single page summary providing basic information about the scheme - title, proposed award, length, mode of study (e.g. on-line, distance mode, mixed mode);
- (iii) rationale, including aims and learning outcomes, rationale for mode of delivery (to include information on appropriate employer and/or industrial/professional input);
- (iv) the basic course structure (including coherence, progression, pathways); - diagrams and / or tables are helpful.

3B Module Descriptors

- (i) The full syllabus will be articulated through module descriptors and will include the following information:
 - Module title;
 - Module leader;
 - Credits and level;
 - Breakdown of the expected learning hours (contact hours + independent learning hours and mode for learning hours)
 - Details of module aims and learning outcomes;
 - Assessment, including mode of assessment;
 - Bibliographies for each individual syllabus; presented in the form of a required and recommended reading list.

3C Delivery

- (i) Provide details regarding the proposed methods of delivery - assessors would expect the teaching methods to be coherent, integrative and appropriate to the learning outcomes. See addendum 1 below for additional information regarding direct (face to face) tutorial support;
- (ii) Provide examples of all teaching, learning and assessment materials, for at least one module and specify what information and materials will be made available to students throughout the course;
- (iii) Explain what will be expected of students – initially and throughout the course;
- (iv) Describe who students should contact for assistance, with either academic related problems or logistical problems relating to the mode of delivery;
- (v) Explain how student progress on the course will be monitored, including any use of automatic progress chasing and assignment submission and return.

If a proposed scheme is to be delivered on-line, the following additional information should be provided:

- (i) Details of how student motivation is maintained by incorporating interactive elements into the programme (such as self-assessments, chat rooms and threaded discussions);
- (ii) Specify minimum requirements for students' hardware, software (including plug ins) and whether a specific browser, or version of a browser or browsers, would be required. NB: It would be the institution's responsibility to ensure that these requirements comply with country specific laws;
- (iii) Provide details of the technical support arrangements for on-line facilities covering availability, call out procedures, backup and recovery and monitoring and escalation procedures;
- (iv) Provide details of the pastoral support arrangements for students, distinguishing between local and central resources;
- (iv) Provide confirmation that the on-line facilities are password access only and that any changes to on-line material can be tracked and audited.

4 Assessment

- (i) Include a detailed assessment calendar, including the structure of examinations and including, where appropriate, an assessment pattern for each unit/module and detail of course progression; credit ratings for modular schemes of study;
- (ii) Give details of the weightings to be given to such elements as examinations, course work, practicals, projects, dissertations and explain how these map onto the learning outcomes;
- (iii) Explain how assignments will be submitted, marked, returned and tracked and how/when students and staff will be reminded of their work commitments. Provide specimen question papers/ assignments;
- (iv) Give clear details of penalties for late submissions;
- (v) Include details of referrals procedure and compensation/condonement pattern;
- (vi) Include details of appeals procedures;
- (vii) Explain what precautions the Institute will use in order to identify students securely and protect against plagiarism. Include details of the unfair practice procedure;
- (viii) Examinations should be sat at designated centres, approved by the University of Wales. If examinations are to be held in different time zones comparable examinations will need to be set and approved.

(N.B. All assessment regulations and requirements must be included in the Student Handbook)

5 Students

- (i) Student market and sources of students;
- (ii) Selection procedures;
- (iii) Actual entry requirements, including any specific 'A' level requested or their local equivalent, mature age entry, specified language requirements, etc.;
- (iv) Recruitment target;
- (v) Provide confirmation that students would receive an induction to working by distance learning and would receive a Student Handbook in electronic or paper format;
- (vi) Give details of how students will integrate with other students and staff (academic, pastoral and technical) with reference to data protection and student privacy (and local laws if applicable);
- (vii) Provide confirmation that all students will be allocated a personal tutor and give details of the systems in place for Course Leaders to be able to monitor staff usage to ensure standards of service to students;
- (viii) Provide details of how students with disabilities will be catered for;
- (ix) Provide details of any language support arrangements to be available for overseas learners whose native language is neither Welsh nor English.

6 Resources

- (i) Provide full CVs of the teaching, administrative and technical staff (to include IT expertise of teaching staff including tutors);
- (ii) Staff development policy;
- (iii) Provide details of staff induction in terms of academic work, technical aspects and personal tutor duties. If this material is delivered electronically, address the same questions for this material that are asked for the programme itself;
- (iv) Provide details on how standards to be applied to the performance of remote teaching staff, how they will be monitored and the actions to be taken in the event of standards not being achieved;
- (v) Describe library provision, especially journals, and hours of opening. Discuss electronic availability and licensing in territories covered if relevant;
- (vi) Give the annual budget for the library;
- (vii) Describe IT provision, budget and access;
- (viii) Provide details of laboratory and workshop facilities where appropriate;
- (ix) Give details of the adequacy of classroom space and tutorial/seminar facilities;
- (x) Give details of technical and administrative staff and administrative processes;
- (xi) Provide the proposed overall budget for maintenance and development of these facilities;
- (xii) Provide details of the funding of the course;
- (xiii) Provide confirmation that staff will receive a Staff Handbook, electronically or in paper format.
- (xiv) Provide a fully costed and dated resource development plan (covering learning resources, classroom facilities and staffing) must be submitted as part of the documentation. Failure to submit an appropriate development plan may result in the validation event being delayed.

7 Quality Assurance and Review

- (i) Explain internal validation procedures.
- (ii) Describe arrangements for course monitoring and review. Arrangements should be in place to ensure that the scheme is reviewed internally on a regular basis (e.g. updating of website/course content, delivery/assessment, student progress and results and staffing.) The University would expect to participate in course committee meetings in the early years of a course's operation;
- (iii) Provide details of student evaluation of courses to include a specimen questionnaire issued to students, if available, pastoral care and academic counselling systems available to students;

- (iv) Describe the staff appraisal scheme.
- (v) The Validation Board expects the following course management systems to be in place for each validated programme:
 - Regular course team meetings to discuss all aspects of a programme's health, including consideration of previous reports (should be minuted, with details of follow up action taken)
 - Meetings between the Moderator and students (wherever possible)
 - Annual meeting of the Joint Board of Studies (as per guidance in Appendix 32)
 - Student feedback questionnaires, accompanied by a mechanism whereby students are informed of the action being taken in response to the questionnaires
 - UW to be informed of all staff changes at the appropriate time

8 Clinical Provision (if appropriate)

- (i) Location/resources;
- (ii) number and type of clinical hours throughout the programme
- (iii) clinical supervision and clinical tutors (induction, training, continuity and uniformity)
- (iv) patient numbers, recruitment and assignment to students (including continuity of care);
- (v) insurance for staff and students;
- (vi) record keeping/data base, including details of data protection and security/confidentiality
- (vii) procedures for continuous and final assessment

9 Student Handbook

It should be noted that once a course is validated it will be necessary to transfer much of the above material into a student handbook. The Student Handbook should also include reference to the following information:

- (i) appropriate timetables and dates for delivery and assessment of the scheme;
- (ii) detailed information on the assessment and examination of the scheme, including regulations on the late submission of work, mitigating circumstances, unfair practice, appeals, etc.;
- (iii) information on student feedback, complaints, pastoral care provision and student support.

Addendum 1

Direct (face to face) Tutorial Support for Distance Learning and On-line Programmes

The University of Wales understands and accepts that an important part of distance learning and on-line programmes can be direct (face to face) tutorial support for students. Such support is beneficial and can encourage and support students who otherwise might feel isolated.

However, it is important to ensure that any such tutorial support is approved either as part of the validation event, or if introduced at a later date, is considered by the Validation Board. The CVs of any staff involved as tutors (on-line, by distance or direct (face to face)) should be approved by the University and staff should have a contractual agreement with the partner institution. Whilst the location of local tutorial support will not normally need to be verified by the University through a formal visit (although the University may require this in certain cases), a list of the locations and details of the resources contained at any location should be provided.

Direct (face to face) tutorial support should support the distance learning or on-line material. The expectation is that a student without access to the local tutorial support, or who chooses not to use such a resource, should have an equal opportunity to successfully complete the programme.

What cannot be permitted by the University:

1. Local tutorial support cannot be a means of delivery of the programme, e.g. lectures;
2. Locations involved in hosting local tutorial support cannot claim to be involved in the delivery of the validated programme. Unless specifically approved by the University, locations cannot claim to be 'support centres' Any publicity material should be submitted for approval in accordance with the Validation Board's normal procedures.

Serial Arrangements

The QAA Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning) - September 2004, states that:

20 A 'serial' arrangement is one in which an awarding institution enters into a collaborative arrangement with a partner organisation which, in turn, uses that arrangement as a basis for establishing collaborations of its own with third parties, but offering the awarding institution's awards. The Agency's experience in audits of collaborative provision leads it to believe that the safeguards offered by the precepts of Part A cannot be fully provided through serial arrangements that limit the awarding institution's ability to control the academic standards and quality of the provision which leads to its awards. If it is to discharge its awarding responsibility properly, and to be in a position to manage potential risk, an awarding institution should have an effective link, as described in precepts A19 and A20, to the assessment of the academic achievement of students on all programmes that lead to its awards. While this responsibility may be readily manageable through a direct relationship with a partner organisation, it becomes much more difficult once the chain of responsibility is extended. Serial arrangements can seriously jeopardise an awarding institution's ability to know what is being done in its name.

The University's agreement with its partner institutions states that:

The Institution shall deliver the Course at the approved Course Campus only. The Institution shall not deliver the Course (or any element of it) at any other location without the prior written consent of the University. The University shall be entitled to withhold its consent in its discretion and shall in no circumstances give its consent without first inspecting and validating any alternative location in accordance with its quality assurance policies and procedures.

Any potential serial arrangement will be reported to the Validation Board and appropriate action taken as a result of investigations. This can include the withdrawal of validation.



**PROFORMA FOR THE CONFIRMATION THAT CONDITIONS SET AT
VALIDATION HAVE BEEN MET**

Name of Institution:

Title(s) of scheme(s) of study to be approved:

I confirm that I am satisfied that the scheme(s) of study specified above has met all the conditions set at validation and should now be validated and introduced.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Comments

[NB: Chairs of Validation events should receive a note from the Moderator(s) designate confirming that any subject specific conditions have been met.]



CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS TO REGISTER AND SUPERVISE CANDIDATES FOR UNIVERSITY OF WALES VALIDATED RESEARCH DEGREES

The approval of an institution as suitable for the registration, supervision and examination of students for University of Wales research degrees implies a commitment by that institution to ensure that registered students will be able to complete the course.

Institutions seeking validation of research degree programmes, as well as the Panel assessing the suitability of an institution to offer a research degree programme, should take account of the section of the QAA Code of Practice relating to postgraduate research programmes, available at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section1/postgrad2004.pdf>.

As stated in the Code of Practice:

“Precept 1

Institutions will have in place effective arrangements to maintain appropriate academic standards and enhance the quality of postgraduate research degree programmes

Precept 5

Institutions will only accept research students into an environment that provides support for doing and learning about research and where high quality research is occurring.”

Documentation should be submitted to the University in accordance with Appendix 4 of the Validation Board’s Handbook of Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures (though not all sections will be relevant to a research degree programme). The University will wish to assure itself of the following in respect of its proposed partner:

1. That it is a financially stable institution with effective and adequate management and administration, adequate and well deployed human and physical resources and appropriate systems for quality assurance. The University will seek such information on these matters as it considers appropriate including audited accounts for the previous financial year..
2. That the institution’s research activity is of an appropriate quality and standard to support research at MPhil and PhD levels. The following are examples of evidence to be presented in support of an application.
 - 2.1 That the reason(s) for wishing to enter into partnership with the University of Wales are acceptable and sound.

2.2 That a detailed institutional profile including history of research activity, evidence of research "culture" and proposals for future developments (supported by statistics) is acceptable.

2.3 That the detailed procedures currently in force or proposed for the registration, monitoring and supervision and assessment of students are acceptable. These will include:

- admission requirements and selection procedure (see QAA precepts 6, 7 and 8)
- induction programme and student handbook (see QAA precepts 9 and 10)
- arrangements for supervision, rights and responsibilities of supervisor and student (see QAA precepts 11 to 14)
- probationary period and transfer from MPhil and PhD (see QAA precepts 16 and 17)
- assessment procedures (in accordance with the relevant University of Wales regulations) (see QAA precepts 22 to 24)

2.4 That a Research Degree Committee will be established in accordance with the following Validation Board criteria:

Each institution should establish a Research Degree Committee, which should meet at least twice per annum (face to face or by correspondence).

The *terms of reference* should be as follows:

1. Consideration of new candidatures and appointment of supervisors
2. Consideration of External Examiner appointments
3. Consideration of upgrades from MPhil to PhD (within agreed timescales)
4. Consideration of Annual Report to the University
5. Consideration of External Examiner reports from previous candidatures
6. Progress reports on existing candidates
7. Updates on examination of candidates and discussion of issues arising from examination process
8. Statistical information (see QAA precept 4)
9. Any other issues referred to the Committee by the University or institution

In the event of executive action being required, this can be taken by the Chair, in consultation with the Moderator.

The *membership* should be as follows:

1. Chair (Head of the Institution or nominee)
2. At least four members of academic and administrative staff with involvement in the research degree programme
3. Moderator
4. Validation Unit representative
5. Student representatives (for Ordinary business, not related to individual proposals)

(See also QAA precepts 4 and 21)

2.5 That the systems in place or proposed to monitor, support and review student progress and to obtain student feedback are appropriate, and that appropriate student welfare/support services are in place (see QAA precepts 15 to 17, 21, 25 to 27).

- 2.6 That the academic staff who will supervise and manage the programme are sufficient in number and quality. Detailed information will be required in the following areas:

List of all staff (academic and administrative)
CVs of potential supervisors
research degrees awarded to staff
staff development policy and examples of current activities
experience of staff in research supervision,
students currently registered or completed
student withdrawals/failure to complete
staff handbook

3. That the resources available or proposed are adequate in extent and quality. Attention will focus on:

3.1 Library

Details of the current stock, including journals and electronic access, opening hours, annual budget, acquisition policy, lending rights at local and other Universities and Institutions.

3.2 Information Technology

Information technology provision, budget and access.

3.3 Research Facilities

A listing of accommodation available for research and study, tutorial/seminar facilities.

4. If an institution is approved to offer research degree programme, the following requirements should be followed:

4.1 Candidature Approval

Information regarding new candidatures should be considered by the Research Degree Committee at the institution. The proposal should contain an outline of the research proposal (at least 500 words), a completed application form providing details of the candidate, including academic qualifications and the supervision arrangements. A pro forma containing information regarding the candidature which will be used by the Validation Unit for registration and tracking purposes. Once received and approved by the Research Degree Committee, confirmation of the candidature will be sent by the Validation Unit to the institution.

The University requires all research degree candidatures to normally commence at the MPhil stage, with a clear process for upgrading to be completed within a set timescale (12 months for full time students, 24 months for part time students). Certain candidates (e.g. those in possession of an MPhil or equivalent) can be considered for exemption from this requirement.

(See QAA precepts 6,7 and 8 regarding selection and admissions.)

4.2 Appointment of Supervisors

Supervisors should be approved, as staff members, as part of the initial validation event. Supervisors for individual candidates should be considered at the relevant Research Degree Committee. CVs for additional supervisors should wherever possible be presented in advance of the supervisor being linked to a particular candidate.

(See QAA precepts 11 to 14 regarding supervision.)

4.3 Appointment of External Examiners

Nominations for External Examiners should be considered by the Research Degree Committee in the first instance and the relevant documentation (including CV) should be sent to the Validation Unit well in advance of the examination date, for approval by the Validation Board. The appointment letter and related documentation will be sent by the Validation Unit, prior to the despatch of thesis.

(See QAA precepts 22 – 24 regarding assessment.)

WRITING DEGREE PROGRAMME DOCUMENTS

These notes are intended to assist partner institutions to prepare more readily and more clearly the outline of their programme(s) of study. Full programme outlines are required by the University to be contained in the institution's degree course document and much of the outline will also appear in the associated student handbooks. The University expects key aspects of the United Kingdom's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) approved practice in this area to be reflected in such documents. These notes introduce and offer brief guidance as to what is expected.

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| | - | Level 5 (Intermediate/Diploma) |
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Conclusion

Annex 1 – Qualification Nomenclature

Annex 2 – Qualifications (Levels) Descriptors

Annex 3 – University of Wales Validated Degree Scheme, Programme Specification

Annex 4 - Vocabulary for Writing Learning Outcomes

Introduction

In recent years higher education institutions in Britain have, following the lead of the QAA, been encouraged to adopt clear documentary evidence that their programmes of study meet accepted national standards. Significant progress in improving documentation has been made. The benefits from this process are also required of those partner institutions that work with UK universities in delivering British awards. These notes are intended to offer a guide to the key concepts and to good practice in preparing course outlines for the University of Wales' national and international partners.

The basic elements that define any programme are:

- The **qualification**, or, award
- The **level** at which it is set
- The **credits** that a student must obtain

There is also a need to ensure that each programme of study adequately covers the subject matter identified in the title of the award, e.g. undergraduate *law*, or, postgraduate *business administration*. These core subject components are identified in the QAA's **Benchmark Statements**.

Each of these elements will be explained briefly below by using the definitions offered by the QAA: Where appropriate, reference to the original documentation on the QAA website will be provided¹.

When preparing documentation that accurately and sufficiently describes a programme of study, it is necessary to produce:

- A **programme specification**
- Individual **module outlines**

There is a growing experience within the UK higher education sector of good practice in writing both programme specifications (for which the University has a template) and module outlines. Some lessons from that experience are included in these notes.

Academic colleagues working in partner institutions should see these notes, and those from the QAA, as providing a framework for the coherent development and specification of programme(s) of study. There is no intention to be prescriptive in what follows, rather it is expected that this document will encourage staff to think systematically, carefully and fully through what they wish to achieve. An important by-product should be that they will more readily reach agreement with the University of Wales by using a standard framework and common points of reference.

¹ Partner institutions' directors, registrars and academics are advised to monitor regularly for themselves the QAA website: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>

Qualifications

“A qualification is a public certification that a student has successfully completed a specified set of learning outcomes with a particular purpose and of specified minimum volume of credit at particular level(s). (It needs to be noted that in higher education it is common practice also to use the term ‘awards’ for qualifications in this general sense.)”²

For further information on qualifications see Annex 1.

Level Descriptors

The starting point for developing degree course documentation is to identify the level at which the programme is to be set. The Validation Board has adopted the 2004 Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW), which includes five levels for higher education academic qualifications.³ The UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has identified five levels for academic qualifications and these appear in brackets below⁴. Three of these levels apply to undergraduate awards and two to postgraduate awards:

Undergraduate:

- **Level 4 (Certificate, C level)**
- **Level 5 (Intermediate, I level)**
- **Level 6 (Honours, H level)**

Postgraduate:

- **Level 7 (Masters, M level)**
- **Level 8 (Doctoral, D level)**

Levels are used as indicators of “the relative difficulty, complexity, depth of study and autonomy required of a learner”⁵.

The CQFW contains generic level descriptors for each level, though the QAA qualifications descriptors contain more detailed guidance. At each level the QAA provides *qualifications descriptors*. The descriptors state the outcomes required of a successful student for the main award (or qualification) at that level. Institutions must ensure that the *learning outcomes* identified in their *programme specifications* (see later) are consistent with the relevant descriptor.

The QAA’s qualification descriptors have two distinct sections⁶:

“The first part is a statement of outcomes, achievement of which a student should be able to demonstrate for the award of the qualification. This part will be of particular interest to those designing, approving and reviewing academic programmes. They will need to be satisfied that for any programme, the curriculum and assessment provide all students with the opportunity to achieve, and to demonstrate achievement of, the outcomes.”

² <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/background/consultation/page2.asp>

³ The CQFW, June 2004,
http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/learning_and_qualifications/frameworks/CQFW/?lang=en

⁴ The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education – *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* – January 2001, <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>

⁵ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/background/consultation/page2.asp>

⁶ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI/default.asp>

“The second part is a statement of the wider abilities that the typical student could be expected to have developed. It will be of assistance to employers, and others with an interest in the general capabilities of holders of the qualification.”

Annex 2 presents the CQFW and QAA qualifications descriptors for just those parts of the range of awards that the University of Wales most often considers for validation.

The descriptors are generic in nature, applying to all programmes of study at a particular level. These descriptors are supplemented in many areas and levels of study by the QAA's subject specific *benchmark statements* (see below).

Subject Benchmark Statements

At the present time the QAA (working together with other organisations) has produced subject specific benchmark statements for more than fifty areas and/or levels of study⁷. The benchmark statements are brief and not overly prescriptive in nature. They have each been written by small panels of subject specialists. While not uniform in nature, each statement further defines the content and level of a named award(s).

It is important when preparing programme specifications and module outlines to be aware of the academic community's expectations for the award, in terms of content and level, as indicated in these statements. They can be an important initial reference in designing a programme but, of course, do not prescribe a simple detailed universal curriculum in the subject. The University requires that in Section 9 of the Programme Specification a clear reference is given to the relevant benchmark statement(s) (where such statement is available) consulted by the proposers/designers of the programme.

The subject benchmark statements will themselves be reviewed periodically and academic directors at partner institutions should monitor those statements relating to their programmes of study at least annually.

In addition to ensuring that the programme attains the appropriate level and content it is also necessary for it to meet the credit requirements specified by the University (see below).

Credits

The QAA advises that institutions must judge for themselves the *volume of work* that students will need to do in order to be able to achieve the outcomes specified for a programme of study. The University of Wales has made this judgement with regard to its awards and measures this volume through a credit system. The QAA provide a brief outline of the credit system (which accurately summarises the system used by the University of Wales)⁸:

“Credit is a measure of the volume of learning at a particular level and, thus, a way of calibrating the relative volume of various learning outcomes. Credit points are conventionally defined in terms of the notional learning hours required to achieve a defined group of such outcomes.

“Credit represents the outcomes of all forms of learning whether lecture-based, tutorial, work-based, research, experiential or whatever. It does not simply relate to formal teaching.

⁷ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/default.asp>

⁸ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/background/consultation/page2.asp>

“Credit points are awarded for the achievement of appropriate learning outcomes at a particular level. One point is to be regarded as reflecting the learning outcomes achieved through 10 notional hours of student effort, which may include work done in formal teaching situations, practical activities, research work, private study, preparation for assessment and so on.

“The learning normally achieved in a year of full-time undergraduate study is to be considered equivalent to 120 credits. It has already been agreed that the learning achieved in a year of full-time postgraduate study will be considered equivalent to 180 credits.”

It will be noted that examination board guidelines which provide for the practice of condoning or compensating for a failed module, will need careful thought in order for them to be reconciled with awarding the credits for ‘failed’ modules.

Undergraduate students must have pursued 120 credits in each of the final three (full time equivalent) years of the degree. Postgraduate students on taught masters’ programmes must also have pursued 120 credits from the taught part of the programme and a further 60 credits from the dissertation or project.

It is expected that the modules which make up a programme of study use a common base unit, e.g. ‘normally’ modules are each worth fifteen credits, or twelve credits, or ten credits. There may of course be ‘double’ modules and ‘half’ modules and so on, consistent with the best teaching practice for the module subject content. However, it is not expected that institutions will take existing programmes of study and assign module credits such that a module could have a credit value anywhere from one upwards. Students (and others) should be able to see and judge clearly the work effort/time required for a module relative to other modules.

Credits can be seen as units (of measurement) that when summed can lead to an appropriate qualification being awarded to a student. It is expected that credits will normally only be available to be ‘spent’ in this way for one appropriate qualification.

In some instances a student who has successfully accumulated credits towards an award may apply for these credits to also contribute to a *higher* award where the latter award requires further credits at the same or higher level, e.g. the credits within a Foundation Degree might contribute credits towards an Honours Degree. (See also the University’s *Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme*.⁹)

(NB: The University of Wales will be amending its regulations in line with the current European Credit Transfer System whereby 1 full-time academic year equals 60 credits.)

Programme Specification

According to the QAA, ‘ A programme specification is a concise description of the intended learning outcomes of an HE programme, and the means by which the outcomes are achieved and demonstrated. In general, modules or other units of study have stated outcomes, often set out in handbooks provided by institutions to inform student choice. These intended learning outcomes relate directly to the curriculum , study and assessment methods and criteria used to assess performance. Programme specifications can show how modules can be combined into whole qualifications. However, a programme specification is not simply an aggregation of module outcomes; it relates to the learning and attributes developed by the programme as a whole and which, in general, are typically in HE more than the sum of the parts.

⁹ <http://www.wales.ac.uk/defaultpage.asp?page=E501&taxonomy=VALREGIST>

For the purposes of audit and review, programme specifications are ...'the definitive publicly available information on the aims , intended learning outcomes and expected learner achievements of programmes of study, and audit teams will wish to explore their usefulness to students and staff, and the accuracy of the information contained in them' (QAA Handbook for institutional audit, England and Northern Ireland, 2006).

Some programme specifications focus on the student audience and aim to help them understand the teaching and learning methods that enable their intended learning outcomes to be achieved; the assessment methods that enable achievement to be demonstrated; and the relationship of the programme and its study elements to the qualifications framework and to any subsequent professional qualification or career path.

In other cases, programme specifications are used primarily as quality assurance document, particularly in design, approval and review processes. Bearing in mind the part that programme specifications play in audit and review processes (see above), it is important that they are fit for the purpose that they fulfill in each individual institution.¹⁰

The document, whilst concise, must be informative for students and other readers. The QAA suggest that programme specifications may be used in the following ways:

:

- "As a source for students and potential students seeking an understanding of a programme.
- By institutions and teaching teams, to promote discussion and reflection on new and existing programmes and to ensure that there is a common understanding about the aims and intended learning outcomes for the programme. Programme specifications should enable institutions to satisfy themselves that the designers of programmes are clear about their intended outcomes, and that these outcomes can be achieved and demonstrated. Programme specifications can serve as a reference point for internal review and monitoring of the performance of a programme. They can also provide the necessary core programme documentation.
- As a source of information for internal and external reviewers and external examiners who need to understand the aims and intended outcomes of programmes.
- As a source of information for employers, particularly about the skills and other transferable intellectual abilities developed by the programme.
- By professional and statutory regulatory bodies (PSBRs), who accredit HE programmes that can lead to entry to a profession or other regulated occupation. Programme specifications should identify those aspects of the programme that are designed to meet the requirements of the relevant body.
- As a basis for gaining feedback from students or recent graduates on the extent to which they perceived that the opportunities for learning were successful in promoting the intended outcomes.

In the benefits of transparency, all institutions will wish to make programme specifications available to students and to consider the benefits of writing them specifically with the student audience in mind."¹¹

There is no QAA prescribed form for the programme specification, though the QAA does offer suggestions as to the information that should be included in the document. In line with this guidance, the University has adopted a template to ensure that all the relevant information is

¹⁰ QAA, *Guidelines for preparing programme specifications*,
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/programSpec/guidelines06.asp>

¹¹ *ibid.*

presented in a systematic manner. The template and its accompanying guidance notes are to be found as Annex 3/Appendix 11 in the University's *Validation Handbook of Quality Assurance*¹².

Many of the sections within the University's *programme specification* template will be straightforward to complete if it is seen as simply presenting a summary of the underlying programme which is being more fully exposed through the *module outlines*. This being the case it must be possible for readers of the *programme specification* to trace statements made there back to *module outlines*. This is too often difficult to do and there is a danger that the *programme specification* can appear to be a somewhat separate and wishful document from the actual course of study.

Various methods for making the link from the *programme specification* to the *module outlines* are possible. One simple means of addressing this concern is to number each statement in the *programme specification*, e.g. 5 ii) c) might be the third claim being made under the heading *Cognitive skills*, or 8 ii) a) might be the first claim under *Methods of assessment*, and then to use these identifiers on the relevant *module outlines*. Some institutions provide together with their *programme specifications* a simple grid on which outcomes are matched to modules, e.g.

Map of Learning Outcomes and Modules:

	Knowledge					Cognitive				Subject skills				General skills			
	5ia	5ib	5ic	5id	...												
Module																	
Level 4																	
BA 401	X	X	X														
AB 403	X	X		X													
Level 5																	
CD 502		X		X													
CB 510	X	X	X	X													
Level 6																	
AB 609	X	X		X													
LM 604	X		X														
ST 623		X	X	X													

However it is accomplished a clear link should be established so that the claims for the programme can be verified when reviewing the students' achievements at the module level. It is at the individual module level that it is necessary to ensure that the learning and teaching processes and the assessment criteria and strategy, are consistent with the delivery and testing of the claimed outcomes.

Module Outlines

This section provides general guidelines covering both necessary content and good practice in writing module outlines. The module outline is a brief document that conveys to the reader, whether student, external examiner or fellow staff member, a clear view of the module.

The level of each module in a programme of study should be indicated in the Programme Specification template, Section 7. The levels shown must be consistent with the *qualification descriptors*; for the three years of the undergraduate degree they should meet the 4, 5 and 6

¹² <http://www.wales.ac.uk/defaultpage.asp?page=E501&taxonomy=VALIDATION>

levels. Postgraduate awards, certificate, diploma and (taught) master degree will all need to be at level 7. Four year undergraduate degrees which lead to an M award will need level 7 outcomes in the fourth year.

The QAA state¹³:

“Each particular module (unit, or analogous programme component) should be defined in terms of intended outcomes with a specified credit volume at one – and only one – specified level.

“The level of a module (or similar) should be determined by relating its intended learning outcomes and assessment criteria to levels descriptors.”

It can be seen from these statements that a module offered at two different levels will be required to have level specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

It may be necessary for degree regulations to be drafted to permit students to study some proportion of lower level modules, e.g. introductory work in quantitative methods for masters students, or, introductory modern language instruction (at level 4) for advanced undergraduates. “For modular Taught Master’s schemes it is recommended that a minimum of two thirds of the taught component be studied at Level 7. Such units should normally require pre-requisite knowledge and skills which are of initial degree level or its equivalent.”¹⁴

Individual modules are not required to incorporate all the level descriptors and benchmark statement requirements.

Key Elements in a Module Outline

- Aims

The aims section should provide a brief broad statement directing the reader to the general purpose served by the module.

- Learning Outcomes

These statements are more specific (than aims) and outline more precisely what knowledge and abilities a student is required to demonstrate on completion of a module. Learning outcomes represent a shift from the traditional emphasis on content, i.e. what will be taught, to a more student oriented approach, i.e. what a student will have achieved upon successful completion of the module. Achievement of learning outcomes must therefore be capable of being demonstrated by students and this should be apparent when reading through the assessment section of the module outline.

The clarity with which learning outcomes need to be written is perhaps most obvious when considering distance learning. The increasing use of distance learning technologies to deliver programmes has often seen a reduction in direct staff-student interaction from that found in full time and part time programmes. The remote learner especially is not always in a position to informally develop an understanding of what is expected and certainly will not gather it from merely reading a list of what will be taught.

Some key points emerge from recent experiences of producing learning outcomes:

- It would be expected that a ten credit module would have relatively few learning outcomes (when contrasted with the list of subject content), perhaps in the range three to eight. There are examples of institutions that list for each module a large number of outcomes, often broken down between the

¹³ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/background/consultation/page2.asp>

¹⁴ University of Wales *Credit and Accumulation Transfer Scheme*

four areas shown on our module mapping matrix earlier: However, these can be criticised as 'atomising' and 'trivialising' each outcome.

- An outcome can be a relatively rich attainment through which a number of the expectations of the level descriptor and subject benchmark statement are met. But it should not be written too broadly, 'Explain the role of equity in financing corporations' or too narrowly 'List Porter's five forces'.
- Outcomes should reflect the CQFW level descriptors and QAA subject benchmark statement expectations.
- For undergraduate degrees there should be a clear sense of progression in learning as a student moves from the first to the final year.
- Each outcome should be written at the threshold or pass level.
- Additional statements showing what a better standard of achievement within the level (i.e. that will lead to a better grade) may also be provided. Typically up to three levels of achieving an outcome is the limit; threshold, good and excellent. (Such information points to how assessment will be graded and may motivate learners.)
- Outcomes must be capable of demonstration and assessment.
- Outcomes should be written in the future tense using an active verb, e.g. "On successful completion of the module students will be able to" (A list of verbs is provided in Annex 4.)
- The language used cannot be ambiguous.

The subject benchmark statements in outlining expectations for qualifications tend to list (numbered) outcomes. This numbering is often used by module authors to show which of the benchmark statement's specific outcomes have been addressed in the module (and eventually how many of them in total have been addressed in the design of the programme).

- **Teaching Methods**

Simultaneous with deciding the learning outcomes there is a need to think creatively through the tutor's role in aiding the students to achieve them. There is an almost inevitable, perhaps historic bias towards the conventional lecture in many subject areas. It may become apparent that certain outcomes, e.g. information gathering, development of low level skills, are best accomplished through structured tasks for individuals (or groups). Other higher level outcomes such as the critical analysis of academic literature may be best 'demonstrated' through lectures (which are often also made available online). Students may themselves be called upon to demonstrate during class time that they have achieved specific learning outcomes, e.g. presenting findings, or leading a seminar.

Staff-student contact is important, not least for motivating students and receiving informal feedback, but the learning outcomes should determine the balance between modes of delivery and what learning students are required to do in their own time. Learning outcomes and teaching methods cannot be matters for separate consideration.

It is good practice to show on the module outline the division of the typical student's time between the various modes of delivery and learning.

The organisation and delivery of distance learning programmes will need to be carefully prepared. Distance learning programmes once established can, because of expense, lack flexibility. The use of internet and hardcopy published material, web based communication between staff and students and between students, workshops and other delivery modes may be needed in order to meet benchmark statement expectations.

- **Content**

This section of the outline will be simply a listing of the key topics to be taught. As a listing of the content will be straightforward to produce it is not further discussed here.

There should though be one note of caution; the learning outcome approach (following Bloom's taxonomy) directs attention to students being able to benefit from information through application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation and not merely its acquisition. Modules overloaded with content can tip the balance of learning towards unreflective knowledge gathering. Particularly at higher levels students must have the additional time and freedom to follow their own thinking

- **Assessment Criteria**

There is a fundamental requirement to establish sufficient assessment to enable a student to demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been achieved.

It is expected that all learning outcomes will be assessed for all students. Any part of the assessment may test more than one learning outcome e.g. students may be presented with a task that requires them to apply an analytical method whilst working in a team and to present the results in a seminar – such an assessment combines analysis and skills.

The University has previously authorised a wide range of assessment methods; unseen end of module examinations, continuous assessment based on essays and/or class tests, continuous assessment based on individual and group projects, marks for presentation and performance and even marks awarded for 'participation'. This list is not exhaustive but it indicates that the University will engage with methods that are appropriate as long as those methods can be employed securely.

It will be clear that some forms of assessment, e.g. class tests and multiple choice questions may be limited in their use to testing basic knowledge. Other forms such as extended essays and dissertations may be appropriate for testing evaluation. Subject specific and key skills may need to be tested in more practical ways possibly including experimentation and presentation. Answering the question of what form the assessment should take cannot be separated from the drafting of the learning outcomes themselves – the key questions to be answered simultaneously being:

- Can we assess this outcome?
- What method is best used to assess the outcome (or combination of outcomes)?
- What criteria can be used to gauge success?

With respect to the first and third of these questions the answers lie in the writing of the learning outcomes. Only assessable outcomes should be included on the module outline. Each learning outcome should be expressed clearly at the threshold level of performance.

(In drafting assessment criteria above the threshold level it may also be useful to refer to the University's Validation Handbook¹⁵ for the classifying (grading) student performances.)

- **Indicative Reading**

As this is a module outline and not a detailed reading list for students it would be appropriate to list key texts (full bibliographical details of up-to-date editions is required) and other sources such as relevant academic journals or internet sources.

Many institutions have used simple mapping to directly link learning outcomes, teaching and assessment. This, while extra work, does have the virtues of both highlighting the coherence of approach to outcomes and should limit the desire to have an overly complex module outline.

Finally:

¹⁵ Validation Handbook of Quality Assurance, Appendix 14,
<http://www.wales.ac.uk/defaultpage.asp?page=E501&taxonomy=VALIDATION>

Other basic information such as tutor, level, credits, pre-requisite and co-requisite modules, maximum or minimum class size and so on, should also be stated on the module outline.

Conclusion

The focus in these notes is on the academic elements of validated programmes, other important matters such as staffing, resources, students' rights, publicity and external examining, have not been addressed.

The purpose here is to provide clear guidance as to the University's requirements of partner institutions in preparing *programme specifications* and *module outlines*. It is now a requirement that all the University's partners place their programmes within this framework. Moderators will also be able to provide support in this process.

Any feedback on these guidance notes is welcomed.

Annex 1 - Qualification Nomenclature

The following is an edited extract from Annex 2 of the QAA's document '*The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland – January 2001*'.¹⁶ (References to master's research and doctoral degrees have been omitted.)

Public understanding of the achievements represented by higher education qualifications requires a consistent use of qualification titles. The following guidelines are designed to assist institutions in achieving consistency in the ways in which qualification titles convey information about the level, nature and subjects of study.

Level

- The titles 'Honours' and 'Master' should be used only for qualifications that meet in full the expectations of the qualification descriptors at H, and M levels respectively (NB: Levels 6 and 7 within the CQFW) (for further information defining *levels* see Annex 2).
- Titles with the stem 'Postgraduate' (e.g. Postgraduate Diploma) should be restricted to qualifications where the learning outcomes of the programme of study match relevant parts of the descriptor for a qualification at M level or above. (NB: Level 7 within the CQFW.)
- Titles with the stem 'Graduate' (e.g. Graduate Diploma) may be used for qualifications from programmes of study that typically require graduate entry or its equivalent, and have learning outcomes that match relevant parts of the descriptor for a qualification at H level, (NB: Level 6 within the CQFW).

Nature

- The title 'degree' should be used only for a qualification that meets in full the expectations of a qualification descriptor at levels I, H, or M. (NB: Levels 5, 6 or 7 with the CQFW.)
- When used with the stems 'Graduate' or 'Postgraduate', the title 'Certificate' should normally signify study equivalent to at least one-third of an academic year*, and the title 'Diploma' should normally signify study equivalent to at least two-thirds of an academic year*.

* For full time degree programmes that last more than one year the University of Wales regards the terms certificate and diploma to apply to one-third and two-thirds respectively, of the credits leading to the full award. The necessary outcomes to be attained for these subsidiary awards must be clearly specified and demonstrated by students gaining the awards¹⁷.

Subject

- Qualification titles that reflect the subject focus of programmes of study in two disciplines (e.g. a joint Honours award) should consider nomenclatures based on:
 - 'A and B', where there is an approximately equal balance between two components;
 - 'A with B' for a major/minor combination where the minor subject accounts for at least a quarter of the programme.

¹⁶ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI/default.asp>

¹⁷ University of Wales *Credit and Accumulation Transfer Scheme*
<http://www.wales.ac.uk/defaultpage.asp?page=E501&taxonomy=VALREGIST>

- Qualification titles should not normally reflect more than three subject components. Where there are more than three significant components, the title 'Combined Studies' would be appropriate.

Annex 2 - Qualifications (Levels) Descriptors

(a) CQFW Descriptors

The following is an extract from the CQFW June 2004 Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales.

"Learning accredited at the following levels will reflect the ability to:

LEVEL 4: develop a rigorous approach to the acquisition of a broad knowledge base; employ a range of specialised skills; evaluate information, using it to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to a variety of unpredictable problems; operate in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.

LEVEL 5: generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at an abstract level, with a command of specialised skills and the formulation of responses to well defined and abstract problems; analyse and evaluate information; exercise significant judgement across a broad range of functions; and accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.

LEVEL 6: critically review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, utilising specialised skills across an area of study; critically evaluate new concepts and evidence from a range of sources; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of situations; accept accountability for determining and achieving group and/or personal outcomes.

LEVEL 7: display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical and professional activity; accepting accountability for all related decision making including use of supervision.

LEVEL 8: make a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of inquiry demonstrating a command of methodological issues and engaging in critical dialogue with peers; accepting full accountability for outcomes.

Level	Intellectual	Processes	Accountability
4	Develop a rigorous approach to the acquisition of a broad knowledge base. Employ a range of specialised skills. Determine solutions to a variety of unpredictable problems. Generate a range of responses, a limited number of which are innovative, to well defined but often unfamiliar problems. Evaluate information, using it to plan and develop investigative strategies.	Operate in a range of varied and specific contexts involving creative and non-routine activities. Exercise appropriate judgement in planning, selecting or presenting information, methods or resources.	Undertake self-directed and a limited amount of directive activity. Operate within broad general guidelines or functions. Take responsibility for the nature and quantity of outputs. Meet specified quality standards.
5	Generate ideas through the analysis of information and concepts at an abstract level. Command wide ranging, specialised technical, creative and/or conceptual skills. Formulate appropriate responses to resolve well defined and abstract problems. Analyse, reformat and evaluate a wide range of information.	Utilise diagnostic and creative skills in a range of technical, professional or management functions. Exercise appropriate judgement in planning, design, technical and/or supervisory functions related to products, services, operations or processes.	Accept responsibility and accountability within broad parameters for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.
6	Critically review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge. Utilise highly specialised technical or scholastic skills across an area of study. Utilise research skills. Critically evaluate new information, concepts and evidence from a range of sources.	Transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills in a range of situations. Exercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services operations or processes, including resourcing.	Accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.
7	Display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills. Demonstrate expertise in highly specialised and advanced technical, professional and/or research skills.	Conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity. Design and apply appropriate research methodologies. Communicate results of research to peers.	Accept accountability in related decision making including use of supervision.
8	Make a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of inquiry.	Demonstrate command of methodological issues. Communicate results of research to peers and engage in critical dialogue.	Accept accountability in related decision making including use of supervision.

QAA Levels	CQFW Levels
Doctoral D Level	Level 8
Masters M Level	Level 7
Honours H Level	Level 6
Intermediate I Level	Level 5
Certificate C Level	Level 4

(b) QAA Descriptors

The following is an edited extract from Annex 2 of the QAA's document '*The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland – January 2001*¹⁸. (There is no distinction drawn in these descriptors between taught masters and masters by research. Reference to doctoral degrees has been omitted.)

**Descriptor for a qualification at Certificate (C) level:
Certificate of Higher Education**

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- i. Knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study;
- ii. An ability to present, evaluate, and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- a Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work;
- b Communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments;
- c Undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment;

and will have:

- d Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

**Descriptor for a qualification at Intermediate (I) level:
Degree (non-Honours)**

Non-Honours degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- i. Knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed;
- ii. Ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context;

¹⁸ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI/default.asp>

- iii. Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in their subject(s), and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study;
- iv. An understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- a. Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis;
- b. Effectively communicate information, arguments, and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively;
- c. Undertake further training, develop existing skills, and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations;

and will have:

- d. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Descriptor for a qualification at Honours (H) level:

Bachelors degree with Honours

Honours degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- i. A systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline;
- ii. An ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline;
- iii. Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline; and
 - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent;
- iv. An appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge;
- v. The ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (e.g. refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- a. Apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects;
- b. Critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem;
- c. Communicate information, ideas, problems, and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;

and will have:

- d. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts; and
 - the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

Descriptor for a qualification at Masters (M) level:

Masters degree

Masters degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- I. A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
- II. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
- III. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- IV. Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- a. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- b. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- c. Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have:

- d. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
 - Decision making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
 - The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Annex 3 – University of Wales Validated Degree Scheme, Programme Specification

See Appendix 11

Annex 4 - Vocabulary for Writing Learning Outcomes

For the purpose of assisting staff to write learning outcomes many university websites provide a vocabulary listing. The one reproduced here is quite widely used; however, there is a strong temptation to edit it. How does *understand* or *be aware of* translate into an assessment task? Why are words like *calculate*, *derive*, *plot*, *use*, and *propose* omitted? Clearly each discipline will find additional specialist language must sometimes be brought to bear in writing some of the learning outcomes.

Another caution when using this excellent list is that the third level of Bloom's taxonomy (to which it relates) is usually 'application' and certainly the verbs listed below meet that definition more readily than they do 'knowledge and understanding'. In fact it is sometimes the first three categories that are defined as 'knowledge and understanding'; to paraphrase they are 'recalling information', 'explaining information' and 'solving closed-form problems'. The three higher categories are by nature 'intellectual skills'; to paraphrase they are 'answering open-ended questions', 'creating your own unique answers' and 'exercising critical judgement based on deep knowledge and high level method'. Hopefully, this may help in thinking through the link to the levels descriptors although knowledge or evaluation may be required at any level.

The list reproduced below appears on a number of websites but seems to have originated from work produced by the *Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer* (SEEC):

Finding the right words for use in writing learning outcomes/assessment criteria can be difficult, particularly when the statements must mesh with the generic level descriptors. The following list is provided as an aid in this process. The words are organised for convenience under headings that might be seen to accord with those from Bloom's taxonomy. However, no hierarchy is intended.

The words are simply a vocabulary list gleaned from a variety of sources to help you write learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Verbs which require evidence of knowing:

Define, describe, identify, label, list, name, outline, reproduce, recall, select, state, present, be aware of, extract, organise, recount, write, recognise, measure, underline, repeat, relate, know, match.

Verbs which require evidence of comprehension:

Interpret, translate, estimate, justify, comprehend, convert, clarify, defend, distinguish, explain, extend, generalise, exemplify, give examples of, infer, paraphrase, predict, rewrite, summarise, discuss, perform, report, present, restate, identify, illustrate, indicate, find, select, understand, represent, name, formulate, judge, contrast, translate, classify, express, compare.

Verbs which require evidence of knowledge/understanding:

Apply, solve, construct, demonstrate, change, compute, discover, manipulate, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, relate, show, use, give examples, exemplify, draw (up), select, explain how, find, choose, assess, practice, operate, illustrate, verify.

Verbs which require evidence of analysis:

Recognise, distinguish between, evaluate, analyse, break down, differentiate, identify, illustrate how, infer, outline, point out, relate, select, separate, divide, subdivide, compare, contrast, justify, resolve, devote, examine, conclude, criticise, question, diagnose, identify, categorise, point out, elucidate.

Verbs which require evidence of synthesis:

Propose, present, structure, integrate, formulate, teach, develop, combine, compile, compose, create, devise, design, explain, generate, modify, organize, plan, re-arrange, reconstruct, relate, re-organise, revise, write, summarise, tell, account for, restate, report, alter, argue, order, select, manage, generalise, précis, derive, conclude, build up, engender, synthesise, put together, suggest, enlarge.

Verbs which require evidence of evaluation:

Judge, appraise, assess, conclude, compare, contrast, describe how, criticise, discriminate, justify, defend, evaluate, rate, determine, choose, value, question.

MEMBERSHIP OF VALIDATION PANEL

Name of Institution:	
Title of Proposed Scheme of Study:	

I confirm that, as nominated Chair of the Panel of Assessors:

I am satisfied that no conflicts of interest have been identified within the proposed Panel membership;

I am satisfied with the following membership in connection with the above validation exercise:

Signature:	
Name:	
Date:	

PLEASE RETURN TO:
MR H F HUGHES, HEAD OF VALIDATION SERVICES,
UNIVERSITY OF WALES VALIDATION UNIT, THE REGISTRY,
KING EDWARD VII AVENUE, CATHAYS PARK, CARDIFF, CF10 3NS
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 00-44-(0) – 29 – 20 - 376999
FAX NUMBER: 00-44-(0) –29 – 20- 376984
e.mail: validation@wales.ac.uk

NOTES OF GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS OF PANELS OF ASSESSORS

- 1 The enclosed submission document(s) and Handbook of Quality Assurance describe both the proposal presented for validation and the University's procedures for considering and processing this proposal.
- 2 As a member of the visiting panel the Assessor will, of course, be required to pay close attention to the academic standard and qualities of the submission and of the evidence presented during the validation meetings themselves.
- 3 In coming to conclusions, it would be helpful if the Assessor could pay close attention to the following information and indicators:

- The qualifications and experience of staff/staff development policy
- Assessment criteria and details
- Entry requirements and admissions process
- Institutional aims & objectives and the programme(s') match to these
- Resources (see 13 & 14)
- Programme Specifications and references to Benchmark Statements
- Course learning objectives
- Teaching and learning methods and outcomes
- Experience/ability of institution to adapt to the UK system.

- 4 The Panel of Assessors will make its recommendation to the University's Validation Board.

The final decision can range from unconditional approval to outright rejection of a proposal. Approval will normally be subject to fulfilment of certain conditions and/or recommendations (often with deadlines attached). The Panel members who attended the Validation event will need to confirm, by means of a pro forma, that all conditions have been met before the scheme can be validated and introduced (Appendix 6).

Retrospective approval may be considered within certain parameters at undergraduate level (normally for Year 1 of a 3 year scheme of study or up to Year 2 for a 4 year scheme of study). Retrospective approval will not normally be considered at Master's level.

- 5 Should the Assessor have any additional remarks or suggestions to make regarding the validation procedures or exercises then these may be addressed directly (in confidence if necessary) to the Head of Validation Services.

7. Programme Learning Outcomes: What a Graduate Should Know and be able to do on Completion of the Programme

To gain the qualification the student will have demonstrated i) subject knowledge and understanding ii) cognitive skills iii) subject-specific practical and professional skills and iv) other general skills and capabilities specified in the learning outcomes for modules within the programme.

i) Knowledge and understanding in the context of the subject	ii) Cognitive skills	iii) Subject-specific practical\professional skills	iv) General\transferable skills
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8. Qualities, Skills and Capabilities Profile

The educational and training goals of the programme seek to promote and demonstrate the following qualities, skills, capabilities and values in the student:

i) Intellectual	ii) Practical	iii) Personal and Social
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9. Main Subjects, Levels, Credits and Qualifications

Detail the programme structure, requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards

10. Teaching and Learning Strategy : Details of how the Scheme will be Delivered

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11. Assessment

i) Main Features of the Programme's Overall Assessment Scheme	ii) Methods of Assessment (including weighting of components)
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12. Benchmark Statements

(i) List the QAA Benchmark Statement(s) consulted as part of the programme design process:

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13. Key Skills Mapping

A mapping exercise should be conducted to demonstrate how the key skills identified by the Validation Board are being developed, assessed and recorded within validated programmes. The key skills identified by the Board are:

- Communication
- Information technology and information skills
- Working with others
- Problem solving
- Study skills
- Employability

14. Date the Programme specification was written/amended:

--

UNIVERSITY OF WALES VALIDATED SCHEME : Programme Specification

Notes of Guidance - for validated centres when completing the programme specification

- Section 1** **Qualification** - nature of degree award e.g. BSc (Hons), BA (Ord), MBA.
- Section 2** **Programme title** - full title of the scheme of study e.g. Business Administration and Marketing, Architectural Science.
- Section 3** **Teaching Institution – the institution at which the programme will be delivered.**
- Section 4** **Programme type** - e.g. full time or part time, modular\non-modular, distance learning.
- Section 5** **Aims and distinctive features of the programme** - including details of what the programme sets out to achieve (under main purposes). Include details of why the programme is distinctive and relevant (e.g. for local or national needs) under special features. The language of instruction and assessment should be listed.
- Section 6** **Criteria for Admission to the Programme –**
- Section 7** **What a graduate should know and be able to do on completion of the programme** - provide full details of the programme learning outcomes, i.e. the expected skills\knowledge which the student will acquire when undertaking the scheme of study (under each of the four separate headings provided).
- Section 8** **Qualities, Skills and Capabilities Profile - list the most important qualities that undertaking the programme will bring to the student under each of the three headings provided, e.g. critical reasoning, research and professional skills, self-motivation, teamwork.**
- Section 9** **Main subject, levels, credits and qualifications** - fully describe the programme structure, including the length of the programme (years of study) and the mode of study (full or part-time etc), pathways, routes, options. Attach appropriate credit values and levels of study for each module or unit of study (modular credit ratings must be within the framework described in University of Wales Regulations).

Provide a diagrammatic representation of the entire programme. The following is an example:

Bachelor Honours Degree 360 credits

Compulsory Modules	Sport Science Modules	Coaching Science Modules	Exercise Science Option
Research Project (40) Contextual Studies (20)	Sports Injury (10) Rehabilitation (10) Paediatric Sport Science (10) Adapted Physical Activity (10) Science of Athletics (10) Science of Swimming (10)	Business in Sport (10) Managing Teams (10) Training Theory (10) Developing Strength (10) Assessing Coaches (10) Performance Analysis (10)	Exercise & the Elderly (10) Paediatric Exercise Science (10) Women & Exercise (10) Injury (10) Rehabilitation (10) Exercise & Mental Health (10)
<i>HE Diploma 240 credits</i>			
Compulsory Modules	Sport Science Modules	Coaching Science Modules	Exercise Science Option
Methods of Enquiry (20)	Assessment of Sports	Coaching Pedagogy (20)	Epidemiology and CHD (20)

Contextual Studies (20)	Performer (20)	Improving Performance (20)	Exercise Testing and Prescription (20)
Elective Modules	Assessment of Sports Performance (20)	Practical Coaching (20)	Exercise Behaviour (20)
Disability Sport (20)	Scientific Support for Sports Performer (20)		
Motor Development (20)			
Sports Technology (20)			
Progressive Coaching (20)			

HE Certificate 120 credits

Compulsory Modules

Movement Systems (20)
 Biological Systems (20)
 Behavioural Systems (20)
 Contextual Studies (20)
 Methods of Enquiry (20)

Elective Modules

Disability Sport (20)
 Motor Development (20)
 Sports Technology (20)
 Effective Coaching (20)

Section 10 Teaching and Learning Strategy – provide details of how the programme will be delivered in order to ensure that the learning outcomes can be achieved e.g. case studies, group work, seminars, lectures.

Section 11 Assessment

i) Main features of the programme’s overall assessment scheme

- link assessment details to the credit rating of each module and to the learning outcomes of each module and the degree scheme overall;
- provide full details of re-sit opportunities, pass marks, compensation, progression etc.

ii) Methods of assessment

- list the methods of assessment employed for the overall scheme of study, e.g. unseen written examinations, assignments, major project\dissertation, open book examinations.

Section 12 Benchmark Statements

- list the QAA Benchmark Statement(s) consulted as part of the programme design process: the expectation is that the award will conform to the subject benchmarks recognised in the UK.

Section 13 Key Skills

- list how the key skills identified by the Validation Board are being developed, assessed and recorded. See Validation Board guidance on key skills (Appendix 12). The expectation is that each key skill would be tested at least twice within each level of the programme, though a flexible approach will be adopted by Panels of Assessors in order to take account of the nature of the particular programme.

Section 14 Date of Programme Specification

GUIDANCE FOR VALIDATED INSTITUTIONS ON KEY SKILLS

1. What are Key Skills?

The 1997 Dearing Report on Higher Education proposed that key skills should have a place in all degree level programmes. The report stressed four key skills, which it regarded as being 'key to the future success of graduates whatever they intend to do in later life' (Dearing Report, 1997, p.133). The four key skills identified by the report were:

- Communication skills
- Numeracy
- Use of information technology
- Learning how to learn

The role of key skills is emphasised further by the position that they occupy in programme specifications and benchmark statements.

The diversity of practice in approaches across the HE sector with regards to defining and developing key skills should be noted, which allows the Validation Board a relatively free role in seeking to address key skills issues. Staff should be aware of ways in which opportunities can be provided for students to develop key skills, and that all programmes should include opportunities for such skills to be assessed and recorded.

2. What has the Validation Board defined as Key Skills?

Following careful consideration of a wide range of documentation relating to key skills across the sector, the Validation Board has adopted the following as key skills to be developed, assessed and recorded as part of all validated schemes:

- Communication
- Information technology and information skills
- Working with others
- Problem solving
- Study skills
- Employability

[It was felt that numeracy could be omitted from the list as it should be embedded in the relevant degrees e.g. Business Administration, Computing, and that such skills would be defined and tested by the specific requirements of the programme concerned.]

Work had been undertaken in respect of defining these key skills at the various levels within HE, and the document outlining these is attached as Annex 1. It was noted that the document should be used as a reference point and guidance rather than as a strict requirement.

3. Introducing and recording key skills within validated programmes

The Validation Board has agreed that from session 2005/06 onwards, new programmes undergoing validation or a Quinquennial Review exercise will be required to undertake a mapping exercise to demonstrate how the key skills identified by the Board were being developed, assessed and recorded within validated programmes. An example of a mapping exercise is attached as Annex 2.

Institutions and Moderators should note that the Board will be adopting a flexible approach to incorporating key skills within schemes. In practice, this might range from developing key skills modules within programmes to embedding key skills within particular modules. The expectation would be that each key skill would be tested at least twice within each level of a programme.

It should also be noted that the flexible approach would be extended to the mapping exercise - if it could be demonstrated why a particular key skill did not need to be developed and assessed, there was scope for this to be taken into account – Panels would be permitted to interpret the general guidance according to the nature of the programme.

March 2005

ANNEX 1 - KEY SKILL DESCRIPTORS

	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION SKILLS	EMPLOYABILITY	STUDY SKILLS	PROBLEM SOLVING	COMMUNICATION	WORKING WITH OTHERS
LEVELS	The Learner:					
7 (M)	Can monitor, assess and critically reflect on the use of IT and information skills and identify ways of further developing these skills.	Can assess the effectiveness of the skills development and identify further ways of developing skills required by employers.	Is autonomous in study and use of resources for learning. Makes professional use of others in support of self-directed learning.	Is confident and autonomous in problem solving. Can isolate, clarify, assess and manage resolution of most relevant problems.	Can engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others within her/his field.	Can clarify a group task and lead, work with or work within a group towards defined outcomes, making appropriate use of the capacities of the group members. Is able to negotiate and handle conflict with confidence.
6 (3)	Can prepare and use IT to aid efficient searching evaluation, selection and presentation of information, exploring alternative lines of enquiry and deriving new information where appropriate.	Can critically reflect on the skills obtained and amend the strategy as necessary.	With minimum guidance, can manage own learning using full range of resources for discipline; can seek and make use of feedback.	Is confident and flexible in identifying and defining complex problems and the application of appropriate knowledge and skills to their solution.	Can engage effectively in debate in a professional manner and produce detailed and coherent project reports.	Can interact effectively within a learning of professional group. Can recognise or support leadership. Can negotiate in a learning/professional context and manage conflict.
5 (2)	Can plan how to obtain and can use the information required in order to meet the purpose of a required activity. Can use the appropriate structures and procedures to explore and develop information.	Can develop a strategy for planning and developing skills required by employers and implement the strategy	Adopts a broad ranging and flexible approach to study; identifies strengths of learning needs and follows activities to improve performance; is autonomous in straight forward tasks.	Can identify key elements of problems and choose appropriate methods for their resolution in a considered manner.	Can communicate effectively in a format appropriate to the discipline and report practical procedures in a clear and concise manner with relevant information in a variety of formats.	Can interact effectively within a learning group, giving and receiving information and ideas and modifying response where appropriate. Is ready to develop professional working relationships within discipline.
4 (1)	Can identify basic information and suitable sources, carry out effective searches and bring together the information in a consistent way, ensuring the work is accurate, clear and properly saved.	Can identify own skills, abilities, personal interests and relate those to employment opportunities.	Can work within a relevant ethos and can access and use a range of learning resources.	Can apply given tools/methods to a well-defined problem and begins to appreciate the complexity of the issues.	Can communicate effectively in a format appropriate to the discipline and report practical procedures in a clear and concise manner with all relevant information.	Meets obligations to others (tutors and/or peers); can offer and/or support initiatives; can recognise and assess alternative options.

ANNEX 2 – EXAMPLE OF KEY SKILLS MAPPING EXERCISE

Name of Institution
Name of Programme

XXXX
BSc (Hons) in Business Information Systems

Key Skills	Level	Developed and Assessed in Modules	How?
Communication	1	Professional Development 1 Introduction to Networks & Multimedia	Continuous assessment includes Presentation worth 20% of module mark
	2	Professional Development 1 Marketing Management and Planning	Continuous assessment includes Presentation worth 20% of module mark
	3	Dissertation Information Systems in Business	Two Presentations Presentation in continuous assessment
Information Technology and Information Skills	1	Information Systems and Applications Programming	Coursework includes advanced usage of Microsoft products
	2	Information Processing and Management 1 Data Management	Coursework and examinations test both IT skills and information processing skills
	3	Information Systems in Business Information Processing and Management 2	Coursework and examinations test both IT skills and information processing skills
Working with others	1	Professional Development 1 Introduction to Internet and Multimedia	Part of the coursework is a team exercise worth 20% of the module mark
	2	Professional Development 2 Multimedia 1	Part of the coursework is a team exercise worth 20% of the module mark
	3	Information Systems Project Management Professional and Ethical Issues in Information Systems	Coursework is based on group work

Problem Solving	1	Programming 1 Introduction to Internet and Multimedia	All assessments involve problem solving
	2	Data Management Systems Development and Design	All assessments involve problem solving
	3	Project Information Systems Project Management	Aim of project is to solve an IT problem within a company Coursework involves problem solving
Study Skills	1	All modules	Part of the taught element of the module
	2	Research Skills All modules	Part of the taught element of the module
	3	Project All modules	Includes research methodology
Employability	1	Professional Development 1 Organisational Behaviour	Part of the taught element of the module Tested in coursework
	2	Professional Development 2 Marketing Management and Planning	Part of the taught element of the module Tested in coursework
	3	Ethical Issues of Information Systems Information Systems in Business	Tested in coursework

NB Each key skill should be tested at least twice during each level.
Module descriptors and programme specifications should also identify the key skills being developed and assessed.

LIBRARY, INFORMATION AND LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES AT VALIDATED INSTITUTIONS: GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are intended to ensure that students enrolled on programmes validated by the University of Wales or at institutions seeking validation by the University of Wales have access to an appropriate level of learning resources to support the overall learning experience. The guidelines take the form of a set of minimum requirements together with the formulation of a development plan, both of which should be referred to in the validation submission document.

The minimum requirements list a number of services and facilities which institutions seeking validation should have in place (or at least indicating a commitment that the minimum requirements will be met within the first year of the running of a scheme) in order for validation to proceed. The second stage consists of a development plan, to be implemented by an institution during the first three years of a scheme's operation and achieved by the Quinquennial Review. The minimum requirements should ensure that institutions meet a minimum threshold, but given the wide range of institutions which now seek validation, the development plan will reflect the local circumstances. The guidelines will hopefully encourage institutions to place an emphasis on providing wider access to learning resources to all students and staff, rather than simply encouraging institutions to purchase quantities of books.

It is worth bearing in mind that students enrolled on University of Wales validated programmes will have access to a wide range of on-line materials via the Validation Board's on-line library.

A questionnaire (copy attached) has been produced for members of validation and Quinquennial Review panels and for Moderators, to enable assessors to evaluate institutions' existing library and IT resources and development plans. The intention is that the basic information is provided by staff at the institution, and that this information is then vetted by the assessor/Moderator.

Minimum Requirements

Library provision

- Is there a dedicated area, of suitable dimensions, for library services? Is library access available at times that are convenient for the students, and in addition to teaching times?
- Are all core texts and journals stipulated on module reading lists provided as a core collection in the library or available on-line? Assessors may be satisfied if alternative arrangements are in place, e.g. if students are required to purchase core texts or when the institution provides students with all such texts.
- Will a collection of hand-out material provided to students during the course of their studies be kept centrally, in the institution's library (subject to the copyright laws pertaining to the country in question)? The collection should be available for inspection by the Moderator during his/her visits to the institution.
- Will the institution designate a person to manage the library, and to be responsible for developing the resource? If yes, who is that person and his/her status? Who is s/he responsible to? Will the institution provide support for the person appointed to enhance his/her competence to manage and develop the resource? Will the academic co-ordinators of validated schemes of study be responsible for acquiring lists of suggested texts from the teaching staff and for advising on the acquisition of those texts?
- Has evidence been provided of any formal arrangements in place if the institution's library resources are to be supplemented by providing access to other local (e.g. public, Universities, business) libraries? A visit to the collaborating libraries may be necessary, especially if such libraries have been identified by the institutions as a major source of such texts and journals.

- Students will have access to the Validation Board's on-line library, but is the institution considering taking advice and exploring links with the learning resources or information services department at the Moderator Designate's institution? This could be discussed with the Moderator designate.
- Are students introduced to library facilities (including the Validation Board's on-line library) as part of an induction course?

ICT provision

- Is there a dedicated area, of suitable dimensions, for ICT services? Is access to the IT facilities freely available during the institution's opening hours?
- Are there a satisfactory number of IT workstations provided for students' use? The number should be specified in the submission document. Are these workstations networked, with a range of appropriate software provided? Is the necessary software to teach courses available?
- Many students will have their own PCs or laptops. What, if any, arrangements are in place to ensure access for students, e.g. remote access or wireless networks.
- Has the institution designated a person with responsibility for managing the IT resources, ideally in collaboration with any other persons with designated responsibilities for learning resource provision?
- Has a list of the course specific and other software provided for students' use been included as part of the validation submission?
- Are appropriate initial skills and training in ICT provided as part of an induction course?

Development Plan

A fully costed resource development plan should be submitted as part of the validation submission and should encompass the following:

- Plans for developing and increasing access to library facilities.
- Plans for renewing and upgrading ICT hardware and software.
- Details of any additional collaborative resource sharing agreements which are planned, e.g. details of any planned visits to the Moderator's institution, to discuss library or ICT resources.
- Staff development plans for the member of staff designated to manage the library and ICT resources.
- A budget for the above.

Application of the Guidelines and Questionnaire

A copy of the guidelines and questionnaire will be provided to the institution seeking validation/undergoing the review. The basic information should be provided by staff at the institution and made available to the Panel of Assessors. It is suggested that one member of an initial validation panel assumes the role of learning resources scrutineer and evaluates the responses provided as part of the validation event, following a tour of the facilities and discussions with the relevant members of staff at the institution. Similarly a member of a Quinquennial Review panel should undertake a similar role, giving due regard to development plans and their actual implementation.

Moderators should also ensure that the questionnaire is completed at least every three years, and that the Validation Board's attention is drawn to any learning resource issues arising from meetings with staff and students in the validated centre.

Completed questionnaires should be submitted to the Validation Unit, and will be copied to the relevant persons (e.g. Moderator, Head of the Institution) and the appropriate follow up action will be taken, depending on the nature of the responses provided. Should any serious concerns be raised in the questionnaire the matter will be referred to the Validation Board's Executive Committee.

LIBRARY, INFORMATION AND LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES AT VALIDATED CENTRES: QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

This questionnaire is designed to provide a comprehensive record of library, information and learning support services provided by or at centres seeking validation/already validated by the University of Wales.

The questionnaire should be completed in conjunction with staff from the institution concerned and the responses evaluated by the assessor/Moderator during initial validation events, by Moderators when they undertake their periodic visits to the centres/institutions (a questionnaire should normally be completed once every three years), by Quinquennial Review Panels, and at any other appropriate event, such as a special review visit. It should also be used if matters relating to these services have been the specific subject of discussions between the University of Wales Validation Unit and the centre/institution, and when action has been sought.

Institutions seeking validation are already required to provide an initial policy statement relating to library, information and library support services and facilities, together with a strategic development plan. Annual College and Course Review Forms and Quinquennial Review documents also seek comments and reports on library and information services. This questionnaire is to be used in conjunction with such reports as part of the Validation Board's quality assurance mechanisms, and as part of the continuing process of monitoring the quality and standards of provision at validated centres.

It is accepted that it is difficult to design a questionnaire that will embrace all library and learning support matters in all contexts, especially given the wide range of subject areas and geographical locations at which programmes are validated. Assessors/Moderators are encouraged to exercise their discretion and judgement when judging the quality of the resources and the information provided in the questionnaire.. You will encounter different standards and cultural and traditional attitudes and practices, but the Validation Board is primarily concerned with improving and developing resources, facilities and services to ensure that a minimum and acceptable standard for students on University of Wales validated schemes is in place.

Your comments and views are most valuable; please make every effort to complete the questionnaires in a comprehensive manner – your qualitative comments are as important as the quantitative data provided by the institutions. The questionnaires will be scrutinised as part of the regular monitoring processes carried out by the Validation Board and the appropriate follow up action taken. Any matters of particular concern indicated in the questionnaires will be reported to the Validation Board's Executive Committee.

The Validation Board is very grateful for your support in this work.

Updated March 2006

MODERATOR / ASSESSOR'S NAME:

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

To be completed by the institution

Name of centre/institution (a questionnaire should be completed for each validated institution and, whenever possible, for every centre at which a scheme of study is to be delivered if there are more than one):	
Total number of registered students at centre/institution:	Total number of students registered on the University of Wales validated scheme/s:
Type of scheme(s) (e.g. Bachelor's degree by classroom delivery, Master's degree by distance learning):	

To be completed by the Assessor/Moderator

Has the centre/institution submitted a Development Plan for its library, information and learning support resources?:	If yes, in your opinion is this an adequate plan in relation to what you have observed at the centre/institution?:
Comments:	
In your opinion, do the facilities and services seen by you correspond to those indicated in the centre's/institution's validation submissions, annual reports etc?:	

If no, please elaborate below:

Additional comments, if necessary:

2 LIBRARY FACILITIES

To be completed by the institution

Please describe briefly the library facilities (location, nature of accommodation, accessibility within institution/centre, nature and state of collections, number of journals, periodicals (including on-line) etc):

Please provide details of library opening hours and any constraints:

Please list the entitlements (access, loan entitlements, copying, printing accounts etc) of teaching staff and students:

Please describe who manages and supervises the library services and facilities (list job title, indication of line manager, qualifications etc):

To be completed by the Assessor/Moderator

In your opinion, is the number and range of materials in the library (books, journals, material for reference, other learning materials, including those produced by teaching staff or others in-house) adequate to meet the needs of the staff who are teaching University of Wales validated scheme(s) and the needs of students following those schemes?:

If no, please comment:

Please indicate any specific aspects of provision that should be improved:

Are these improvements (please tick):

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| essential and urgent? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| necessary, and should be phased in within ___ years? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| desirable, and should be considered by the centre/institution? | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3 ICT FACILITIES

To be completed by the institution

Please describe briefly the ICT facilities in place (number and adequacy of PCs, networking facilities, range of software and peripherals and other equipment etc):

Please provide details of opening hours (and any constraints) of the ICT facilities:

Who is responsible for managing and supervising the ICT services and facilities (list job title, indication of line manager, qualifications etc):

--

To be completed by the Assessor/Moderator

In your opinion, are the ICT facilities provided (hardware, software, peripherals, Internet access and technology-based learning materials) adequate to meet the needs of the staff teaching University of Wales validated schemes and the needs of the students following those schemes?
If no, please comment:
Please indicate any specific aspects of provision that should be improved:
Are these improvements (please tick): essential and urgent? <input type="checkbox"/> necessary and should be phased in within ___ years? <input type="checkbox"/> desirable, and should be considered by the centre/institution? <input type="checkbox"/>

4. MANAGING THE LIBRARY AND ICT FACILITIES

To be completed by the Institution

Please outline the mechanisms that are in place for teaching staff to make their requirements for library and ICT facilities known:
Please describe how matters relating to library and ICT facilities are included in course review and student feedback and evaluation procedures:

Aside from the people mentioned in 2 and 3 above, who has overall/strategic responsibility for library and ICT facilities at the institution?

Is that person, and/or the individuals responsible for day-to-day management of the services, involved in key academic decision-making committees and processes?

Assessor/Moderator's Comments regarding the above:

--

5. INDUCTION AND TRAINING

To be completed by the institution

Please describe briefly the means by which students are introduced to the library and ICT facilities and services:

Please describe any additional guidance or training given to students in information seeking or handling skills and ICT during the course of their studies:

Please describe how students and staff will be introduced to and will access the Validation Board's on-line resources:

Assessor/Moderator's Comments regarding the above:

--

6. OTHER FACILITIES OR ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

To be completed by the institution

<p>Please describe any additional or alternative arrangements to provide or augment library, information and learning support facilities (e.g. agreed access/use arrangements for staff/students with other public, academic or commercial libraries and ICT facilities at or near the location, preferential hardware purchase agreements with certain suppliers, loan of hardware etc):</p>

<p>Are these arrangements on a formal contractual basis?:</p>

<p>Please describe any arrangements (formal or informal) made with the Moderator's university/institution in Wales in the context of planning and providing library, information and learning support services:</p>

<p>Please describe any other kinds of co-operative activity between the centre/institution and others in the provision of information, library and learning support service:</p>
--

Assessor/Moderator's Comments regarding the above:

7. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR OBSERVATIONS

To be completed by the Assessor/Moderator

Please add below any other comment pertaining to library, information and learning support services at the centre/institution that it has not been possible to include above.

Signed (Assessor/Moderator):

Date:

[Version 2:Updated March 2006]

POST VALIDATION FOLLOW-UP VISIT

(Undertaken by Course Moderator and/or member of Validation Unit staff. A signed hard copy should be sent to the Validation Unit in addition to any email copies)

Name of Institution:

Course Title(s):

Date of Validation Panel Visit:

A Specific problems\development areas identified in the validation reports and details of action taken.

B Staff development - details of meetings undertaken with staff\outcome\future development proposals.

- C** Quality Assurance Mechanisms - are all agreed Quality Assurance mechanisms now in place and operating successfully - e.g. is there a designated course leader, are there regular staff meetings, are these meetings minuted, is there a staff appraisal scheme operating, what student feedback mechanisms exist?
- D** Assessment - are all key assessment elements now in place? Are the teaching staff fully familiar with University of Wales assessment requirements? Do the course assessment requirements conform fully with University of Wales Regulations and under which Regulations (e.g. modular, part-time) does the course operate?
- E** Resources - are recommended resources (including staffing) now in place as required by the validation panel? Are there any further medium or long term developments required with regard to resources?
- F** College concerns - does the Validated Institution have any concerns regarding University of Wales procedures or policies which need to be addressed?

G. Any other comments.

H Summary of progress

Would you regard progress made with this validation programme since the date of the validation visit to be:

- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory
- Very Poor

Signed:

Date:

Name:



GUIDANCE ON ASSESSING AND EXAMINING STUDENTS

1. Introduction

Students who are enrolled on University of Wales validated programmes are properly regarded as being as much students of the University as those attending programmes of study at any one of the University's Accredited Institutions in Wales. In order to ensure the quality and standards of the awards at validated institutions, the assessment and examination of a University of Wales validated programme must be conducted in accordance with the detailed and documented criteria agreed at validation and within the requirements of appropriate Regulations, Academic Protocols and other guidelines issued by the University. In addition, all programmes validated by the University of Wales are subject to audit by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). Every effort has been made to map this guidance against the precepts of the QAA's Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education, section 6, Assessment of Students.

A recurring area of discussion between the University and its partners has been over the purpose and nature of assessment and examination of students registered with the University. This is a matter that lies at the heart of ensuring the quality and reputation of the programmes delivered in the University's name. The maintenance of universally high standards is in the interests of all parties involved in these validated educational programmes. The following notes are intended to provide general guidance regarding the conventions that shape the pattern of assessment and examination of UoW courses. The precise rules for examining particular programmes are contained in the programme regulations, contained in the definitive programme document. These rules will conform to the University's Regulations and Academic Protocols.

2. Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to measure student knowledge, understanding or skills. Good assessment practice is designed to ensure that students can demonstrate that they have met the intended learning outcomes of the module / programme of study and achieved the standard required at the point of assessment for the award / award of credit being undertaken. Assessment can also promote and support student learning by providing the student with feedback to help improve his/her performance.

3. Forms of Student Assessment

Assessment is usually construed as being diagnostic, formative or summative. These terms are used to mean the following.

Diagnostic assessment is used to show a learner's preparedness for a module or programme and identifies, for the learner and the teacher, any strengths and potential gaps in knowledge, understanding and skills expected at the start of the programme, or other possible problems. Particular strengths may lead to a formal consideration of accreditation of prior learning.

Formative assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and on how it can be improved and/or maintained.

Summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

An assessment process for a particular module can, and often does, involve more than one of these assessment purposes. Within a programme, using a range of assessment types enables students to demonstrate their capabilities and achievements in meeting different intended learning outcomes. Diversity of assessment practice is to be expected and is welcomed, in order to test a wide range of outcomes. Accepted methods of assessment include:

- Essays
- Examination papers (including open book)
- Objective tests (which may be conducted on-line)
- Direct observation
- Oral tests
- Structured practical assessments
- Self-assessment (which may be conducted on-line)
- Extended dissertations
- Reports on projects

The selection of a set of methods and the balance between the components will be shaped by the requirements of each particular programme of study, in particular the learning outcomes of the module concerned – it is important that the methods of assessment are appropriate to testing the intended learning outcomes for a module fairly and accurately. Assessment should also be at the appropriate level – assessment methods should relate to the appropriate level descriptors within the qualifications framework.

Please note that, although there is no requirement for institutions to provide prescriptive model answers, the provision of broad guidelines on the institution's expectations for a good answer is encouraged.

Every effort should be made to ensure that assessment is of the student's individual performance, and that assessment makes a positive contribution to student learning. It is expected that all students on any module will face the same assessment programme. The methods adopted must also be consistent with any classification scheme associated with the relevant UoW award (see *Classifying Student Performances* below).

Whatever assessment methods are adopted they must be agreed in advance with both the External Examiner and with the Moderator (see below). The course document, programme specification and student handbook must also clearly present the assessment methods, weighting and schedule.

4. Approval of Assessments

Examination question papers, translated into English where necessary, should be prepared in draft some months prior to the examination period. They should be sent to the Validation Unit at least 10 weeks before the examinations take place. It is considered good practice to submit the re-sit examination papers at the same time. The draft papers will be forwarded by the Validation Unit to the External Examiner for comment. Any comments and/or corrections suggested by the External Examiner will be returned to the partner institution via the Validation Unit for final drafts to be completed. The same process applies to any form of assessment (e.g. coursework) that contributes 50% or more towards the final module mark. Draft examination paper can be transmitted to the Validation Unit by email, provided that they are password protected and that the password is transmitted separately.

It is recommended that Institutions have in place arrangements to ensure that assessments are internally moderated prior to their transmission to the Validation Unit (or Moderator). Aside from seeking to ensure that the academic level and content are appropriate, this can serve as a check to ensure that there is a consistent 'house style' for assessments and that typographical or other minor errors are corrected. Institutions should also carefully consider how to co-ordinate assessment deadlines in order to avoid clashes and excessive assessment burdens for students and staff. This might even involve combining assessment in cognate modules. Care should also be taken to ensure that students have adequate time to reflect on learning before being assessed.

It is also good practice for institutions to confer with Moderators when drafting their examination papers/assessments prior to submitting them to the Validation Unit, particularly during the early stages of a programme operating.

Institutions must ensure that all examination papers, and associated documentation, are kept and transmitted under strictly confidential conditions. Any possible breaches of security must be reported immediately to the Validation Unit.

Rubric

Each examination paper or other assessment component will have its own particular duration, structure and detailed regulations, and these should be clearly stated on the instructions to candidates, e.g. Three hour paper. Answer four questions, two from each section. Programmable calculators are not permitted.

Each question should show clearly how many of the total marks for the paper have been allocated to it. In addition for questions which contain a number of individual tasks/requirements, the distribution of those marks between the key elements of the question should be shown.

Not only should the paper format be appropriate for the area of examination but this format should also be known to the students. The student handbook should outline the methods of assessment for each module (e.g. 50% by three hour unseen examination, 50% by 2000 word assignment). It is important that both staff and students are aware of, and understand, the marking criteria that will be used to mark each assessment task. These should be issued with the coursework assessment.

Questions

Assessment questions must examine the course syllabus and be able to be completed by the average student in the time available. The learning outcomes and the award classification system will be the major determinants of the type of assessment and of the nature of the questions posed. For basic 'pass/fail' certificate and diploma awards it may be appropriate for questions to test a student's breadth of knowledge and ability to apply relevant problem solving skills.

However, for degree awards such an approach is too limited. University of Wales degrees are classified and examination questions must be consistent with the classification criteria (see below). Perhaps the overriding principle behind the classification system could be captured in the concept of measuring a student's depth of knowledge in key areas and ease with the methods of the discipline. Final year papers, with relatively few questions each requiring an extended answer, are the norm in many subjects.

Security/Confidentiality

It is of vital importance throughout this process that the greatest possible care be exercised in securing the confidentiality of the question papers prior to the examination. All staff must be made aware of their responsibilities in this area and should ensure that their working drafts as well as completed papers can not enter the public domain whether as hard copy or through a computer network. Examination papers and other assessments are central to ensuring the quality and validity of awards. Any breaches of security will invalidate UoW awards and may result in the termination of the partnership between the UoW and the institution if the latter is found to be at fault.

5. Conduct of Examinations/Assessment

Superintendent of Examinations

Each institution should appoint a Superintendent of Examinations who has overall responsibility for ensuring that all assessments are conducted in accordance with the University's requirements and who shall ensure the security of examination papers and other assessments – see Academic Protocol 1.

Each Superintendent of Examinations is required to submit a completed pro forma to the Validation Unit on an annual basis confirming that assessments have been conducted in accordance with the relevant sections of the QAA's Code of practice for Collaborative Provision and should report any problems which have arisen to the University. (see Appendix 19).

Institutions must ensure that examinations and assessments are conducted in accordance with the Regulations and guidelines issued by the University. Where institutions have any doubt over the operation or interpretation of the assessment regulations they should consult with the Validation Unit or their appointed Moderator(s).

Information for Students

Institutions shall inform all students, in writing, at the beginning of the academic year, of the following:

- (i) methods of assessment to be used in their schemes of study including the weighting given to the assessment components of each module and how the degree classification is decided;
- (ii) information concerning the deadlines for submission of assessed work and the penalties for not meeting those deadlines and for exceeding or not reaching a specified word count;
- (iii) information concerning the University's Verification and Appeals Procedures (final and interim) and Unfair Practice Procedure;
- (iv) that any exceptional or mitigating circumstances, which may adversely affect their performance, must be reported to the appropriate Examining Board;
- (v) that students who, without good cause, absent themselves from examinations, or fail to complete their forms of assessment by the required date, shall be awarded a zero mark for the component concerned.
- (vi) that students requiring special provision (e.g. those with dyslexia) should contact the Superintendent of Examinations as soon as is practicable in order to discuss their requirements. Institutions shall make reasonable adjustments for candidates with special needs, in compliance with the requirements of prevailing legislation. Good practice guidelines on such provision are detailed in Academic Protocol 1.

Students should be made aware well in advance of the time and place for examinations. Wherever possible the examination schedule should provide for adequate breaks between examination papers. Account should be taken of religious holidays and special arrangements made, as necessary.

Institutions shall ensure that all candidates undertaking examinations have access to the University's Directions to Candidates (see Appendix 18).

Invigilation

Institutions shall take all reasonable measures (e.g. by checking College ID cards or other forms of identification, ideally photo ID, e.g. passport) that the persons presenting themselves for examination are bona fide registered candidates for the award concerned.

Examinations must be invigilated by responsible members of staff (see Appendix 19 for details) – and each examination should be invigilated by at least two persons. The invigilators' duties range from distributing question papers to ensuring no cheating in examinations. If any form of cheating is suspected, institutions should refer immediately to the University's Unfair Practice procedure, which clearly explains the procedure that should be followed at every stage of the process.

At the end of the examination invigilators will collect all examination answer papers and rough workings from each candidate. They should ensure that candidates have identified their work by placing their name and/or examination number on the paper. If the nature of the examination/assessment deems it feasible, students may retain their personal copy of the question paper – obviously this would not be feasible for a multiple choice examination. Each institution shall ensure that a sufficient number of Invigilators is in place for each examination. Invigilators shall undertake their duties in accordance with University's Instructions to Invigilators (see Appendix 19).

A complete record of those attending each paper should be maintained by the administrative office of the partner institution.

Availability of Examiner(s)

The appropriate internal examiner(s) must be available during the conduct of the examination for consultation by the invigilators in the event of any previously undetected ambiguity or error in the examination paper being discovered.

The University shall reserve the right to make unannounced visits to Institutions in order to verify that examinations are being undertaken under appropriate conditions and in accordance with its published requirements.

Institutions must ensure that students' marked examination scripts, together with all other forms of assessment contributing to an award, are kept under secure conditions and made available (with accompanying spreadsheets and internally awarded marks) for scrutiny by External Examiners during the Examining Board visit.

6. Examination/Assessment Marking

Internal

As soon as possible after completion of an examination/assessment the answer papers should be passed to the Internal Examiner for marking. The marks awarded for each answer should be shown clearly on the paper and comments reflecting why particular marks were awarded should be included. It is worth noting that students have the right to see their scripts if they wish, after an Examining Board has confirmed the results. An agreed sample of papers included in the determination of the class of degrees should be 'double marked', i.e. marked by two internal examiners - see Validation Board guidelines on double marking (Appendix 17). Internal moderation is important in ensuring that examiners are applying the marking criteria (see below) in a consistent manner, and that there is a shared understanding of the academic standards students are expected to achieve. Additionally, where possible and practical, consideration should be given to maintaining student anonymity during the internal marking process, e.g. by using student numbers as opposed to names on assessments.

When the marking is completed the answer papers should be returned to the course director. Examiners will draw the director's attention to any papers which pose problems. Such papers may include those which are marginal with respect to classification, fails and, very rarely, those suspected of irregularities. If any form of cheating is suspected, institutions should refer immediately to the University's Unfair Practice Procedure, which clearly explains the procedure that should be followed at every stage of the process.

Grade Criteria

Grade criteria are useful for staff when assessing and grading candidates' work (as first and second markers), to External Examiners in judging the marking standards applied by internal examiners and to students in obtaining feedback on their performance. The examples below are generic criteria, institutions might choose to develop more specific additional criteria in conjunction with the programme Moderator and if deemed necessary the External Examiner.

Assessed work awarded a mark in the bands listed below should display the majority of the characteristics noted under the headings below:

A Undergraduate Level

- First Class (70-100%)

First class work is relatively rare and is expected to stand out from the work of other students. While it may be the case that within given areas of study a modest number of students might achieve first class marks, it would not be expected that when aggregating the marks awarded for the various elements of assessment that many students will achieve a first class result overall.

- directly addresses the question or problems raised
- provides a coherent argument displaying an extensive knowledge of relevant information
- critically evaluates concepts and theory
- relates theory to practice
- reflects the student's own argument and is not just a repetition of standard lecture and reference material
- is very accurate
- has an element of novelty if not originality
- provides evidence of reading beyond the required reading
- displays an awareness of other approaches to the problem area
- has an appreciation of methodological concerns and displays an awareness of the limitations of current knowledge
- displays excellent use of relevant data and examples, all properly referenced

- Upper Second Class (60-69%)

This is a highly competent level of performance and students earning this degree classification may be deemed capable of registering for higher research degree work.

- directly addresses the question or problems raised
- provides a coherent argument drawing on relevant information
- shows some ability to evaluate concepts and theory and to relate theory to practice
- reflects the student's own argument and is not just a repetition of standard lecture and reference material
- does not suffer from any major errors or omissions
- provides evidence of reading beyond the required reading
- displays an awareness of other approaches to the problem area
- displays good use of relevant data and examples, all properly referenced

- Lower Second Class (50-59%)

This is an acceptable level of performance and all competent students should expect to achieve at least this level.

- addresses the question but provides only a basic outline of relevant arguments and evidence along the lines offered in the lectures and referenced readings
- answers are clear but limited
- some minor omissions and inaccuracies but no major errors

- Third Class (40-49%)

This level of performance demonstrates some knowledge and an element of understanding but is weak. Students attaining this level of performance should be in a small minority of those on the course and could not expect to progress to higher degree work.

- points made in the answer are not always well supported by argument and evidence
- relevant points have been omitted from the answer
- there are some errors in the answer
- parts of the question remain unanswered
- answers may be unduly brief and possibly in note form

- Marginal Fail (35-39%)

Students in this category have not quite done enough to persuade the examiners that they should pass¹.

- answers lack a coherent grasp of the problems and issues raised in the question

¹ In line with the relevant Academic Protocols, candidates for Initial Degrees may be awarded a 'Pass Degree' where their overall mark falls between 35 and 39%.

- important information has been omitted from the answers and irrelevant points have been included
- answers are far too brief

- Fail (Under 35%)

Failed students have been unable to convince the examiners that they have benefited adequately from academic study.

- fails to show any knowledge or understanding of the issues raised in the question
- reveals fundamental misunderstanding of the subject matter
- most of the material in the answer is irrelevant

B Postgraduate Level

The following generic grade criteria are in place for Postgraduate degrees (taught and dissertation component):

Indicative Grade	UK % Marks	Characteristics
A	70%+	Very high standard of critical analysis using appropriate conceptual frameworks Excellent understanding and exposition of relevant issues Clearly structured and logically developed arguments Good awareness of nuances and complexities Substantial evidence of well-executed independent research Excellent evaluation and synthesis of source material Excellent use of relevant data and examples, all properly referenced
	Distinction 70% and above	
B	69-60%	High standard of critical analysis using appropriate conceptual frameworks Clear awareness and exposition of relevant issues Clearly structured and logically developed argument Awareness of nuances and complexities Evidence of independent research Good evaluation and synthesis of source material Good use of relevant data and examples, all properly referenced
C	59-50%	Uses appropriate conceptual frameworks Attempts analysis but includes some errors and/or omissions Shows awareness of issues but no more than to be expected from attendance at classes Arguments reasonably clear but underdeveloped Insufficient evidence of independent research Insufficient evaluation of source material Some good use of relevant data and examples, but incompletely referenced
D	49-40%	Adequate understanding of appropriate conceptual frameworks Answer too descriptive and/or any attempt at analysis is superficial, containing errors and/or omissions Shows limited awareness of issues but also some confusion Arguments not particularly clear Limited evidence of independent research and reliance on a superficial repeat of class notes Relatively superficial use of relevant data, sources and examples and poorly referenced
	UW Pass Mark = 40%	
E	39 – 30%	Weak understanding of appropriate conceptual frameworks Weak analysis and several errors and omissions Establishes a few relevant points but superficial and confused exposition of issues No evidence of independent research and poor understanding of class notes Poor or no use of relevant data, sources and examples, and no references
F	29% and below	Very weak or no understanding of appropriate conceptual frameworks Very weak or no grasp of analysis and many errors and omissions Very little or no understanding of the issues raised by the question No appropriate references to data, sources, examples or even class notes

NB: Distinction marks (70% +) are awarded only to exceptional pieces of work.

7. Plagiarism

Institutions should encourage students to adopt good academic conduct in respect of assessment. However, a major problem in assessment nowadays is ensuring that a student's work is his/her own and that the student has not engaged in plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the act of claiming the work of others as your own work. "Others" in this context can include fellow students and the authors of books, journals and internet material. Plagiarism is regarded as a form of cheating and is unacceptable. Students will be penalised for plagiarism, usually by the loss of marks and in extreme cases may be deprived of any UoW award.

Students learn from the work of others and may quote from it without penalty, but students should receive guidance as to accepted forms of academic referencing and citation. Where direct quotation appears to a student to be appropriate s/he must ensure that quotation marks and reference to the original author is clear within the text. Essays, projects and reports will also show the referenced works in the bibliography.

It is essential that students and staff are made aware of the University's definitions of plagiarism and other unfair practice, the possible consequences of unfair practice - this is contained in the University's Unfair Practice Procedure. If any form of cheating is suspected, institutions should refer immediately to the University's Unfair Practice procedure, which clearly explains the procedure that should be followed at every stage of the process.

8. Disclosure of Marks and Feedback to Students

It is important to distinguish between unconfirmed marks and confirmed marks.

Unconfirmed marks are those that have not been confirmed by a full Examining Board including the relevant External Examiner(s).

Confirmed marks are those that have been confirmed by a full Examining Board including the relevant External Examiner(s). The arrangements for releasing confirmed marks to students need to be carefully considered – the practice of publishing results on noticeboards is no longer very widespread, and even if this is done, students' anonymity should be protected by using ID numbers rather than students' names. Many institutions now release confirmed marks to students electronically.

It is good practice for students to be given individual feedback on their performance to date (e.g. coursework, semester one examinations) as this promotes learning and facilitates improvement. Any feedback should be constructive and timely, in order for a student to benefit from the feedback and to improve their performance. It is good practice to establish a clear timescale for providing feedback to students as well as establishing guidance on the level of feedback to be provided. If unconfirmed marks (or indicative grades) are provided, students should be made aware that any marks are subject to final confirmation by an Examining Board. As mentioned previously, students can ask to see their examination scripts, but this should only be permitted after a mark has been confirmed by an Examining Board. Generic feedback can also be provided for a group of student which can help students to improve their individual performance by learning from the cohort as a whole.

9. Examination Boards

Examination Boards are part of the quality assurance process that applies to all university degrees in the UK. Award Boards are examination boards which determine the entitlement of students to receive awards and the classification of those awards.

One of the purposes of quality assurance processes in higher education is to ensure that standards for a given UK degree course are comparable with those of any other degree course within the same university and, by extension, with those of other UK universities.

Objectives

The main tasks of Examination Boards are to:

- ensure that the diet of assessment established in the course scheme has been duly administered by scrutinising examination scripts, projects, course work, and any other evidence of assessment;
- ensure that marking has been fair, internally consistent, and consistent with marking in UK higher education institutions (UKHEIs);
- adjust marks, if necessary, to comply with the above objectives;
- ensure that students have satisfied the course and university regulations in order to either progress or qualify for an award of the University of Wales;
- determine appropriate action, such as re-sits, for students who have not satisfied the conditions for progression or qualification;
- take into account any special circumstances that may have affected student performance in any element of assessment and apply appropriate measures if necessary;
- take decisions on any borderline cases;
- decide final degree classifications
- discuss any cases of unfair practice or other breaches of the regulations;
- make recommendations for future assessment exercises.

Internal Examining Board

Prior to the formal Examining Board visit by the External Examiner and Moderator, an internal examining board should have been held to discuss the results, including any inconsistencies, borderline cases and special circumstances, and to make recommendations to the formal Examining Board. The minutes of the internal Examining Board should be made available to the External Examiner and Moderator.

Scrutiny of Assessed Work

All assessed work should be available for scrutiny by the External Examiner(s) prior to the formal Examining Board taking place. Ideally this should all be held in a 'base room', which should also include the assessment questions, model answers and module reports.

Where a programme is taught and assessed in a language other than English or Welsh, a sample of translated assessed work may be required, depending on the linguistic capabilities of the External Examiner(s) – see Appendix 35 for the Validation Board's requirements in this respect. The External Examiner may also request that comments on assessed work are translated.

Prior to the Examining Board, the External Examiners will have been provided with a spreadsheet of results, the minutes of the internal examining board and will have scrutinised a sample of the marked assessed work. Often they will pay particular attention to students who are borderline pass or fail or close to the dividing line between degree classifications. They will look for consistency in marking standards, patterns and anomalies in the marks received by individual students or by whole classes in a given module area and look at the profile for the cohort as a whole, hence providing a comprehensive and accurate spreadsheet is essential.

The External Examiner's role is not to act as a third marker (only in exceptional circumstances and for postgraduate dissertations and theses), but to ensure that the standards being achieved by the students on the programme are in line with the expectations for a UK award.

Composition

Examination Boards will normally consist of:

Chair: A senior member of the academic staff at the institution concerned.

Course Teaching Team: All staff involved in the teaching and assessment of the students should be members of the Board of Examiners and are required to attend the Board's meetings. The purpose of the Board is to discuss and determine individual student performances as well as reflect on the pattern of

results for individual courses within a study programme. As mentioned above, an internal Examining Board should also have been held prior to the External Examiner and Moderator arriving at the institution. See appendix 21 for requirements for attendance by internal examiners at final Examining Boards – an Examining Board can be cancelled if it is felt that the level of attendance is not quorate.

External Examiners: The appointment of **an External Examiner is required for all UoW degree courses** whether conducted at one of the University's Accredited Institutions or at a partner institution. The examiner is external in the sense that s/he cannot be a member of staff of the UoW. A Code of Practice for External Examiners is available from the Validation Unit. The participation of the External Examiner is crucial as no results sheet is valid unless they sign it. Final awards can only be determined by an Examination Board at which the External Examiner is present (or, if they have difficulty in attending, their written views are presented to the board)

Moderator: The University will also appoint a Moderator for each validated programme. Moderators are drawn from the academic staff at the University's Accredited Institutions. Moderators are charged with defined specific responsibilities intended to help foster and develop the relationship between UoW and the partner institution. Moderators attend Examining Boards in an advisory capacity rather than as full members. Full and open exchange between the partner institution and the External Examiners and Moderators is key to the smooth functioning of the latter's role as mentor and advisor. For institutions new to the examination classification system the advisory role will be of great importance.

The following list indicates some of the key duties of the External Examiner and Moderator:

<u>External Examiner</u>	<u>Moderator</u>
Written comments on draft examination papers	Liaison with Validated Institution over the drafting of examination papers prior to their submission to the External Examiner (if required)
Attending annual examination board meetings; reviewing a sample of students' work; agreeing final results and signing the pass list	Attending annual Examination Board meetings in an advisory capacity
Verbal comments for the examination board on the course and on overall student performance	Submitting an annual and where required a mid term report to the University
Submitting an annual report to the University	Ensuring adherence to relevant UoW Procedures, Regulations and Academic Protocols
For degree schemes, ensuring that graduate standards are achieved and maintained.	Ensuring aggregation of marks and classification of awards follows agreed UoW practice
	Providing academic advice and a point of contact to facilitate the continuing development and (where relevant) upgrading of the validated programme
	Providing a quality assurance role in terms of implementing UoW procedures on, for example, staff development and the Quinquennial Review.
	Ensuring that resources at the Validated Institution are of an appropriate standard.

Examination Boards are normally attended by a representative of the Validation Unit who will record the results on a Notification of Results Form (NORF), be in charge of any accompanying paperwork, and advise on questions concerning University regulations, Academic Protocols and other procedures.

Conduct of Examination Boards

Examination Boards are usually chaired by the partner institution's head of school or course director with a formal agenda (an example agenda is available from the Validation Unit) . The partner institution will also appoint a member of staff to act as secretary to the board. The secretary will be responsible for recording the Board's decisions and any other relevant matters. The institution will be responsible for ensuring that Examining Board decisions are communicated to the students in good time.

The Chair will ensure that awards are made in accordance with the established guidelines for aggregating performance in individual areas of assessment, as contained in the programme regulations contained in the programme document. It is considered good practice to ensure that all members of the Examining Board are provided with a copy of the specific regulations covering the programme.

As noted previously, an internal Examining Board should have been held prior to the formal Moderation of assessed work. As a result of this, the course team should have already developed a consensus on any special circumstances (absence due to illness, etc.) or borderline cases and will be able to advanced reasoned proposals, supported by evidence or arguments, for consideration by the other members of the Board.

All members of the Examining Board should have a set of spreadsheets detailing overall student performance in the modules being considered, as well as a final weighted average and recommended degree classifications (if appropriate). It may well be the case that students being considered for a final award will have marks for modules approved by a previous Examining Board - these marks should be included on the consolidated mark sheet. It is useful to have a consolidated mark sheet in descending order of merit, as this will enable all borderline cases to be easily identified. This sheet should also show the average mark and the standard deviation for each module, as this will help the Board to identify any anomalies or inconsistencies.

Examples of spreadsheets are available from the Validation Unit.

The consolidated mark sheet should be supported by information on the weighting of the different forms of assessment for each module (coursework, examinations, etc.). This information can be crucial to decisions on progression and/or compensation. It can also be vital when establishing the profile of students who are on the borderline between two degree classifications or the pass/fail divide. The presentation should assist the Board of Examiners to determine the classification of students' performances, i.e. to establish class boundaries. Rank ordering all students' performances means that those students who are marginal between two particular classes (and between pass and fail) will be discussed at the same time. This will help promote efficiency and consistency in the Board's deliberations. The mark sheet should have been amended to take account of any recommendations made by the External Examiner prior to the meeting.

Each institution should have a clear policy in place in respect of the rounding up and down of marks (e.g. whether this happens by module, at the end of a level or at the end of the programme). The Validation Board would not expect to see rounding up/down by more than 0.5% (e.g. 59.4% becomes 59%, 59.5% becomes 60%, 59.6% becomes 60%).

All Board members should also be provided with a copy of the Examining Board agenda, the minutes of the previous meeting and the internal Examining Board meeting.

Issues to be resolved by the Examining Board include:

Special Circumstances: The University's Regulations and Academic Protocols specify what constitute special circumstances, these include (documented) illness, accident, close bereavement or on closely related compassionate grounds. Candidates who have brought forward special circumstances that have affected their performance in an examination/assessment, or which has caused absence from an examination /assessment need to be carefully considered in order that the appropriate action can be taken. This might include allowing a candidate a further attempt at an examination previously failed, with no penalty applied.

It is considered good practice to have held discussions regarding special circumstances prior to the Examining Board taking place – this might include a special circumstances committee that makes recommendations on each case or by holding a separate discussion with the Moderator to discuss each case. Holding discussions beforehand ensures that cases are discussed in full beforehand and that confidential matters can be discussed in a separate forum, ensuring that any cases are given appropriate consideration whilst ensuring that the business of the Examining Board can proceed at a reasonable pace.

Unfair Practice: In certain instances, cases of alleged unfair practice can be resolved by the Examining Board (see the University's Unfair Practice procedure for further details).

Progression: The pass mark for a module at undergraduate and postgraduate level is 40%. However, each programme should have clear criteria on the requirements to pass a module - this might vary from requiring each individual component that contributes to the module mark to be passed to calculating a weighted average of the component marks. Whichever approach is operated, staff, students and Examiners need to be clear on the rules being operated – in the staff and student handbook and in the course document. Students should be made aware of the impact of individual marks and results on their ability to progress and complete a programme.

Students are normally required to successfully complete the full assessment programme for that particular level before being permitted to proceed to the next level of study, and students who pass all modules will automatically progress to the following year/ level of study. However, this does not necessarily mean that students are required to pass every individual element of the assessment. The cases of those who have failed some modules will be considered individually and in the light of the course regulations. These can include the following:

Trailing: which allows students to carry forward (or 'trail') failed modules forward to the following year (the UoW requires that no more than 40 credits can be trailed from one level to another).

Compensation: means that a student is awarded a pass grade, in exceptional circumstances, for work which was not of the expected standard or for non-submission of work. The practice of compensation would only be operated in exceptional circumstances as agreed by the appropriate institutional mechanism.

Condonement: means that a student would not be penalised in terms of progression or award for failure in elements of assessment equivalent to a stipulated credit value.

Typically, programme regulations will limit the number of modules that may be compensated or condoned and will establish a minimum mark in the module failed to qualify for compensation/condonement. However, the UoW would not expect compensation/condonement to be permitted for more than 30 credits worth of modules, and no compensation/condonement operated in a module awarded a mark of below 30%. Certain key modules may be excluded from the possibility of compensation, especially where they are pre-requisites for later modules. Compensation is usually not automatic but at the discretion of the board, which will normally consider overall student performance and the benefits or otherwise of compensation against re-sits or the resubmission of coursework.

Re-assessment: As stated above, the pass mark for a module is 40%, and there need to be clear rules on the criteria to pass a module. Most programmes will allow candidates who have failed a module to be re-assessed at the next available opportunity, once the failure has been confirmed by an Examining Board. The University's regulations and the programme specific regulations will detail the number of re-sit opportunities allowed (three re-sit opportunities at undergraduate level, one at Master's level). It should be noted that modules recovered after a re-sit or resubmission can normally only achieve the bare pass mark (40%) in the module concerned (as opposed to the component), regardless of the mark actually obtained. A candidate at Master's level who has failed and re-taken a module cannot be eligible for Distinction in the degree.

Many programme regulations limit this option to a maximum number of failed modules – a candidate who failed a large number of modules for instance might be required to leave the programme or repeat

the academic year/level. Candidates can be allowed to repeat an entire academic level, and therefore the marks for the repeated level would not be capped. However, the marks for any modules in the level concerned that were passed have to be forfeited. This cannot be applied to candidates in the final level of their studies.

In summary, the principal options for progression are:

- Progress with no modules pending
- Progress after compensation or condonement (with or without modules pending)
- Progress with modules pending with re-sits at the next available opportunity
- Re-assessment with progression dependent on passing a certain number of modules
- Repetition of the whole year if the number of failed modules is so large that re-assessment at the next opportunity is not permitted under the regulations
- Exclusion from the course if the number of failed modules is so large as to require a student to withdraw from the programme, the student has run out of time to complete the programme or has run out of re-sit opportunities under the regulations.

Classification – Undergraduate Degrees

One of the primary functions of an Examining Board is to determine the final awards degree made to undergraduate candidates and to determine progression from the taught element to the dissertation element for Master's degree candidates.

The full honours classification is described in qualitative terms below, with generic grade criteria for the different degree marks bands and classes available – see above. Understanding the classification system is central to understanding the system of higher education in Wales and staff who are new to the UK assessment system should bear the grade criteria in mind when drafting assessment criteria and when marking student assessed work.

Guidelines showing how individual elements of the assessment are to be aggregated must be agreed with the UoW as part of the validation process. They should be operated, with discretion, at the Examination Board. The overall degree classification is frequently based on the average marks obtained over a period, normally Levels 5 and 6. This is often a weighted average. Within a level/year, modules are usually weighted according to their credit loading. While some degree schemes give equal weight to each of the last two years, most will weight the final year over the penultimate one (e.g. 60%/40%). The actual weighting to be applied will be shown in the programme document and in the student handbook validated by the University. The marks required for each classification are defined by the University and listed in the University's Academic Protocols and are as follows:

First Class Honours	70-100%
Upper Second	60-69%
Lower Second	50-59%
Third	40-49%
Marginal Fail ²	35-39%
Fail	0-34%

Taught Master's Degrees: Completion of Part One

In order to progress from Part One to Part Two of a taught Master's degree, a candidate should have achieved an overall average mark of 40%.

NB: In order to be awarded a Master's degree with Distinction, candidates should have been awarded a Distinction grade in both components (taught and dissertation) or have been more successful in the dissertation component than in the examined component, provided that the aggregate mark obtained is 70% or greater and no modules have been failed. It follows therefore that candidates achieving a mark of 70% or greater in Part One, but 69% or lower in Part Two cannot be considered eligible for a Distinction

² In line with the relevant Academic Protocols, candidates for Initial Degrees may be awarded a 'Pass Degree' where their overall mark falls between 35 and 39%.

Part One mark	<i>Candidate is eligible for the award of Distinction:</i>
65%	Where the Part Two mark is 75% or greater;
66%	Where the Part Two mark is 74% or greater;
67%	Where the Part Two mark is 73% or greater;
68%	Where the Part Two mark is 72% or greater;
69%	Where the Part Two mark is 71% or greater;
70%	Where the Part Two mark is 70% or greater;

Borderline cases: When a student is on the borderline between two degree classifications or pass/fail, the External Examiners will normally look at all the evidence, including the student profile, but will pay particular attention to any arguments put forward by the teaching staff in favour of moving a particular student into a higher category or maintaining the classification indicated by the marks.

The Validation Board has agreed that a borderline candidate be defined as one whose classification falls within the 'window of opportunity', i.e. within 2% of the next category of award available (e.g. 58% for consideration as a borderline 2.i/2.ii), before any rounding has taken place. Examining Boards should consider all students falling within the 'window of opportunity' and should ensure that any decisions are fully minuted.

There are two main methods used when discussing borderline cases on the basis of a candidate's performance:

Exit Velocity

Where a student's classification falls within 2% of a classification boundary (before any rounding is applied), the Examining Board shall consider the candidate's performance in the final year of study. Where the student's final year average is in the higher classification band the Examining Board shall normally award the higher class of degree.

Preponderance Principle

Where a student's classification falls within 2% of a classification boundary (before any rounding is applied), the Examining Board shall consider the proportion of marks obtained by the student in each of the classification bands. Examining boards shall only consider those marks which are used to calculate the classification. In order to be awarded the higher classification, marks in the higher classification band must have been achieved in modules attracting a credit weighting equal to half or more of those contributing to the degree classification.

The Examining Board may also choose to look at a candidate's performance in a major piece of assessed work (e.g. dissertation or project).

Comments by the External Examiner/Moderator

Following the consideration of students' results the Chair of the Board should request the External Examiners and Moderator to comment BRIEFLY for the attending staff on matters covering the course - teaching, examinations, marking standards, student performances, possible developments, and where appropriate allow brief response from staff, usually for purposes of clarification. It should be noted that a Joint Board of Studies is normally held during the Examining Board visit at which a number of issues relating to the programme are also discussed. Examiners and Moderators will of course submit a formal report to the University in due course. The report is sent to the institution, which is required to formally

respond to any recommendations made by the Examiner/Moderator, via the Annual College and Course Review Form.

Recording decisions/signing the Notification of Results Form

For an undergraduate degree award Board or for a Board at the end of the taught component of a Master's degree, all decisions of the Examining Board will be recorded on the Notification of Results Form (NORF). The Form is supplied by the Validation Unit and should be signed by all members of the Board present, including the External Examiner (though not the Moderator). NORFS are then returned to the Validation Unit for processing and (where appropriate) issuing of pass lists and certificates.

Re-sit Boards

Where re-sit Examination Boards are held, arrangements should be made either for the External Examiner(s) to attend the Board or to be provided with the spreadsheet of results and a sample of assessed work, if deemed necessary by the External Examiner. In any case a NORF will need to be produced and signed by the relevant members of the Board. The arrangements for re-sit candidates and Examining Boards should be agreed at the main Examining Board.

Retention of Assessed Work

Institutions should ensure that assessed work is retained for an appropriate period of time. The University would expect that all student work is retained for a minimum of three years and that a sample of assessed work is retained for a period of up to ten years.

10. Appeals

An Examining Board decision with respect to any student is usually final. However, students can invoke appeals procedures (the relevant procedure depends on the stage of study that a student has reached). Details of the appeals procedures (final award and interim) are available from the Validation Unit and should be included in the Student Handbook.

It should be noted that candidates cannot appeal against the academic judgement of the Examiners.

11. Review and Training

Institutions should ensure that assessment practice is internally evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis. This might also include an analysis of marking and marking trends, to enable comparison within a programme. The Annual Report and Quinquennial Review provides an opportunity for the University to evaluate assessment practice within each validated programmes. The University's assessment regulations are also reviewed and updated on an on-going basis and analysis made of results from across institutions.

Institutions should also ensure that staff development opportunities are available for staff in respect of good assessment practice. This might range from induction of new staff to enabling staff to learn about new approaches to assessment and best practice in assessment. The Moderator can play a role in sharing good practice with colleagues at partner institutions.

12. Conclusion

These notes are intended to give general information and guidance concerning the conventions that underpin assessing student performance within the University of Wales. Our experience is that this is an area where practices between institutions can legitimately differ; based on variations permitted within the University's Regulations and Academic Protocols. However, to preserve the standing of the University's awards it is not an area where misunderstanding can be tolerated and all institutions are required to ensure that their own internal regulations are clearly stated (for staff, students and external scrutiny) and that these are approved in advance by the University. Any variations on what the University believes to be best practice can only be permitted after full disclosure, consideration and agreement by the Validation Board.

We believe that the education and development of individual students is well served by attempts to meet the assessment criteria made explicit in these notes. For partner institutions to take full advantage of the University's wealth of expertise in designing courses of study and forms of assessment, close cooperation between the two parties along the lines indicated here must be pursued.

Any comments on these notes are most welcome and should be forwarded to:

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GUIDELINES ON DOUBLE MARKING OF ASSESSED WORK

Internal Moderation and Double Marking

1 Introduction

The aims of double marking are principally to:

- Provide a check that an assessment has been marked in line with the expressed aims and learning outcomes of the assignment/examination, and in terms of marking criteria;
- Provide assurance for students of fairness of marking and hence the equality of treatment of each student;
- Assure internal consistency of assessment within a module;
- Provide an approach to the comparability of standards across modules within a subject area.

Students are not permitted to appeal against academic judgement and so it is important to ensure fairness and consistency through the double marking process. In addition the External Examiners will review the marking process and marks awarded. Both the overall results of assessment as well as each individual student's result will be further scrutinised at the meeting of the internal examiners and at the final, decision-making Board of Examiners Meeting.

These notes outline the minimum standard for double marking required by the Validation Board of partner Institutions, as well as guidance to practical considerations in operating the policy.

2 An Agreed Policy

All Institutions should have a written policy on double marking which should be agreed with the University of Wales appointed course Moderator(s).

In placing the responsibility on Institutions, the Validation Board recognises the need for Institutions and Examining Boards to conduct the assessment of students in a manner that is appropriate to individual disciplines and to the methods of assessment employed. In pursuit of assessment practices that are demonstrably fair, valid and reliable the University requires that all Institutions adopt at least the following minimum standards. The Validation Board stresses, however, that these are only the minimum standard and urges all Institutions to exceed them in the light of their own particular circumstances.

3 The Minimum Standard

Will apply to: **All Assessed Work that Contributes towards the Final Award**

All marking and assessment strategies should be agreed with External Examiners in advance, e.g. through the provision of outline or 'skeleton' suggested answers/markings schemes (these should be submitted at the same time as draft assessments are submitted for approval).

The following should normally be subject to second marking:

Examination Papers, Class Tests and Continuous Assessment (where the latter constitutes 50% or more of the total marks awarded for the module) which require the exercise of a substantial element of academic judgement by the marker and where the mark awarded by the first marker(s) falls into one of the following categories:

- All first class/distinction marks;
- All failing marks;
- Any marking undertaken by persons other than members of the Institution's Academic Staff
- All rubric violations in examinations

Institutions should ensure additional double marking to that noted above is undertaken such that the following total minimum percentages of all examination papers or class tests that contribute towards the final award are second marked:

Number of Students/Percentage of Assessment to be Double Marked

- Up to 20 minimum of 40%
- 21-50 minimum of 30%
- 51-100 minimum of 20%
- 101-200 minimum of 10%
- Above 200 a minimum of 20 assessments (or students)

Such sampling should ensure a full range of marks/degree classes is included.

It is recommended that double marking at the equivalent to undergraduate year one (Level 1/Level 4/Level C) and for assessments that do not contribute towards the final award, is restricted to failed assessments.

Postgraduate Dissertations for Taught Masters Programmes

It is a requirement that ALL masters dissertations are double marked by two experienced members of the Institution's staff, both having the relevant subject expertise. The dissertation supervisor is not normally permitted to be one of the internal markers. The dissertation will then be forwarded to the Validation Unit for onward transmission to an external examiner for final scrutiny. (Institutions should set a reasonable maximum period for the double marking of each dissertation, e.g. 15 working days, and not accumulate clusters of such studies before submission to Wales.)

It should also be noted that the Boards of Examiners for taught masters degrees will decide only whether, following the taught part of the degree (Part One), a candidate will be permitted to proceed to writing the dissertation (Part Two).

No other assessments need to be double marked unless an Institution deems it valuable to do so.

4 Mark Variances between First and Second Markers

These should be expected and arise naturally from independent judgement. Nevertheless, the External Examiners and the Board of Examiners Meeting will expect to be given a single set of agreed marks. Where differences arise they should be resolved by:

- A discussion between the markers;
- an average mark (but only where the two marks are already close and both rest within the same degree classification);
- a defined Institutional procedure to resolve differences.

Should the above measures fail to resolve differences a third, senior academic member of staff (nominated by the chair of the board of examiners) should review the assessed work and guide colleagues to an agreed set of marks. Only in very exceptional circumstances should unresolved differences between marks be presented to the External Examiners for finalisation.

5 Organisation of Double Marking

The first marker will normally be the person who set the assessment or the module leader. It is important that assessors with sufficient expertise are utilised. This can, in practice, place some constraints on the choice of co-assessors.

It is recommended that the chair of the board of examiners (or his/her nominee) agree a list of pairings of double markers for the academic year; avoiding 'cosy pairs' and 'perpetual reciprocal pairs' is important. A careful re-allocation of pairings of markers across years may enable consistency across modules (and across time).

Where feasible, 'blind' marking of assessments is preferable by both the first and second marker, i.e. the second marker should grade an assessment without knowledge of the first mark. Such a process will increase independent judgement.

Where blind double marking is not considered feasible (as agreed by the chair of the board of examiners, or his/her nominee) 'verification' would occur. It is important that the second marker be given clear evidence by the first marker of the basis for marks awarded on the assessment itself and/or by means of a 'skeleton' answer(s)/marking scheme.

A clear record of which individual pieces of assessment have been double marked must be kept. Where blind double marking has occurred this may be recorded on the assessment itself after both markers have agreed a final mark. In other instances the work of both examiners in marking the assessment should be clearly seen on the assessment.

DIRECTIONS TO CANDIDATES AT EXAMINATIONS

Time of Examination

- 1.1 The examinations will be held at times specified in the degree examination time-table.
- 1.2 Candidates should be in their seats punctually at the hours fixed for the commencement of the examination. No candidates will be allowed to enter the examination room more than half-an-hour after the time fixed, or to leave until forty-five minutes after the time fixed for the commencement of the examination in each subject. No candidate will be allowed to leave the examination room during the last fifteen minutes of an examination.

Seating Arrangements

- 2 Candidates shall in every examination occupy the seats assigned to them by the invigilator.

Examination Materials / Equipment

- 3.1 Candidates may take into the examination room only such books, mathematical or other tables, printed documents, manuscripts, notes, formulae, electronic equipment or other source of information or assistance as have been approved by the College and the Examining Board. In some cases, where appropriate, candidates will be provided by the College with such material and / or equipment as the examiners consider necessary. Examining Boards shall prepare lists of material and / or equipment to be permitted in examination rooms and candidates shall be notified in advance, in writing of the contents of these lists and which, if any, of the permitted items will be provided by the College.
- 3.2 The material and / or equipment which candidates are permitted to bring into the examination room shall bear no marks or notes of any kind other than the name of the owner and anything which is regarded as normal in the nature or construction of the item in question.

Unfair Practice

- 4 It is an unfair practice to commit any act whereby a person may obtain for himself/herself or for another, an unpermitted advantage. This shall apply whether the candidate acts alone or in conjunction with another/others. Any action or actions shall be deemed to fall within this definition whether occurring during, or in relation to, a formal examination, a piece of coursework, or any form of assessment undertaken in pursuit of a qualification of the University of Wales. The University of Wales has distinct procedures and penalties for dealing with unfair practice in examination or non-examination conditions.

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, examples of unfair practice are shown below. These examples are not exhaustive and other cases may fall within the general definition of unfair practice.

- 4.1 Introduction into an examination room and/or associated facilities any unauthorised form of materials such as a book, manuscript, data or loose papers, information obtained via any electronic device, or any source of unauthorised information.
- 4.2 Copying from or communication with any other person in the examination room and/or associated facilities except as authorised by an invigilator.

- 4.3 Communication electronically with any other person, except as authorised by an invigilator.
- 4.4 Impersonation of an examination candidate or allowing oneself to be impersonated.
- 4.5 Presentation of an examination script as one's own work when the script includes material produced by unauthorised means.
- 4.6 Presentation of evidence of special circumstances to Examining Boards, which evidence is false or falsified or which in any way misleads or could mislead Examining Boards
- 5 A candidate suspected of engaging in an unfair examination practice shall be informed by the invigilator that the circumstances will be reported. Such a candidate may continue with that and subsequent examinations without prejudice to any investigation and decision subsequently to be taken by the University. Failure by an Invigilator to warn a candidate at the time of examination shall not prejudice subsequent investigation by the University of any allegation made against a candidate. An Invigilator who considers, or suspects that a candidate is engaging in an unfair examination practice is authorised by the University to confiscate and retain evidence relating to the alleged unfair practice.

DEGREE EXAMINATIONS - DUTIES OF INVIGILATORS

The following information relating to the duties of Invigilators is based on information contained in Academic Protocol 1 and the Unfair Practice Procedure:

- 1 Each Institution shall nominate a Superintendent of Examinations for appointment by the University. He / She shall perform the following duties:
 - (a) To be responsible for the conduct of all written examinations at that Institution
 - (b) To operate the provisions concerning the custody of examination papers.
 - (c) To arrange examination rooms and the seating therein for written examinations.
 - (d) To nominate Invigilators and make arrangements for invigilation of written examinations so that normally one Invigilator acts for each group of fifty candidates or less.
 - (e) To arrange for the delivery of the papers (immediately before each written examination) to the Invigilator(s) who shall then distribute them.
 - (f) To arrange for the delivery of all the examination papers for practical examinations in any subject to a particular internal examiner who shall thereafter be responsible for their custody and distribution to the candidates.
 - (g) To ensure that answer-books, mathematical tables and other necessary materials are available for each examination.
 - (h) To make appropriate arrangements for dealing with absentees from examinations in accordance with the provisions of Academic Protocol 1 (Initial Degrees offered on a Collaborative Basis), including notification of cases to convenors of examining boards and the recording and reporting of such cases.
- 2 Examinations must be invigilated by responsible members of staff – each examination should normally be invigilated by at least two persons.
- 3 An invigilator shall not admit any candidate to the examination room without the authority of the Superintendent of Examinations.
- 4 During the whole examination, the invigilators shall maintain a constant supervision over the candidates and shall see that candidates are provided with the necessary materials. They shall inspect all materials brought into the examination room by candidates and shall see that every candidate complies with the "Directions to Candidates".
- 5 No candidates may enter the examination room thirty minutes or more after the commencement of an examination.
- 6 Candidates are not permitted to leave the examination room until forty five minutes have elapsed, nor may they leave in the last fifteen minutes of the examination. Any candidate who has left the room without the invigilators' authority shall not be allowed to re-enter it during the examination. Under special circumstances, the invigilator may act according to his/her discretion and the

circumstances shall be reported to the Superintendent of Examinations. No candidate shall be allowed to take any copy of an examination paper from the examination room until at least forty-five minutes have elapsed from the start of the examination.

- 7** During each examination the invigilator shall have power to exclude from the examination room all persons save officers of the University or the Institution and the candidates sitting examination. The invigilator shall prevent any unauthorised communication on the part of the candidates amongst themselves or with any other person.
- 8** An invigilator who considers or suspects that a candidate is engaging in an unfair examination practice shall inform such a candidate, preferably in the presence of a witness, that the circumstances will be reported and that he may continue that and any subsequent examinations without prejudice to any decision which may be taken, but failure to warn shall not prejudice subsequent proceedings. Where appropriate, the invigilator shall confiscate and retain evidence relating to any alleged unfair examination practice, so that it is available to any subsequent investigation. The invigilator shall as soon as possible report the circumstances in writing to the Chair of the relevant Examining Board and to the Superintendent of Examinations.
- 9** The invigilator shall collect the scripts and arrange for their transmission to the Superintendent of Examinations or his/her nominee(s) who shall then arrange for their transmission to appropriate examiners, together with the surplus copies of the examination paper or papers and a form giving the names of candidates who did not submit scripts. The invigilators shall make a report to the Superintendent of Examinations on the conduct of the examinations, drawing attention to any special circumstances. A statement regarding the conduct of examinations should be submitted on an annual basis to the Validation Unit

CONDUCT OF UNIVERSITY OF WALES ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

The UK Government's Quality Assurance Agency [QAA] Code of Practice relating to Collaborative Provision (September 2004) states in precept A 20 that:

"The awarding institution should ensure that a partner institution involved in the assessment of students understands and follows the requirements approved by the awarding institution for the conduct of assessments, which themselves should be referenced to Section 6 of the Agency's Code on Assessment of Students (2000), or any successor document."

Each institution offering a University of Wales validated programme is required to ensure that the following four categories of good practice are adhered to:

1. The integrity of the examination and assessment process as a whole (e.g. measures to ensure the confidentiality of draft examination papers, measures to deal with cheating and plagiarism).
2. The security of examination papers and scripts (this relates to specific measures taken to protect examination papers and students' answers at your Institution).
3. The ability of local invigilation to ensure the integrity of assessment events (taken to ensure that events are properly overseen by qualified staff or external personnel, who are instructed to act on such occasions, and to take appropriate measures to deal with cheating etc.).
4. The integrity of continuous assessment procedures (that the strict procedures applied to examinations also relate to coursework, assignments etc.).

Please complete the following statement and return it to the Validation Unit. Should any particular problems have arisen, please attach a report to this statement.

I _____, the Superintendent of Examinations, hereby confirm that the University of Wales Assessments conducted at _____ were undertaken with the highest regard for security and integrity and in full compliance with the QAA Code of Practice as provided by the University of Wales.

Signature:	
Name:	
Date:	

ATTENDANCE OF INTERNAL EXAMINERS AT UNIVERSITY OF WALES EXAMINATION BOARDS

- 1 All University of Wales Examination Board meetings must be constituted and conducted in accordance with the attached Academic Protocols.
- 2 An appropriate internal (i.e. Institutional) Examination Board should be conducted prior to the University of Wales Examination Board meeting.
- 3 As far as possible, all internal examiners are required to attend the University of Wales Examination Board. The following minimum threshold for attendance shall apply:
 - A minimum of 75% of students' assessed work must be covered by the presence of appropriate internal examiners;
 - Any person responsible for teaching 10% or above of a validated scheme must be available at the Examination Board.
- 4 Internal Examiners unable to attend the Examination Board through accident or illness must provide a written report on the work assessed by themselves.
- 5 Centres offering validated schemes of study must ensure that contracts of employment (particularly for part-time teaching staff) make explicit reference to the requirement of attending the Examination Board meeting.
- 6 The Moderator/External Examiner/Validation Unit representative shall have the right to declare an Examination Board null and void if it is not constituted in accordance with the above guidelines.

A CODE OF PRACTICE FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

In this document the term 'external examiners' refers to external examiners for initial degrees, undergraduate and postgraduate diplomas and certificates and for taught Master's schemes (Master's degrees by examination and dissertation) validated by the University of Wales.

General

1. All external examiners are ultimately responsible to the Academic Board, which is empowered by Statute to regulate all University of Wales examinations.
2. The Academic Board is also empowered by Statute to advise the University Council on the fees and other emoluments to be paid to external examiners and assessors in respect of any examinations or assessments for schemes validated by the University.

Criteria for Appointment

3. The number of external examinerships already held by persons being considered for nomination as external examiners should not normally exceed two.
4. Only persons of sufficient seniority and experience to be able to command authority will be appointed as external examiners. An External Examiner must possess specialist knowledge and expertise in the subject of research but need not have had previous experience as an external examiner. Examiners from outside the University system may be appropriate where professional expertise is required.
5. Where a course leads to a professional award, at least one appropriately experienced practitioner should be included among the examiners.
6. The external examiner may not be drawn from the members of staff of any institutions which give awards of the University of Wales unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as the unavailability elsewhere of the required specialised subject knowledge.⁶
7. Former members of staff may not be invited to become external examiners before a lapse of at least three years, or sufficient time for students taught by that member of staff to have passed through the system, whichever is the longer.
8. Members of staff who have retired, or who have moved to posts outside the University of Wales, may be invited without such a lapse of time to act as external examiners for institutions within the University other than that at which they taught, provided that no contact has been established with the candidates to be examined.
9. Other than in exceptional circumstances, an external examiner may not be re-appointed to examine a scheme offered within the same institution before a lapse of at least three years.

The University of Wales is aware of the special difficulties inherent in the external examination of Welsh-medium work, with the consequence that it is possible for a member of staff from another institution within the University to be appointed as an 'External' Examiner to carry out such duties where no suitable examiner external to the University of Wales could be found. Such appointments must be made in accordance with the appropriate Regulations and Academic Protocols of the University. Similar arrangements may be made for other disciplines, subject to approval by the Academic Board.

10. The making of reciprocal arrangements for external examining with staff teaching similar schemes of study at other universities is not permissible.
11. Normally, an external examiner will not be appointed from the same institution as another already in place in respect of a validated programme of study; similarly, an external examiner will not normally be succeeded by another from the same institution.

Appointments

12. External examiner appointments shall be by the University, acting on nominations received from a partner institution/moderator and approved by the Validation Board.
13. All nominations are submitted for approval to the Validation Board and thence the Academic Board of the University of Wales.
14. Examiners shall normally be appointed for a period of three years, with the possibility of re-appointment for a fourth year.
15. External examiners are responsible for bringing to the attention of the University any existing or changed circumstances which may cause a potential or actual conflict of interest.

Preliminary Arrangements

16. Upon appointment, each external examiner will receive a letter of invitation from the Validation Unit. This will provide details of the term of office, annual fees, brief information on the scheme, together with the University of Wales regulations. The institution itself is required to supply full details of the syllabus and methods of assessment.
17. External examiners must be inducted by the University of Wales representatives to ensure that they understand and can fulfil their responsibilities. Institutions shall issue detailed guidance, if relevant, in the areas of intellectual property and appointments to practice-based and multi-/inter-disciplinary programmes or modules. Wherever possible, external examiner appointments will be phased to enable the mentoring of new examiners.

Methods of Assessment

18. External examiners are expected to participate in discussions regarding any amendments to the methods of assessment in use.

Review of Academic Provision

19. External examiners are expected to review academic provision to assist with future development of the scheme(s) of study concerned.

Preparation of Examination Papers

20. Draft examination papers and other major assessment components must be approved by the external examiner, who may require alterations to be made.

Please note that, although there is no requirement for institutions to provide prescriptive model answers, the provision of broad guidelines on the institution's expectations for a good answer is encouraged.

Coursework Assessment

21. Coursework shall be available for scrutiny by the external examiner.

Moderating

22. External examiners shall ensure that academic standards are maintained, are appropriate and comparable and the processes are sound and fairly conducted.
23. External examiners are expected to scrutinise sufficient evidence to indicate the basis on which marks have been awarded, which should include agreed sampling examination scripts. External examiners shall scrutinise all, or an agreed proportion of, candidates' written work, which shall normally include a sample of work from all levels of performance. Where the external examiners are reviewing an agreed proportion only, they should normally see work assessed internally as borderline, first class, distinction, or failures. Many external examiners wish to see scripts from the top, the middle and the bottom of the range. The guiding principle is that external examiners should have enough evidence to determine that internal marking and classifications are of an appropriate standard and are consistent. They should inspect a sufficient amount of the work of the candidates to enable them to arrive at a judgement that can be applied to the examination as a whole.

On the recommendation of an Examining Board, an external examiner may be required to determine marks and examine individual student performances.

Examinations *Viva Voce*

24. Where an examination *viva voce* is to be held for a proportion, but not all, of the candidates, the principles for the selection of candidates should be agreed in advance with the external examiner.
 - .1 For an initial degree such an examination should normally be conducted by an external examiner who may be assisted by one or more internal examiners.
 - .2 For a taught Master's degree, the Chair of the Examining Board must chair the examination.

Unfair Practice

25. An external examiner who, either in the course of the examining process or subsequently, considers that a candidate has engaged in an unfair examination practice shall immediately report the circumstances in writing to the Chair of the appropriate Examining Board.

Constitution of Examining Boards

26. Each institution shall establish an Examining Board or Boards to consider results and make recommendations on candidates pursuing schemes leading to the award of undergraduate qualifications.
27. For each Final Examining Board there shall be :
 - .1 the Chair appointed by the institution, who shall be a senior member of the full-time academic staff. [In addition to the Chair, there may be a Convenor who shall be a member of the full-time academic staff appointed by the Department or institution concerned who will be responsible for administrative arrangements associated with the work of the Examining Board which would otherwise be carried out by the Chair.];
 - .2 the external examiner(s) appointed as prescribed;
 - .3 the internal examiner(s) and/or representative(s) appointed in respect of relevant modules by the institution;

- .4 appropriate persons who may attend at the Chair's invitation in an advisory capacity. Such persons shall possess no voting rights;
 - .5 the adviser(s) or moderator(s) appointed by the University (as observers only).
28. For each taught Master's scheme, a meeting of the examiners shall be held to determine the results of candidates in the examination component of the degree (Part 1) and, in particular, to decide which candidates may proceed to Part 2 (the dissertation component). For this purpose the Examining Board shall consist of the following:
- .1 the Chair appointed by the institution, who shall be a senior member of the full-time academic staff. [In addition to the Chair, there may be a Convenor who shall be a member of the full-time academic staff appointed by the Department or institution concerned who will be responsible for administrative arrangements associated with the work of the Examining Board which would otherwise be carried out by the Chair.];
 - .2 the external examiner(s) appointed as prescribed;
 - .3 the internal examiner(s) and/or representative(s) appointed in respect of relevant modules by the institution;
 - .4 appropriate persons who may attend at the Chair's invitation in an advisory capacity. Such persons shall possess no voting rights;
 - .5 the adviser(s) or moderator(s) appointed by the University (as observers only).

Meetings of Examining Boards

29. Normally, each Examining Board will meet at the partner institution concerned as and when required in order to consider students' performance and to make decisions on termination of study, progression and recommendations on award of degrees or intermediate awards, as appropriate.
30. During Semester One, the external examiner(s) shall perform all the tasks normally associated with examining such as the approval of examination papers. The external examiner(s) will not be required to attend Examining Board meetings but may do so if he or she wishes. Consultation shall take place by correspondence or other appropriate means. The external examiner(s) shall attend Examining Board meetings and perform all functions normally associated with examining in Semester Two.
31. The external examiners for schemes of study are required formally by the University to be present at the meeting of the Examining Board(s) at which the examination results in the subject(s) in which they have been involved are determined. If exceptionally an external examiner cannot attend a meeting where his/her presence is formally required, he/she should be available for consultation by telephone, videonetwork or other suitable means with the Chair and shall despatch, in accordance with his/her directions, all documents necessary for the due performance of the business of the meeting.
32. The official Notification of Results Form completed at the formal meeting of the final Examining Board must be signed by the Chair and by all external examiners present. If, exceptionally, no external examiner is able to attend, a copy of the form must be forwarded immediately to at least one external examiner for signature.

Reports

33. External examiners are required by the University of Wales to submit written reports both annually and at the end of their period of office. External examiners' comments on the

examining process are invited, including observations on the structure and content of the scheme of study and its teaching.

- .1 Reports on undergraduate schemes of study should be made as soon as possible following the meeting of the final Examining Board;
 - .2 Reports on Part I of taught Master's schemes should be submitted following the meeting of the Examining Board;
 - .3 Reports on dissertations for taught Master's schemes (Part II) should be made separately, using the form enclosed with each dissertation.
34. Reports on work examined at partner institutions should be returned to the Vice-Chancellor c/o the Validation Unit. Copies of reports will be circulated to the Principal of the relevant institution.
35. The University attaches considerable importance to the external examiner's report and payment of the fee is conditional upon its receipt. In the event of an examiner not submitting a report within 3 months of the Examining Board, the Vice Chancellor shall be empowered to take such steps as appropriate to the circumstances to obtain it, and/or may choose to issue a letter of premature termination as a result.
36. Whilst it is hoped that such a situation will not arise, an external examiner whose performance or general conduct is unsatisfactory may be warned informally in the first instance and, if necessary, be advised on appropriate remedial action(s), which must be taken.

In exceptional circumstances, however, the Vice-Chancellor may authorise a letter of premature termination to be sent to the external examiner concerned without prior warning. This will have the effect of terminating the contract immediately. The following non exhaustive list provides examples of reasons that may justify premature termination of an External Examiner's appointment:

- Non-submission of External Examiner reports within three months following the assessment board.
- Persistent non attendance at assessment/examining board meetings.
- A conflict of interest arising between the duties of the External Examiner and other interests that s/he may have.
- An inability to continue to satisfy the criteria for appointment.
- Unprofessional conduct during the assessment process.
- Any other matter that may reasonably cause the Validation Board to feel that the appointment is no longer tenable.

A letter of premature termination may also be sent in respect of a less serious incident where an external examiner has received previously an informal warning of the sort described above.

Arbitrating Examiners

37. External examiners are asked to note that when the decision of an examiner considering a dissertation submitted for the Master's degree by Examination and Dissertation gives rise to a case of dispute between the external examiner(s) and internal examiners it is within the power of the Vice-Chancellor, at the request of the Chair of the Examining Board, to appoint another external examiner who will be asked to arbitrate. The Vice-Chancellor may take into account any written reports submitted by members of the Examining Board. In choosing a second external examiner the Vice-Chancellor may also take into account, but need not be bound by, the nomination (if any) of an Examining Board for a second external examiner. A decision on whether or not to reconvene the Examining Board shall be at the discretion of this second external examiner whose decision on this matter shall be final.

PROCEDURES FOR THE INDUCTION OF NEWLY APPOINTED EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR VALIDATED SCHEMES OF STUDY

- 1 All External Examiners are provided with full printed information regarding the validated scheme for which they are appointed. This includes:
 - Academic Protocols and Regulations
 - Handbook of Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures
 - Moderator's/External Examiner's Report Form
 - List of Moderators/External Examiners appointed for overseas (or UK) centres
- 2 To supplement the above each newly appointed External Examiner shall be given an appropriate Induction/Briefing session conducted by the Moderator and/or Validation Unit representative in advance of the Examiner's first Examination Board meeting.
- 3 This induction session should focus in particular on:
 - The nature of the validated award and the general structure of the University
 - The relationship between the University and the Validated Institution, with particular emphasis on the University's quality assurance procedures
 - The External Examiner's role and responsibilities
 - The University's Regulations and requirements for assessment and award of its qualifications
 - The precise assessment requirements of the particular scheme of study for which the External Examiner has responsibility
 - Any issues highlighted in the reports submitted by previous External Examiners
 - Any relevant issues with regard to the 'cultural context' in which the degree is operating/issues regarding translations etc.
 - The main duties and functions of the Moderator
- 4 For External Examiners based at institutions outside the UK, the following should also be explained:
 - The position occupied by External Examiners within the UK Higher Education System
 - The nature of the Examination Board and the assessment and award requirements for a UK qualification
 - The precise methods for classifying and awarding the University of Wales degree
 - The importance of drawing issues identified during scrutiny of assessed work to the attention of the Moderator and External Examiner prior to the formal Examination Board
 - The reporting requirement expected of the External Examiner subsequent to the Examination Board meetings
- 5 At the end of the Induction/Briefing session the External Examiner concerned will be required to complete and sign the attached pro forma.

**INDUCTION OF NEWLY APPOINTED EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR VALIDATED
SCHEMES OF STUDY**

Name of External Examiner:

Name of Institution:

Title of Validated Scheme of Study:

I confirm that I attended an Induction/Briefing meeting conducted by staff from the University of Wales and that the duties expected of the External Examiner were explained fully to me at this meeting.

Signature:

Date:

Any Comments/Suggestions:

VALIDATED CENTRE EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

Each External Examiner for the University of Wales is required to submit a report of each Examination Board to the Vice-Chancellor of the University. You are asked to complete this report immediately following the marking period and to return it to the Validation Unit. **A separate report should be completed for each scheme examined.**

Since this form will be photocopied, you are required to complete it in typescript. Your report need not be restricted to the areas given below and you should feel free to comment on any matters which you deem appropriate. Constructive suggestions for future action are particularly welcomed. Please submit all comments in typewritten/word-processed form.

Please return your completed form to the University of Wales Validation Unit, University of Wales Registry, King Edward VII Avenue, Cathays Park, CARDIFF, CF10 3NS or you may email it to validation@wales.ac.uk (a signed hard copy should also be posted to the Unit).

Payment of fees and expenses will be authorised once the report has been received at the Validation Unit.

Name of Examiner:

Title of Scheme of Study and subject(s) examined:

College:

The report given below is in respect of work conducted in session

Signed: Dated:

Section A

Please respond to the following questions by deleting the answers as appropriate. Any comments on these may be made on the following page.

1. Did you receive, at the appropriate time, all the necessary information on the scheme of study and its assessment? **Yes/No/See Comment**
2. Were the learning outcomes of the scheme of study clearly defined and appropriate to the subject matter and the students? **Yes/No/See Comment**
3. Were the course structure and content appropriate to the scheme's learning outcomes? **Yes/No/See Comment**
4. Were you asked to approve all examination papers and/or coursework assessment schedules contributing to the final award? **Yes/No/See Comment**
5. Were the methods of assessment well-balanced and fair? **Yes/No/See Comment**
6. Did they reflect the scheme's learning outcomes? **Yes/No/See Comment**
7. Did the examinations\assessments cover the whole subject area of the scheme? **Yes/No/See Comment**
8. Were examination\assessment procedures and the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied? **Yes/No/See Comment**
9. Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by internal examiners? **Yes/No/See Comment**
10. In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment? **Yes/No/See Comment**
11. Was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures? **Yes/No/See Comment**
12. Were the arrangements for your participation in the assessment process (including full membership of Board) satisfactory? **Yes/No/See Comment**

13. Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the scheme? **Yes/No/See Comment**
14. Had proper consideration been given to any recommendation made by you or by the previous External Examiner in last session's report? **Yes/No/See Comment**
15. Were the standards appropriate by reference to published national subject benchmarks, national qualifications frameworks and programme specifications (see also section B point 2)? (To be completed by UK External Examiners only.) **Yes/No/See Comment**
16. Were you satisfied with the apparent interaction between the University of Wales and the Validated Institution? **Yes/No/See Comment**

Further comments:

(Please continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

Any further comments (eg. Are there any examples of good practice that you would like to highlight to the Validation Board?)

(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Section C

Please list any recommendations for which you would like a written response from the Institution. These will be followed up in the Annual College and Course Review Form.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY EXTERNAL EXAMINER

VALIDATED SCHEMES OF STUDY - DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE MODERATOR

- 1 The Moderator is charged with:-
 - 1.1 A quality enhancement and programme development role, where appropriate or necessary, for a validated centre and its scheme(s) of study.
 - 1.2 Responsibility to report to the Validation Board as to whether practices and procedures at the Validated Institution (for the validated scheme of study) equate to those pertaining to the University of Wales itself and that adequate resources are in place at the Validated Institution.
- 2 The Moderator has the following responsibilities with regard to the examination and assessment procedures for a validated scheme of study:
 - 2.1 Where requested or required and, in direct liaison with the Validated Institution, assisting with the preparation of draft examination papers (in order to ensure that they are at the correct levels etc.) prior to their transmission for approval by the External Examiner(s).
 - 2.2 Attending annual Examination Board meetings (in an observer/advisory capacity) in order to determine (in co-operation with the Validation Unit representative) at such meetings that:-
 - relevant University procedures, Regulations and Academic Protocols are adhered to;
 - aggregation of marks and classification of awards occurs in line with standard University of Wales practice and published criteria;
 - the scheme's assessment is conducted according to criteria agreed in the validation document.
 - 2.3 Where agreed as necessary receiving (and if required, approving) proposals for dissertations for Masters' level schemes of study.
 - 2.4 Submitting both an Annual Report and a Mid-Term Visit Report to the University.
 - 2.5 Attending Joint Board of Studies meetings.

- 3 The Moderator is expected to perform a key developmental role in terms of ensuring that:
- 3.1 The academic integrity of the validated scheme and the attainments of students will stand up to critical scrutiny and appraisal by External Examiners. The use of applying Benchmark Statements and Programme Specifications is particularly important in this respect.
 - 3.2 The University's expected standards of academic achievement are established and maintained at validated centres.
- 4 The Moderator has the following responsibilities with regard to admission procedures for a validated scheme of study:
- 4.1 to sit as a member of the Validated institutions admissions committee, to receive all correspondence relating to committee meetings and offer guidance where appropriate.
- 5 In order to fulfil these obligations the Moderator is required to pay particular attention to the following:
- assessment practice and procedures (assessment seminars should be conducted as necessary);
 - teaching strategies and learning outcomes;
 - physical resources and their enhancement (and disabled access to the same);
 - staffing and staff development (staff development seminars should be conducted as necessary);
 - student feedback; regular meetings with students should be held wherever possible.
 - management and operation of the validated scheme(s) of study;
 - review and implementation of External Examiners' and Moderators' comments and recommendations;
 - ensuring that a Student Handbook is in place and is regularly updated.
- 6 The discharge of the Moderator's duties depends on close and regular contact with the validated institution. The Moderator will be required to establish the minimum thresholds for such contact within the following parameters:
- 6.1 It is the expectation that courses in the nascent stages of operation (i.e. up until their first Quinquennial Review) will normally require at least two visits per annum to the validated institution by the Moderator.
 - 6.2 Courses subject to particular requirements (e.g. in preparation for Quinquennial Review or upgrading of degree status) will require special visits to deal specifically with those requirements.
- 7 In undertaking such visits to the Validated Institution the Moderator will be required to:
- provide and agree an action plan with the Validated Institution;
 - hold meetings with the Course Director and teaching team;
 - hold meetings with students (where possible);

- review physical resources and facilities;
 - provide example documents relating to good practice within the institutions of the University of Wales (e.g. student handbooks, assessment schemes, benchmark statements etc).
- 8 Reports of such visits by the Moderator (and action plans, follow up of recommendations etc) should be documented by the Moderator and submitted on a regular basis to the Validation Unit (i.e. in addition to the Annual Report).
 - 9 In the event of any specific difficulty arising which is a cause of concern for the Moderator (e.g.: relating to the governance or management of a Validated Institution) then such concerns shall be reported to the Validation Unit for appropriate action.
 - 10 A Moderator will normally be appointed for 5 years in the first instance with the possibility of extending this by a further 2 years.
 - 11 A Moderator will normally be assigned between 2 and 4 Validated Institutions with 5 as a maximum.
 - 12 The Quinquennial Review shall be an opportunity for an independent assessment of the effectiveness with which a Moderator is discharging his/her duties.
 - 13 Should the Moderator be in a situation of possible or perceived conflict of interest in relation to his/her duties at a Validated Institution (e.g.: acting as a paid advisor at the institution) then such circumstances shall be reported immediately to the Validation Board.

PROCEDURES FOR THE INDUCTION OF NEWLY APPOINTED MODERATORS FOR VALIDATED SCHEMES OF STUDY

- 1 All Moderators are provided with full printed information regarding the validated scheme for which they are appointed. This includes:
 - Academic Protocols and Regulations
 - Handbook of Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures
 - Moderator's Report Form
 - List of Moderators/External Examiners appointed for validated centres
- 2 To supplement the above each newly appointed Moderator shall be given an appropriate Induction/Briefing session conducted by the departing Moderator (where there is a changeover of Moderators) and or the Validation Unit representative in advance of the first Examination Board meeting.
- 3 This induction session should focus in particular on:
 - The nature of the validated award
 - The relationship between the University and the Validated Institution, with particular emphasis on the University's quality assurance procedures
 - The Moderator's role and responsibilities
 - The University's Regulations and requirements for assessment and award of its qualifications
 - The precise assessment requirements of the particular scheme of study for which the Moderator has responsibility
 - Any issues highlighted in the reports submitted by previous External Examiners/Moderators
 - Any relevant issues with regard to the 'cultural context' in which the degree is operating/issues regarding translations etc.
- 4 At the end of the Induction/Briefing session the Moderator concerned will be required to complete and sign the attached pro forma.

INDUCTION OF NEWLY APPOINTED MODERATORS FOR VALIDATED SCHEMES OF STUDY

Name of Moderator:

Name of Institution:

Title of Validated Scheme of Study:

I confirm that I attended an Induction/Briefing meeting conducted by staff from the University of Wales and that the duties expected of the Moderator were explained fully to me at this meeting.

Signature:

Date:

Any Comments/Suggestions:

VALIDATED CENTRE MODERATOR'S REPORT

Each Moderator is required to submit a report of each Examination Board to the Vice-Chancellor of the University. You are asked to complete this report immediately following the marking period and to return it to the Validation Unit. **A separate report should be completed for each scheme examined.**

Since this form will be photocopied, you are required to complete it in typescript. Your report need not be restricted to the areas given below and you should feel free to comment on any matters which you deem appropriate. Constructive suggestions for future action are particularly welcomed. Please submit all comments in typewritten/word-processed form.

Please return your completed form to the University of Wales Validation Unit, University of Wales Registry, King Edward VII Avenue, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NS or you may email it to validation@wales.ac.uk (a signed hard copy should also be posted to the Unit).

Payment of fees and expenses will be authorised once the report has been received at the Validation Unit.

Name of Moderator:

Title of Scheme of Study and subject(s) examined:

College:

The report given below is in respect of work conducted in session

Signed: Dated:

Section A : Please respond to the following questions by deleting the answers as appropriate. Any comments on these may be made on the following page.

1. Do you believe that (during the period covered in this report) you have been able to develop and influence the Validated Institution, its staff, resources etc, in accordance with the criteria laid down in the Moderator's Duties and Functions? **Yes/No/See Comment**
2. Did you receive, at the appropriate time, all the necessary information on the scheme of study and its assessment? **Yes/No/See Comment**
3. Were the learning outcomes of the scheme of study clearly defined and appropriate to the subject matter and the students? **Yes/No/See Comment**
4. Were the course structure and content appropriate to the scheme's learning outcomes? **Yes/No/See Comment**
5. Were you asked to assist with the preparation of any examination papers and/or coursework assessment schedules contributing to the final award? **Yes/No/See Comment**
6. Were the methods of assessment well-balanced and fair? **Yes/No/See Comment**
7. Did they reflect the scheme's learning outcomes? **Yes/No/See Comment**
8. Did the examinations/assessments cover the whole subject area of the scheme? **Yes/No/See Comment**
9. Were examination/assessment procedures and the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied? **Yes/No/See Comment**
10. Was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures? **Yes/No/See Comment**
11. Has the Validated Institution taken appropriate consideration of the relevant QAA benchmark statements and is there a programme specification in place? **Yes/No/See Comment**
12. Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the scheme? (If 'Yes', please provide full details.) **Yes/No/See Comment**
13. Had proper consideration been given to any recommendation made by you or by the previous Moderator in last session's report? **Yes/No/See Comment**
14. Were you satisfied with the apparent interaction between the University of Wales and the Validated Institution? **Yes/No/See Comment**

Further comments:

(Please continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

Section B : Moderator's comments

1. Please provide full details (on a separate sheet if necessary) of your opportunities to interact with staff at the Validated Institution.

2. Please provide full details (on a separate sheet if necessary) of your opportunities to interact with students at the Validated Institution.

3. Please give details of any staff development exercises conducted by yourself which have taken place during the session.

4. Please provide details of any student related issues which you would wish to draw to the attention of the Validation Board.

5. Are you satisfied with the resources available to support the scheme of study? If 'no', please give details of any specific areas of concern. Did you have the opportunity to apply the Validation Board's Resources Questionnaire at Validated Institutions? If so, please append to this report.

6. Please give details of any concerns or areas for future development you would like to draw to the attention of the Validation Board.

7. Are you satisfied that the University of Wales Regulations and Academic Protocols are being applied in full by the institution?

8. Please comment on any issues relating to course management/administration you would like to draw to the attention of the Validation Board.

9. Are there any issues (general or specific) regarding the duties and functions of the Moderator which you wish to draw to the attention of the Validation Board?

10. Do you have any concerns about the future operation of the Validated Programme?

Any further comments (eg. Are there any examples of good practice that you would like to highlight to the Validation Board?)

(Please continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

Section C

Please list any recommendations for which you would like a written response from the Institution. These will be followed up in the Annual College and Course Review Form.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY MODERATOR

**VALIDATED CENTRE
MODERATOR'S MID TERM VISIT REPORT FORM**

This report should be submitted by Moderators following a mid term visit to a University of Wales validated institution. You are asked to complete this report immediately following the visit and to return it to the Validation Unit. **A separate report should be completed for each scheme.**

Since this form will be photocopied, you are required to complete it in typescript. Your report need not be restricted to the areas given below and you should feel free to comment on any matters which you deem appropriate. Constructive suggestions for future action are particularly welcomed. Please submit all comments in typewritten/word-processed form.

Please return your completed form to the University of Wales Validation Unit, University of Wales Registry, King Edward VII Avenue, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NS or you may email it to validation@wales.ac.uk (a signed hard copy should also be posted to the Unit).

Payment of fees and expenses will be authorised once the report has been received at the Validation Unit.

Name of Moderator :

Title of Scheme of Study and subject(s) examined:

College:

The report given below is in respect of a mid-term visit conducted in session

Signed: Dated:

- 1. Issues Discussed with Course Leader(s)/Institution's Management**
(Should include discussion of previous external examiners/moderators reports, Annual Reports, Annual College and Course Reviews)

Action Required:

- 2. Issues Discussed with Course Teaching Team**
(Should include details of any staff development exercises conducted)

Action Required:

3. **Issues Discussed with Students**
(Wherever possible meetings should be held with students)

Action Required:

4. **Resources**
(A review of resources should be conducted and the Validation Board's resource questionnaire should be updated periodically)

Action Required:

Any further comments:

(Please continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

Please list any recommendations for which you would like a written response from the Institution. These will be followed up by means of the Annual College and Course Review Form.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY MODERATOR

VALIDATED SCHEMES OF STUDY - DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EXPERT

In response to the condition contained within the report for the Independent Review conducted by James Wright, that:

Where the University validates analogous provision, and does not have a precisely identical subject capacity of its own, it should appoint a course consultant from the discipline to act in tandem with the Moderator to provide appropriate advice

the following duties and functions have been drawn up. Consequently, course consultants, which shall be known as External Experts, will only be appointed for those schemes where the Moderator is drawn from a different subject discipline.

- 1 The External Expert is charged with:-
 - 1.1 A course content development role, where appropriate or necessary, for a validated centre and its scheme(s) of study.
 - 1.2 Reviewing prospective validation submission documents.
- 2 The External Expert has the following responsibilities with regard to course content review and development for a validated scheme of study:
 - 2.1 Where requested or required and, in direct liaison with the Validated Institution and the Moderator(s), assisting with the review and development of the course content.
 - 2.2 Submitting a Report to the University following each visit.
 - 2.3 Approving (in conjunction with the Moderator(s) and External Examiner(s)) any proposed changes to the scheme, which will normally be presented to the Joint Board of Studies for approval.
- 3 The External Expert will be appointed by the University of Wales for a 5 year period (with the possibility of a 1 year extension, if the 5 year period lapses in the year prior to a quinquennial review) and will be selected on the basis of their External Expertise. The expectation would be for the University to appoint one External Expert for each subject area (although External Experts would not normally be appointed to more than 3 Institutions).
4. In order to fulfil these obligations the External Expert is required to ensure that the elements listed below are up-to-date, appropriate and relevant to meet the requirements of the accrediting Regulatory/Professional Registration body:
 - course content
 - clinical training and assessment (practice and procedures);
 - teaching strategies and learning outcomes;
 - clinical resources and their enhancement;
 - requirements of professional/regulatory bodies

- 4 The discharge of the External Expert's duties depends on close and regular contact with the validated institution and the Moderator(s) for the scheme. The External Expert will be required to establish the minimum thresholds for such contact within the following parameters:-
 - 5.1 External Experts will receive an induction session conducted by the Moderator(s) and Validation Unit representative.
 - 5.2 It is the expectation that courses will normally require at least one visit per annum to enable both clinical teaching and clinical assessments to be observed to the validated institution by the External Expert, ideally with the Moderator.
 - 5.3 Courses subject to particular requirements may require special visits to deal specifically with those requirements.
 - 5.4 In addition, External Experts might attend the annual meeting of the Joint Board of Studies.

- 6 In undertaking such visits to the Validated Institution the External Expert will be required to:
 - provide and agree an action plan with the Validated Institution;
 - hold meetings with the Moderator(s), Course Director and teaching team;
 - review physical resources and facilities;
 - provide example documents relating to good practice.

- 7 Reports of such visits by the External Expert (and action plans, follow up of recommendations etc) should be documented by the External Expert and submitted to the Validation Unit.

- 8 In the event of any specific difficulty arising which is a cause of concern for the External Expert (e.g.: relating to the governance or management of a Validated Institution) then such concerns shall be reported to the Validation Unit for appropriate action.

9. Should the External Expert be in a situation of possible or perceived conflict of interest in relation to his/her duties at a Validated Institution (e.g.: acting as a paid advisor at the institution) then such circumstances shall be reported immediately to the Validation Board.

**VALIDATED CENTRE
EXTERNAL EXPERT'S VISIT REPORT FORM**

This report should be submitted by External Experts following a visit to a University of Wales validated institution. You are asked to complete this report immediately following the visit and to return it to the Validation Unit. **A separate report should be completed for each scheme.**

Since this form will be photocopied, you are required to complete it in typescript. Your report need not be restricted to the areas given below and you should feel free to comment on any matters which you deem appropriate. Constructive suggestions for future action are particularly welcomed. Please submit all comments in typewritten/word-processed form.

Please return your completed form to the University of Wales Validation Unit, University of Wales Registry, King Edward VII Avenue, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NS or you may email it to validation@wales.ac.uk (a signed hard copy should also be posted to the Unit).

Payment of fees and expenses will be authorised once the report has been received at the Validation Unit.

Name of External Expert.....

Title of Scheme of Study:

College:

The report given below is in respect of a visit conducted in session

Signed: Dated:

- 1. Issues Discussed with Course Leader(s)/Institution's Management**
(Should include discussion of previous external examiners/moderators/external experts reports, Annual Reports, Annual Response Form)

Action Required:

- 2. Issues Discussed with Course Teaching Team**
(Should include details of any staff development exercises conducted)

Action Required:

- 3. Issues Discussed with Clinic Teaching Staff**
(Should include details of any staff development exercises conducted)

Action Required:

- 4. Issues Discussed with Students**
(Wherever possible meetings should be held with students)

Action Required:

5. **Resources**
(Should include details of any areas for development/improvement)

Action Required:

6. **Please give details of any concerns or areas for future development you would like to draw to the attention of the Validation Board.**

7. **Please comment on any issues relating to course management/administration you would like to draw to the attention of the Validation Board.**

8. **Are there any issues (general or specific) regarding the duties and functions of the External Expert which you wish to draw to the attention of the Validation Board?**

Any further comments:

(Please continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

Please list any recommendations for which you would like a written response from the Institution. These will be followed up by means of an Annual Response Form.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY EXTERNAL EXPERT

ANNUAL COLLEGE AND COURSE REVIEW FORMS (RETURNED BY INSTITUTIONS OFFERING VALIDATED SCHEMES)

Name of Institution:

Full title(s) of validated course(s):

1. Course Director's Overview

Provide an overview of the last twelve months, identifying areas of good practice and any issues that were critical in the operation of the programme.

An action plan should be provided which addresses key issues arising in the review period and denotes who is responsible for action to be taken. Provide details of progress on the previous review period's action plan, including completed and pending issues.

2. Students

Give details of:-

- a. Admissions policy and entry requirements, even if unchanged since the course was validated.
- b. Entry qualifications of most recent student intake.
- c. A summary of wastage rates since the inception of the course. Please make a distinction between student drop out and academic failure.
- d. Target student intake numbers and whether or not these targets are being maintained.

3. Student Feedback

- a. Identify mechanisms by which student feedback has been achieved.
- b. Provide a summary of student feedback elicited as a result of questionnaires, staff/student liaison committees etc.
- c. Provide details of action taken as a result of the feedback obtained.

- d. Identify mechanisms by which students are informed of action taken (or not taken, as the case may be).
- e. Where such information is available, please include feedback obtained from former students and employers.

4. Staffing

- a. Give full details of any staff changes (to include full CVs of new members of staff) together with any changes in the staff/student ratio.
- b. Give full details of staff development and training initiatives undertaken during the year to include resources allocated, details of programmes/study/courses undertaken etc.
- c. Staff Appraisal – provide details of the scheme in place at your Institution and any recent modifications made (excluding confidential matters).

5. Resources

- a. Provide details of changes to the ICT and library resources made during the year.
- b. Provide details of the annual budget for ICT and library resources.

6. Course Structure/Content

List the courses/modules in each year and give full details of any proposed amendments to the course - please note that these must be sanctioned by the University in advance of implementation.

7. Course Assessment

Provide details of course assessment criteria and methods, including the weightings given to examinations and coursework.

8. Response to External Examiner, External Expert and Moderator Reports

- a. Provide a response to all recommendations made by the External Examiners, External Experts and Moderators in their reports for the previous session ensuring that details of the proposed action to be undertaken are provided.
- b. Attach full copies of External Examiner, External Expert and Moderator Reports for the previous session (including Moderator mid-term visit reports). An electronic version will have been provided to you by the Validation Unit.
- c. For Research degrees only, provide a response to comments made by External Examiners in Result and Report forms received in the previous session. Copies of Research Degree Result and Report forms should be appended to the review.

9. Output

a. Student Results

Provide an overview of the conduct of examinations and an analysis of student results to include details of awards achieved, failures and re-sits. Detail any special factors explaining high failure or non-completion rates.

b. Student Destinations

Details should be provided of the destinations (e.g. employment/further study) of the previous year's graduates where known.

c. Interaction with the University of Wales

Please comment on the effectiveness of your interaction with the University of Wales during the academic session (and in particular with your appointed Moderator(s))

10. Course Management

Provide minutes of the following meetings held at your Institution:

- internal course monitoring committees
- heads of department/faculty meetings
- staff/student liaison meetings
- Joint Board of Studies meeting
- reports of review bodies

Finally

Please check that the following items have been attached to this review prior to its submission to the Validation Unit and where they are not available please indicate why:

- CVs of new staff
- External Examiner, External Expert and Moderator Reports for the previous session
- Result and Report Forms (Research degrees only) for the previous session

Minutes of:

- internal course monitoring committees
- heads of department/faculty meetings
- staff/student liaison meetings
- Joint Board of Studies
- review bodies

Please note that incomplete ACCRs will be returned to the Institution for rectification.

PLEASE RETURN TO:
MR H F HUGHES, DIRECTOR OF THE VALIDATION UNIT,
UNIVERSITY OF WALES REGISTRY,
KING EDWARD VII AVENUE, CATHAYS PARK, CARDIFF, CF10 3NS
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 00-44- (0) – 29 - 20- 376999
FAX NUMBER: 00-44-(0)-29-20-376984
e-mail: validation@wales.ac.uk

JOINT BOARD OF STUDIES AT VALIDATED CENTRES (HEALTH STUDIES)

1 Membership

The Joint Board of Studies shall comprise of at least four nominated representatives of the validated centre, one of whom shall be the Course Director, and at least three representatives of the University. This latter category shall include the Moderator (who should chair the meeting), External Expert and External Examiners. Furthermore, membership will also include one additional member of the Health Studies Committee, who will receive the papers for written comment only. Finally, the Board shall have at least part of its business open to attendance by student representatives from the validated centre. In any case, the institution should ensure that student feedback is fed into the discussion of the Joint Board of Studies.

2 Duties

- (i) To receive and consider reports from the Course Director(s) concerning the scheme in question, which shall include statistical information as appropriate*.
- (ii) To receive and consider reports from external examiners, external experts and moderators. These will be linked to the college's response to such comments and will be followed up at subsequent meetings.
- (iii) To approve amendments to the structure/ syllabus/assessment of the course or to refer such modifications to the University's Validation Board if they so merit (in accordance with the Validation Board's criteria for amendments to validated schemes of study). It is considered good practice to circulate documentation regarding large changes in advance of the meeting.
- (iv) To receive information regarding changes in course staffing, teaching resources, physical resources etc and make any necessary recommendations to the bodies detailed under (vi) below.
- (v) To receive information as may be relevant from any internal college bodies, eg staff/student liaison committees, analysis of student feedback forms..
- (vi) To consider such matters as may from time to time be referred to the Joint Board of Studies by either the Validation Board or the College Academic Board or similar body.

3 Meetings

- (i) Boards of Studies will meet at least once per annum.
- (ii) Wherever possible, meetings shall be arranged to coincide with University of Wales Examination Board meetings at the centre concerned.
- (iii) Formal Minutes of the meeting shall be taken by a representative from the validated centre. These Minutes shall be submitted to the University for review by the Validation Board's Committee for Health Studies.

4 Agenda Items

Standard Agenda items for meetings of Joint Boards of Studies shall include the following:

- 1 Minutes of the Last Meeting
- 2 Matters Arising
- 3 External Examiners' Reports
- 4 Moderator's Reports
- 5 External Expert's Reports
- 6 Annual College and Course Review (Appendix 33)
- 7 Any Other Business
- 8 Date of Next Meeting

REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSLATION WHERE VALIDATED PROGRAMMES ARE ASSESSED THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

- 1 All such validated programmes shall have in place at least one native-speaking External Examiner approved by the University.
- 2 Unless agreed otherwise in writing (and only for those programmes where all External Examiners and Moderators have a working knowledge of the language concerned) then the following requirements for translation shall apply:
 - (i) All draft examination questions (and model/example answers etc.) together (where specified) with assignment questions etc.
 - (ii) An agreed proportion of at least 10% of assessed work contributing to the final award or degree classification. Such work to be drawn from across the students' range of performance and ability (according to the requirements and specifications of the External Examiners and Moderators).

The above must include all assessed elements including examination work, assignments, coursework, projects etc.
- 3 All translations must be undertaken by either:
 - (i) A nominated person who is independent of the Validated Institution and is suitably qualified and approved (e.g. nominated by a local British Council office). Details of the person appointed (to include a brief CV and full name and address) must be lodged with the Validation Unit.

or

 - (ii) A suitably qualified person on an in-house basis provided such translations are submitted for verification to a qualified translator as specified in (i) above.

All translators should be supplied with information about the context of the work they are required to translate (eg that scripts were completed under formal examination conditions).
- 4 Where special arrangements are made for any particular programme or institution (e.g. due to the specialised or highly technical content of a programme) then any such arrangements must be approved in writing by the Moderator and reported to the Validation Unit (and, where necessary, to the Validation Board).
- 5 Should the native speaking Examiner not be available to attend the Examining Board, alternative arrangements must be put in place to ensure that the work can be scrutinised by the Examiner and that his/her comments are taken into account by the Examining Board. Should this not be the case, the University of Wales representative(s) shall have the right to postpone the Examining Board.
- 6 Institutions should set and publish clear timetables to facilitate sound and timely translations. The operation of these guidelines will be monitored by the moderator(s) and Validation Unit

staff and any failure to comply with the specified terms will be drawn to the attention of the Validation Board. The University reserves the right to require back translation.

The Validation Board may take appropriate action under such circumstances including the possible withdrawal of validation.



GUIDELINES FOR ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY MATERIALS FOR VALIDATED PROGRAMMES

Introduction

Given the very extensive number of institutions which now have schemes validated by the University, relatively few problems are encountered each year with respect to advertising and publicity. It is evident that most such difficulties arise from misunderstandings (largely about the structure of the University) rather than from a desire to deliberately mislead. Nevertheless, the potential for damage arising from inappropriate publicity is very real and the Validation Unit will continue to exercise great vigilance and to take swift action wherever necessary.

Rationale

The University of Wales needs to promote a clear and consistent message. These procedures advise on the production of publicity materials, which enables the University to manage the messages communicated to both our centres and students.

These procedures are designed to ensure that:

- The consistency of marketing and publicity materials using the University's name is maintained;
- The message communicated is consistent;
- The University's corporate image is maintained;
- Marketing and publicity materials do not compromise but enhance the image of the University;
- Messages are complementary and not contradictory;

Scope

Arising from the 2003 Independent Validation and Franchising Review (the Wright Report), the Validation Board has approved these updated procedures with regard to the advertising of University of Wales validated schemes of study. This procedure covers the production and amendment of all Marketing and publicity materials and applies to marketing material produced or amended after 1st September 2006.

Please note that all institutions submitting schemes for validation (including institutions that already deliver University of Wales validated schemes) can only advertise the scheme under consideration "subject to final approval" once a successful validation exercise has been held. This "subject to final approval" status will need to be maintained until all the conditions of validation have been met to the Panel's satisfaction and the Agreement document between the University and the submitting institution has been signed.

Definitions

Marketing / publicity materials includes the following items:

- Advertisements;
- Articles;
- Corporate brochures;
- Direct marketing material;
- Posters;
- Presentation Slides;
- Press releases;
- Product brochures and fliers;
- Mail shots;
- Presentations
- E-mail marketing;
- Temporary / conference and exhibition fliers and brochures;
- Websites.

Procedure for the approval of Marketing/ Publicity Materials

All marketing materials should be sent to the publicity.approval@wales.ac.uk inbox for review and approval on behalf of the University of Wales. Alternatively, materials can be sent in hard copy to the Validation Unit at the following address (ref: SJE Publicity):

The Validation Unit
University of Wales Registry
King Edward VII Avenue
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NS

The Validation Unit will maintain a record of marketing materials.

A review will normally look at the correct use of the University's logo and its corporate colours, the use of standard language, message consistency and monitor web links (where applicable).

Please allow 5 working days for approval. The University shall have absolute discretion as to the contents of any statements advertisements or other promotional material prepared by the Institution for publication for the purposes of attracting the candidates to the Scheme.

New Materials

All written material should conform to the standard words/terms, colour branding and layout outlined in which can be found in Addendum 1 of these guidelines.

Reviewing Materials

The University retains the ownership of copyright, trademarks and any other applicable intellectual property rights at all times.

The use of the logo and/or photographs does not imply an endorsement.

Pro Forma

All institutions will be required to complete a pro forma issued annually by the Validation Unit indicating compliance with these procedures.

Penalties

The Validation Board reserves the right to impose a range of penalties on institutions failing to adhere to these procedures. These would range from limiting or prohibiting a student intake to suspending the right to use the University's name in advertisements and, ultimately, to the possible withdrawal of validation.

Presentation and Content of University of Wales Publicity Materials

1. Introduction

In order to maintain a consistent approach, all marketing and publicity materials (including websites) mentioning the University of Wales and its validated schemes of study must conform to the guidance noted in this Addendum.

2. Use of Standard University of Wales phrases and descriptions

The descriptions of the University of Wales and its Validation operation within this section may be reproduced for publicity purposes. Any deviation from the standard form of words noted in this appendix must be granted approval by the Validation Unit.

a) About the University

Founded by Royal Charter in 1893, the University of Wales is the degree-awarding body for the vast majority of higher education students in Wales, as well as for many at other higher education institutions in the United Kingdom and overseas. It currently accredits nine university institutions in Wales to award its degrees; these are:

Aberystwyth University
Bangor University
Swansea University
University of Wales, Lampeter
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
University of Wales, Newport
North East Wales Institute of Higher Education
Swansea Institute of Higher Education
Trinity College, Carmarthen

Cardiff University is also closely linked with the University of Wales, as an Affiliated Institution, and the University continues to be the awarding body for the prestigious degrees in medicine, dentistry and allied subjects.

The University is the degree-awarding authority not only for these Accredited and Affiliated Institutions, but also for over 100 other higher education institutions both within the United Kingdom and overseas, with which it also enjoys close links. Annually, it awards around 15,000 initial degrees and more than 4,000 higher degrees, making it the second largest degree-awarding body in the United Kingdom. The number of students, from all over the world, pursuing University of Wales degrees is more than 80,000, and their studies cover almost the full range of subjects.

In addition, the University provides services to the higher education sector in Wales, such as the Gregynog study and conference centre and the University of Wales Press, and runs a highly-respected research centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies.

The University is a major national institution in Wales. While it is, of course, committed to helping to fulfil the educational and economic needs of Wales and to supporting its linguistic, cultural, and national heritage, the University is also committed to its international role and to enhancing its standing across the UK and overseas.

Please note that specific schools or departments within an Accredited Institution of the University may only be mentioned in exceptional cases (for example, where students studying on validated schemes of study spend part of their studies at an Accredited

Institution of the University). The Validation Unit (in consultation with the school or department concerned) will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis.

Photographs of the University of Wales Registry, copies of the University's logo and other publicity materials are available from the Validation Unit.

Photographs must be identified as being reproduced with the permission of the University.

b) The University's Validation Operation

“Validation is the process by which an awarding institution judges that a programme developed and delivered by another institution is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to its award.” (The Quality Assurance Agency.)

While the majority of the University's students study in Wales, the University's very successful and highly regarded international validation operation is also an important dimension of its work. This enables overseas institutions to offer the University of Wales degree at an equivalent standard to the degree offered in Wales itself. Validation is important in fostering links between Wales and other countries and many of the University's graduates are now in positions of influence overseas. Last year, more than 15,000 students were registered on validated courses of the University of Wales and nearly 3,000 graduated with the University's degree. Altogether, more than 35,000 students have been awarded degrees since the validation operation began in 1975.

The maintenance of academic standards is of paramount importance for validated courses, as it is for courses offered within Wales. The University is rightly regarded as a role model in this respect. Its processes compare very favourably with those of other institutions in the UK and the positive report received following a recent independent review, favourable audit reports from the Quality Assurance Agency and the University's reputation overseas attest clearly to the high esteem in which its validation work is held.

The recent review of the University's Validation and Franchising was commissioned in 2004 by the University of Wales Council, in response to a recommendation in the Williams Report on the University's membership, structures and *modus operandi*. The three independent panel members, who were drawn from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, the University of Birmingham and St Martin's College of Higher Education, were asked to examine the benefits and risks of validation and franchising to the University and its accredited institutions. To undertake the review they consulted widely, both within the University of Wales and further afield, as well as taking into consideration the available written evidence, such as Quality Assurance agency reports on audits of validated and franchised provision. In its favourable report on the provision, the panel highlighted the extensive, long-term experience of validation which had been built up by the University over a long period, together with the impressive quality and dedication of the staff of the Validation Unit, and expressed the belief that, with greater collaboration from within the accredited institutions, even more could be achieved of mutual benefit.

c) The Validation Annual Graduation Celebration

A special event is held annually in Cardiff by the University of Wales as an opportunity for students from outside Wales to celebrate together. At a colourful ceremony, which includes a procession of officers and academics, preceded by the University's ceremonial mace and accompanied by a trumpet fanfare, the graduates receive the congratulations of the Secretary General of the University, the Warden of the Guild of Graduates and the Vice-Chancellor.

In his welcome message to the students last year, Dr Lynn Williams, Secretary General of the University of Wales, wrote:

“Our Mission within the University of Wales emphasises our commitment to our international role. Academic partnerships have developed, through the work of the Validation Board, extending the hand of friendship to many countries world-wide. International links such as those clearly in evidence in Cardiff today are of particular importance and are especially valued in our uncertain world.”

3. University of Wales Logo

The University of Wales’ logos and crest are the most recognisable representation of the University’s image. As such, it of utmost importance that they are used consistently to maximise their impact. As the logos form part of the University’s corporate image, they should not be altered in any way other than the options specified within these guidelines.

The following guidelines should be used to maintain the brand recognition.

a) Format

The University has two distinct logos which form part of its corporate identity:

the ‘asymmetrical’:



and the ‘symmetrical’:



b) Bilingualism

The University of Wales is committed to supporting the linguistic, cultural and national heritage of Wales. As such, the bilingual logo forms a distinct part of the University’s corporate image. Therefore, the University’s logo may only be used in its bilingual entirety.

c) Colour Specification

The University’s two logos can be reproduced in three different colour formats:

Black and white (as above);

Murrey (pantone 193) and white:



Navy (pantone reflex blue) and white:



In some circumstance, the logo's colours can be reversed so that a black/murrey/navy background with white text is displayed. Approval will be given in such instances on a case-by-case basis only.

d) Size

The logo must always be of a sufficient size so that its characters can be easily legible.

Please do not use the logo from the University's website. You can request various high quality copies of the University's logo by emailing publicity.approval@wales.ac.uk.

e) Accompanying Text

Institutions are required to ensure that all advertisements (including brochures, flyers and websites) relating to University of Wales validated schemes contain the University's logo, featured prominently, as well as standard text explaining the relationship between the University and the institution. Accordingly, all publicity materials (as defined within these procedures) should appear as follows:

[Insert Institution name, logo and course title here]

PRIFYSGOL CYMRU  **UNIVERSITY OF WALES**

This degree is validated and awarded by the University of Wales, UK. For further details regarding the University and its validation services, please log on to www.wales.ac.uk/validation or email validation@wales.ac.uk

4. Recognition of University of Wales degrees in Spain

All publicity materials produced by institutions delivering University of Wales validated schemes in Spain should note clearly and unequivocally that, after successfully completing their University of Wales degree, students will need to go through the homologación process in order for the Ministry of Education in Spain to recognise their degree as being equivalent to awards granted within Spain. It should also be noted that homologación will be dealt with by the Ministry of Education on a case-by-case basis and that the University of Wales cannot guarantee that such applications will be successful.

PROCEDURES FOR EXISTING VALIDATED CENTRES TO HAVE APPROVAL OF AN ADDITIONAL CENTRE OR CENTRES

- 1 Each additional centre shall be subject to a preliminary visit (by an independent member of the Validation Board or Unit) with a report made to the Validation Board.
- 2 Upon receipt of a satisfactory proposal document a full validation exercise by a Panel of Assessors shall take place. The Panel shall be constituted as follows:
 - the existing Moderator(s) for the validated scheme
 - the existing External Expert for the validated scheme
 - the existing External Examiner(s) for the validated scheme
 - a representative from the Validation Unit
 - the Validation Board may also, where necessary, require that a Validation Board representative also be present.
- 3 A report of the validation exercise (concentrating on staffing, resources and quality assurance procedures at the additional centre(s)) shall be made available to the Validation Board.
- 4 In all instances, a direct contractual agreement between the University and the additional centre will be required (with an addendum referring to the existing centre and its relationship to the new centre as necessary).
- 5 Each additional validated centre shall be required to submit a separate Annual Report to the Validation Board.

UPGRADING OF VALIDATED DEGREE SCHEMES

Upgrading of degree schemes can either be from Ordinary level to General Honours or from General Honours to fully classified Honours level.

In both cases the following criteria apply:

A Criteria for Upgrading

The following documentation and information shall be made available in order to form the criteria to support a request for upgrading. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that the validated scheme has demonstrated a progression from one level to the next as evidenced by:

- 1 The report of the original validation (with particular attention to be paid regarding expectations at validation e.g. expectations of upgrade, timescales etc and curriculum content).
- 2 Details of student intake, re-sit and wastage rates.
- 3 An analysis of students' evaluation of the degree scheme.
- 4 Details of staffing (including any changes since validation) and staff development.
- 5 A comprehensive statement on resources.
- 6 Reports of External Examiners and Moderators (normally covering at least one graduating cohort).
- 7 The views of External Examiners and Moderators on the request for upgrading as recorded in the attached pro forma.

[NB: For schemes that have undergone a Quinquennial Review exercise, the documentation listed in 2, 3, 4 and 5 will not be required. In such cases, the Working Group will instead be provided with the report of the Quinquennial Review exercise, plus details of the meeting of any conditions/recommendations and the institution's Quinquennial Review submission document.]

B Procedures

- 1 A request for upgrading shall be reported to the Validation Board. The Board shall nominate at least two of its members to form a small Working Group to consider each proposal on the basis of the evidence as outlined in A1-7 above.
- 2 The Working Group shall normally meet on at least one occasion to consider the evidence and agree on a recommendation. In exceptional circumstances a visit to the College may be necessary or the Working Group may request that a representative or representatives from the College attend a meeting of the Working Group.
- 3 The Working Group's recommendation shall be relayed to the Validation Board for approval. On the recommendation of the Working Group approval may be given on a retrospective basis (i.e. to include students enrolled at any particular stage within the degree scheme).

UPGRADING OF VALIDATED DEGREE SCHEME

Full Title of Degree Scheme

Present Level of Award

Institution

The following pro forma should be completed in full and returned, together with any supporting documentation, to the Validation Unit within 14 days of issue.

1 Student-related issues

To note any student-related issues e.g. relevance to the request for upgrading, e.g. entry requirements, progression, feedback, wastage rates.

2. Academic Standards

Drawing on your experience as the scheme's Moderator/External Examiner, please provide your views with regard to the academic achievements and level of the scheme. Does the degree equate, in terms of its academic level and status, with other General Honours degree qualifications with which you are familiar?

3. Assessment and Classification of Students

Are assessment procedures at the Institution sufficiently sophisticated to handle the requirements of marking at honours level? Do the internal examiners have a sound understanding of the requirements of a UK General Honours degree?

4. Specific Recommendations

Do you wish to see any specific conditions applied to any recommendation for upgrading (e.g. with regard to existing students enrolled on the programme)?

5. Any Other Relevant Information

Please provide any further details which you consider to be relevant to the upgrading proposal.

6. Final Recommendation

Would you wish to support the proposal to upgrade (subject to any conditions or recommendations noted above):

Yes/No/Further Comment:

Name:

Position: External Examiner/Moderator

Signed:

Date:

PLEASE RETURN TO:
MR H F HUGHES, HEAD OF VALIDATION SERVICES,
UNIVERSITY OF WALES VALIDATION UNIT, THE REGISTRY,
KING EDWARD VII AVENUE, CATHAYS PARK, CARDIFF, CF10 3NS
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 00-44-(0)-29-20- 376999
FAX NUMBER: 00-44-(0)- 29- 20-376984
e-mail: validation@wales.ac.uk

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO VALIDATED SCHEMES OF STUDY

The following processes shall apply for processing and approving amendments to existing schemes of study.

(i) All requests for approval of amendments shall be made in writing by the institution and submitted either in the Annual Return (as an appendix if necessary) or to the Head of Validation Services.

(ii) Upon receipt of an appropriately documented request the following procedures will be applied:

A. For an amendment to a scheme's syllabus and/or assessment criteria which contribute or affect less than 30% of the entire scheme (unless this 30% constitutes more than 30% of the modules/credits contributing towards the final degree classification):

The amendments shall be circulated for the written approval of the Moderators and External Examiners.

B. For an amendment to a scheme's syllabus and/or assessment criteria which contributes or affects more than 30% of the entire scheme (or more than 30% of the modules/credits contributing towards the final degree classification):

All such amendments shall be considered wherever possible by a meeting of the Joint Board of Studies at the Institution concerned. Where it is not possible for the JBS to consider a proposal, or where a JBS meeting so recommends then a panel of assessors shall be established which will consider the proposal either by correspondence or at a meeting.

All panels shall be chaired by an independent member drawn from the Validation Board who shall approve the final constitution of the panel.

C. Requests for amending the mode of delivery of a programme (e.g. to distance learning or on-line delivery)

All such amendments will be considered either by the Joint Board of Studies or by a panel of assessors, depending on the nature of the proposal.

(iii) With respect to procedure A above the Validation Board will be informed of any amendment agreed by means of the Moderator's Report or the Institution's Annual College and Course Review Form or, if required, a report by the Head of Validation Services.

With respect to procedure B above the Validation Board will be required to approve any amendments by means of receipt of a written report containing the recommendations of the Joint Board of Studies (or, if deemed necessary, the panel of assessors).

With respect to procedure C above the Validation Board will be required to approve a report of the panel or the joint board's consideration of the proposal.

QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW OF VALIDATED INSTITUTIONS

A The Concept of Course Review

Quinquennial review is the process whereby the progress of a validated course is critically appraised at five yearly intervals, and any proposals for change are considered by a Review Panel representing the University of Wales in order to confirm that the course remains academically valid and continues to meet the conditions for an award of the University of Wales.

The course review process begins with the regular monitoring exercise by the institution itself, which is formally reported in the Annual College and Course Review Form. This evidence and the annual reports submitted by the External Examiner, External Expert and the Moderator, which accumulate during the quinquennium, provide the background to the course overview and critical appraisal submission, which is prepared for consideration by the Review Panel. The course document provides an accurate record of the course as it operates at the end of the quinquennium and provides background details for the course overview and critical appraisal.

The critical appraisal, in which all members of the course team engage, is of central importance in the review process, and in its written form provides crucial evidence for the Review Panel. The most effective critical appraisals present a balance between statistical information and objective evaluative comment, incorporating feedback from students and other sources, and providing a clear indication of the action taken to solve problems that have been identified.

However, the course review is not just a backward-looking evaluation confined to judgements on past performance. It provides an opportunity for the institution to propose possible future developments, which may include consideration of substantial changes in the structure and content of the course, although detailed information should be given in the course overview/critical appraisal submission to enable any new provision to be validated. The review enables the university to assess that the institution's learning resources are of an appropriate standard. Normally a member of the Panel of Assessors will be provided with Guidelines and a Questionnaire to assess the institution's resources and their development over the quinquennium. Above all, the review provides an opportunity for a frank and constructive discussion and an exchange of ideas between the panel and the course team in the spirit of professional partnership.

B Guidelines for preparing the Course Review Submission

The document should be prepared according to the following format. The items listed under each section heading are examples of the issues requiring attention. It is not a closed and definitive list - other issues relevant to a particular section may be addressed in the submission.

1 Course Rationale

- (i) What reasons were given to justify the provision of this course when validated or last reviewed?
- (ii) Has that justification been modified during the quinquennium for political or economic or educational reasons? If so, explain how the rationale has changed during that time.
- (iii) Summarise the course rationale for the five years ahead.

2 Aims and Learning Outcomes

- (i) What were the stated **aims** for the course when validated or last reviewed?
- (ii) In what way, and for what reason, have those aims been modified during the quinquennium?
- (iii) What evidence is available to show the aims have, or have not, been achieved? What action has been taken to correct the failure to achieve the aims?
- (iv) What were the stated **learning outcomes** for the course when validated or last reviewed?
- (v) What evidence is available to show the extent to which the course has fulfilled its learning outcomes? What action has been taken to overcome any failure to achieve the learning outcomes?
- (vi) Do the learning outcomes adequately reflect the capabilities students are expected to demonstrate at the completion of the course?

3 Course Structure and Content

- (i) What changes have been made to the structure of the course during the quinquennium? What were the reasons for the changes and how effective have they been? Have the external reference points (eg QAA subject benchmark statements) or professional/ statutory body requirements changed during the quinquennium and did this result in any changes to the programme?
- (ii) Are any changes to the structure proposed for the forthcoming quinquennium? If so, for what reason(s)?
- (iii) How relevant is the course content to the aims and learning outcomes? Explain what effect any change to the aims and learning outcomes has had on the content, and vice versa.
- (iv) What changes have been made to the sequence and progression of the course content during the last five years? Why was this change necessary, and how beneficial has it been?
- (v) How effectively does the course content build upon students' prior knowledge and professional experience? What measures have been introduced during the quinquennium to ensure progression and coherence for the individual student?

(Note: *An up to date course document (including programme specification) should be included in the submission to the University.*

4 Students

- (i) Provide statistics of student cohorts over the previous five years including admissions, course completion, final examination results/degree classification and failures and explain any significant variations in the data from year to year.
- (ii) Describe the admissions process for the programme, including any entry criteria for the students. What changes, if any, have been made to the criteria in the last five years and for what reason(s)?
- (iii) What measures have been taken during the quinquennium to minimise student “wastage” (i.e. non-completion of course)? Assess the effectiveness of those measures.
- (iv) What changes, if any, have occurred in the quality of tutorial and pastoral support for students in the last five years?
- (v) What provision is made for disabled students?

(Note: *Statistical data relating to the students should be included in the Appendix to the Submission*)

5 Staffing and Development

- (i) What are the criteria, if any, for the selection of teaching staff for this course? Have these arrangements changed in any way during the quinquennium and are they, currently, satisfactory?
- (ii) How effectively has the academic expertise of the teaching staff matched the needs of the students during the last five years? Overall, has this matching become stronger or weaker?
- (iii) To what extent have the teaching staff upgraded their academic expertise and engaged in relevant research, consultancy and other scholarly activity during the quinquennium? How is this staff development activity likely to change, if at all, in the next five years?

(Note: *CVs for all members of the course team should be included in the Appendix to the Submission*)

6 Teaching and Learning

- (i) How is the quality of the teaching monitored? What criteria are used to assess this quality? What evidence is there of any change in the quality of teaching by the course team during the quinquennium?
- (ii) In what ways have the teaching strategies changed to meet the needs of Honours degree students?
- (iii) What developments have taken place in the mode of student learning and study during the last five years? How effective are those changes?
- (iv) To what extent have distance learning materials and information technology become part of the teaching-learning strategy during the quinquennium? How effective are these changes?

7 Assessment

- (i) What modifications have been made to the assessment scheme during the last five years? Explain the reasons for any such change and assess the effectiveness.

- (ii) What arrangements have been made during the quinquennium to ensure the validity and objectivity of the assessment process?
- (iii) What measures have been taken to avoid an excessive workload for students and how effective are those measures?

8 Resources

- (i) What changes in the financial provision for the course have been implemented during the quinquennium? What action has been taken to minimise any adverse effects for the students and the quality of the course?
- (ii) What developments have taken place in the library, computing and other learning resources provision for the benefit of the students?
- (iii) What resource needs have been identified for the effective delivery of the course in the future? How will the resources be achieved, and failing that, what are the consequences for the course?

9 Course Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

- (i) Has the constitution and operation of the Course Committee changed during the quinquennium? If so, outline those changes and evaluate the consequences.
- (ii) Explain the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the course (including student feedback) and identify the ways in which the procedures have been modified, if at all, during the quinquennium.
- (iii) Are the teaching staff, students (present and past) and employers invited to express their views of the course? How are their views obtained and how have those views changed in the last five years?
- (iv) Identify any **two** issues raised by the external examiner during the quinquennium and, in each case, describe the action taken by the Course Committee in response to the examiner's report.

(Note: *Copies of the minutes of the Course Committee meetings relevant to the two issues in 9 (iv) should be included in the Appendix.*)

10 Future Development of the Course

- (i) What are the proposals for the future development of the course? What support for those proposals exists within (a) the institution and (b) the course team?
- (ii) What are the resource implications for the institution if the proposals are approved?
- (iii) Would the proposed developments have implications for the present aims, objectives, structure and content of the course?
- (iv) Provide an outline of the proposed Course Development Plan for the next quinquennium. *(This plan should be included in the Appendix.)*

11 Association with the University of Wales

- (i) How beneficial have you found this relationship in the last five years?

- (ii) In what ways do you perceive this association could be enhanced?
- (iii) Do you have any comments regarding your relationship with the University of Wales Moderator(s) and the Validation Unit?

NOTES OF GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS OF QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW PANELS

- 1 The enclosed documents provide the required information for assessment of the institution's Quinquennial Review.
- 2 As a member of the Review Panel you will be required to determine whether or not this information, and that provided as a result of the Review visit, provides sufficient and positive evidence to allow the scheme(s) of study to operate under University of Wales validation for a further five year period.
- 3 The Quinquennial Review is also an appropriate opportunity to review the relationship of the Institution with the University of Wales with the validating body. In particular Review Panels are required to critically review the role that the appointed Moderator(s) have played over the previous five year period and to make a recommendation as to whether or not their period of appointment should be extended for one further period of two years.
- 4 In coming to conclusions, it would be helpful if the Assessor could pay particular attention to the following information and indicators:
 - Evidence contained in the reports of External Examiners, External Experts and Moderators
 - Staffing and staff development policy
 - Adequacy of college / course management – there is an expectation that the Panel would normally meet members of the Institution's Senior Management with Course Leader(s), in order to discuss strategic/Institutional level issues
 - Entry requirements
 - Assessment criteria and details of student performance
 - Conduct of examinations and the Examination Board(s)
 - Institutional responsiveness to University of Wales requirements
 - Future outlook (academic and financial)
 - Student feedback/system for reviewing and monitoring student progress/development of key skills
 - Quality of administrative support (including, where appropriate, translation requirements)
 - One member of the Panel will assume the role of Learning Resources Scrutineer and will be provided with the appropriate Guidelines and Questionnaire.
- 5 The Quinquennial Review Panel will make its recommendation to the Validation Board.

The final decision can range from unconditional approval to refusal to renew validation. In the case of the latter, the University will be required to put in place a system which ensures that all currently registered students have the opportunity to complete their studies.

Approval will often be subject to fulfilment of certain conditions and recommendations (often with deadlines attached). If revised documentation is required, Panel members are required to confirm, by means of a pro forma, whether or not they are satisfied that the conditions set at the Review have been met and that the scheme(s) should continue to be validated.

- 6 Should the Assessor have any additional remarks or comments to make re. the Review procedures or exercise, these may be addressed (in confidence if necessary) directly to the Head of Validation Services.

NOTES OF GUIDANCE ISSUED TO UNIVERSITY REVIEW PANEL MEMBERS IN CONNECTION WITH THE QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW

Name of Validated Institution:

Title of Course(s) subject to Review:

The University considers its major Quinquennial Review to be of central importance in the process of monitoring academic standards and determining whether or not to maintain the validated status of a course or institution.

The following documentation is enclosed for your use:-

- (i) Validation Board Handbook of Policy and Procedures.**
- (ii) Annual Report Forms (submitted by External Examiners, External Experts and Moderators) for the past 5 years.**
- (iii) Annual College and Course Review Forms (submitted by the Validated Institution) for the past 5 years.**
- (iv) A detailed overview paper submitted by the Course Director.**
- (v) A course document (including programme specification).**
- (vi) A student handbook.**
- (vii) Notes of Guidance for members of Quinquennial Review Panels.**

In particular the Review Panel will be expected to enter into a rigorous and critical dialogue concentrating on key performance indicators, such as entry requirements, student perception and performance, quality of staff and resources, course and institutional development plans and quality assurance mechanisms including the implementation of External Examiner's recommendations.

A report of the Review Panel visit will be made to the Validation Board's Executive Committee and to the institution concerned. Following a Review and (if required) the submission of any additional documentation, Panel members are required to confirm, by means of a pro forma, whether or not they are satisfied that the conditions set at the Review have been met and that the scheme(s) should continue to be validated.

PREPARATION OF DOCUMENTATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW

Title of Course(s) subject to review:

In order to review academic standards, course quality and the student experience during the five year period since the University of Wales established validation at your Institution it will shortly be necessary to undertake a thorough Quinquennial Review.

According to the University's established procedures this review will be undertaken by a Review Panel consisting of:-

A Chairperson (drawn from the Validation Board)

External Examiner(s)

Additional Expert Assessor(s) from a UK University other than Wales.

Course Moderators will be consulted as part of the Review exercise.

Prior to visiting your institution the Review Panel will require the following documentation:-

- (i) Annual Report Forms (submitted by External Examiners and Moderators) for the last 5 years.**
- (ii) Annual College and Course Review Forms (submitted by your Institution) for the past 5 years.**
- (iii) An overview paper prepared by the Course Director(s).**
- (iv) An up to date Course Document**
- (v) An up to date Student Handbook**

This report forms an important element in the Panel's deliberations. It should concentrate on the course's development over the past 5 years paying particular attention to:-

- (a) Course Rationale, Aims and Learning Outcomes - are they being achieved?**
- (b) Students - intake, qualification on entry, numbers and wastage rates, admissions policy, pastoral care and counselling, student feedback, questionnaires etc.**
- (c) Staffing and Staff Development.**
- (d) Resources - how have these developed over the past 5 years, what are the plans for future development?**
- (e) Course Structure and Content - what changes have been implemented and for what purpose?**

- (f) Course Management, Teaching and Learning Strategies - are there effective systems for delivery and monitoring of the course in place? How are changes decided upon, are the recommendations of External Examiners and Moderators implemented?**
- (g) Future Action Plan - what is the general assessment of the academic well-being of the Institution and its programme? What course of action will be taken to remedy problems?**
- (h) Validation Body - do you wish to make any observations regarding your working relationship with the University of Wales? How might this be improved?**

This documentation should be made available to the Validation Unit by the deadline stated below.

It is anticipated that the Review Panel visit will take place on_____ .

A report of this visit will be made to the Validation Board Executive Committee and a copy will also be made available for your comment.

GUIDELINES FOR USE AT CENTRES WHERE VALIDATION HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN

(OR COME TO AN END FOR OTHER REASONS)

- 1 The over-riding concern shall be to ensure that all existing students (already enrolled on the validated schemes) are given every possible opportunity to complete their studies under acceptable conditions and to qualify for the University's award under the terms of the Agreement document signed by both parties.
- 2 There should be continuing close liaison between the Validation Unit and the institution concerned (and special meetings convened with senior management) to ensure that the University's requirements are understood and met and that a spirit of co-operation is maintained under what may often be quite difficult circumstances.
- 3 There should be close contact and regular meetings (with the Moderator and Validation Unit staff) with students to ensure that they are fully aware of the situation and to elicit feedback as to the nature and extent of teaching resource provision being made available to support their studies.
- 4 The Moderator(s) and External Examiner(s) are required to continue to exercise their designated roles and functions until all University of Wales registered students have exited or completed the course(s).
- 5 The Moderator(s) should pay careful attention to resources available to the institution to ensure that they are adequate to enable students to complete their studies (and by means of completing the resources questionnaire provided by the Validation Unit).
- 6 The Moderator(s) should maintain close contact with teaching staff and conduct staff development work as appropriate to the circumstances (bearing in mind, for example, that long-term goals and outcomes may be inappropriate).
- 7 External Examiners should be given full and adequate information as to the situation prevailing at the institution concerned and the efforts being made on behalf of existing students.
- 8 Validation Unit Staff should monitor carefully the institution's advertising and publicity materials to ensure that the programme(s) concerned are no longer being advertised as validated by the University of Wales and that the institution is not claiming to have on-going links with the University.
- 9 Should provision for existing students not be forthcoming at the institution then the Validation Unit should make every effort (and, as far as possible, in co-operation with the institution) to transfer existing students onto an appropriate alternative scheme of study which is recognised by the University's Academic Board.
- 10 If approached by another UK validating University or by another interested party (e.g.: the QAA or the British Council) then the Validation Unit should provide a detailed (and, if necessary informal) account of the circumstances surrounding the University's decision to terminate the validated relationship.

- 11 A brief report detailing action undertaken during the period of withdrawal, together with any recommendations for good practice under such circumstances, shall be made to the Validation Board.

DATED

Appendix 46
2007

(1) **UNIVERSITY OF WALES**

(2)

**VALIDATION
AGREEMENT**

MORGAN COLE
Bradley Court
Park Place
Cardiff CF10 3DP
Tel: 02920 385385
Fax: 02920 385300

DATED

2007

BETWEEN

- (1) UNIVERSITY OF WALES established by Royal Charter on 30th November 1893 of University Registry, Kind Edward VII Avenue, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NS (the "**University**"); and
- (2) [*NAME OF INSTITUTION*] [*describe legal status of institution and where registered if applicable e.g. statutory corporation or company registered in [country] etc.*] of [*address*] (the "**Institution**")

RECITALS

- (A) The University has pursuant to its charter and statutes power to enter into this Agreement and to perform the duties and obligations set out in this Agreement.
- (B) The Institution under the systems of laws to which it is subject is authorised and entitled to provide education and has the power to enter into this Agreement and to perform the duties and obligations set out in this Agreement.
- (C) The University and the Institution have agreed to enter into this Agreement to enable the University by validation to award the Qualification (as defined below) to candidates enrolled on a Course (as defined below) within the Institution.

AGREEMENT

1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

1.1 In this Agreement including its Schedules unless the context otherwise requires

1.1.1 the following definitions are used:-

"Agreement" means this agreement together with its Recitals and Schedules;

"Commencement Date" means the commencement date set out in Schedule 1;

"Confidential Information" means all information (including all oral and visual information, and all information recorded in writing or electronically, or in any other medium or by any other method) disclosed to, or obtained by, one party from the other party or a third party acting on that other party's behalf and which is marked as confidential or which is otherwise of a confidential or commercially sensitive nature (as would be determined by a reasonable person) or which otherwise comprises "personal data" or "sensitive personal data" (as both are defined in the Data Protection Act) and including without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing any information relating to a party's contracts, students, staff, and business affairs;

"Course" means the programme(s) of academic study within the Subject intended as preparation for obtaining the Qualification;

"Course Campus" means the approved campus or location described in Schedule 1;

"Course Director" means the member of the teaching staff of the Institution with overall responsibility for the delivery of the Course at the Institution;

"Course Language" means the language of delivery and examination of the Course as set out in Schedule 1;

"Course Start Date" means the Course start date set out in Schedule 1;

"Examining Board" means the panel of External Examiners and Moderators appointed by the University to visit the Institution in conjunction with University staff for the purpose of finalising marks awarded to candidates by the Internal Examiners and to determine the awarding of Qualifications to candidates enrolled on the Course;

"External Examiners" means persons qualified to examine the Subject who are not members of the teaching staff of the University or of a member institution of the University or of the Institution and who by separate contract agree with the University to act as examiners of the Course;

"External Experts" means persons qualified to act as an Advisor to the Institution with regard to subject specific course developments and to provide additional subject guidance to the Institution who are not members of the teaching staff of the University or of a member institution of the University or of the Institution and who by separate contract agree with the University to act in this capacity;

"Fees" means the fees set out in Schedule 3 from time to time;

"Guidelines on the Transfer of Data" means the guidelines issued by the University to the Institution from time to time specifying the information and returns required by the University in respect of the enrolment and subsequent assessment and/or examination of each student on the Course;

"Internal Examiners" means persons qualified to examine the Subject who are members of the teaching staff of the Institution;

“Joint Board of Studies” means the annual meeting of nominated representatives of the Institution (including the Course Director), and representatives of the University (including Moderators and External Examiners) for the purpose of receiving and considering reports from the Course Director concerning the Course, approving amendments to the Course and considering such other matters as may be referred for consideration by the University’s Validation Board or the Institution’s Academic Board (or equivalent);

"Maximum Number" means the maximum number set out in Schedule 1;

"Minimum Number" means the minimum number set out in Schedule 1;

"Minimum Term" means the 3 year period commencing on the Commencement Date;

"Moderators" means persons qualified and appointed to ensure that appropriate academic standards of the University are maintained and who are on the teaching staff of one of the member institutions of the University;

"Qualification" means the qualification(s) described in Schedule 1;

"Registration Information" means the information and returns required by the University in respect of each student as a condition of enrolment of that student on the Course;

"Subject" means the subject described in Schedule 1;

"Term" means the period during which this Agreement shall remain in force pursuant to Clause 2.1; and

"Translation" means an accurate English language translation of a non-English document to be undertaken by the translation service or agency which has been appointed in accordance with the University's procedure

for appointing translators from time to time (a copy of which will be provided to the Institution upon request).

- 1.1.2 references to a statute or statutory provision shall be construed as a reference to the same from time to time amended, consolidated, modified, extended, re-enacted or replaced. Any reference to a statutory provision shall include any subordinate legislation made from time to time under that provision;
- 1.1.3 words in the singular shall include the plural and vice versa and a reference to a gender shall include a reference to all genders;
- 1.1.4 a reference to a person shall include a reference to a firm, a body corporate and unincorporated association or to a person's executors or administrators;
- 1.1.5 a reference to a Clause or Schedule shall be a reference to a clause or schedule (as the case may be) of or to this Agreement;
- 1.1.6 references to writing shall include any modes of reproducing words in a legible and non-transitory form; and
- 1.1.7 the headings are for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation of any provision of this Agreement.

2. **TERM**

- 2.1 This Agreement shall come into force on the Commencement Date and, subject to earlier termination in accordance with its terms, shall remain in force for the Minimum Term and thereafter from year to year until terminated pursuant to Clause 10.2.
- 2.2 The Institution shall promote and organise the Course to commence on the Course Start Date in each year of the Term.

3. **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

3.1 Subject to Clause 3.5 the Institution undertakes in each year of the Term to:

3.1.1 advertise and seek candidates for the Course; and

3.1.2 enrol by the Course Commencement Date no fewer than the Minimum Number of candidates and no more than the Maximum Number of candidates to participate and receive tuition in the Course.

If by the Course Commencement Date in any year insufficient candidates have enrolled on the Course, the University shall be entitled in its discretion to terminate this Agreement forthwith by giving 30 days notice in writing to the Institution.

3.2 The minimum qualifications for candidates to apply for enrolment on the Course are set out in Schedule 2 and the Institution shall prior to the Course Commencement Date provide the University with written evidence satisfactory to the University that students enrolled by the Institution on the Course have achieved such minimum qualifications.

3.3 Without prejudice to Clause 3.4, the University shall notify the Institution no later than [6 weeks] prior to the Course Commencement Date of the Registration Information required in respect of each student. The Institution shall provide the Registration Information to the University no later than 1 week after the Course Commencement Date. The University is not required to enrol on the Course a student in respect of which it has not received all of the Registration Information required.

3.4 The Institution shall provide the University with the full name and details of each student enrolled on the Course as specified in the Guidelines on the Transfer of Data from time to time and shall forthwith notify the University if these details change or if a student withdraws or wishes to be admitted late to the Course. The University shall be entitled in its discretion to refuse to enrol on the Course any student admitted late by the Institution.

3.5 The provisions of Clause 3.1 shall not apply where notice of termination has already been served pursuant to the terms of this Agreement.

4. **AWARD OF QUALIFICATION**

4.1 Subject to the Institution having duly performed its obligations under this Agreement, the University agrees to award the Qualification to those students enrolled on the Course who complete the Course successfully in compliance with the University's requirements (as notified to the Institution from time to time).

5. **FEES**

5.1 The Institution shall pay to the University the Fees and all other sums payable under this Agreement in sterling and in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2. Save as may be expressly set out in this Agreement, the Institution is wholly responsible for the cost and expense of complying with its obligations under this Agreement. Payment shall be made without deduction, set-off or counterclaim.

6. **CONDUCT OF ASSESSMENTS**

6.1 The Institution shall submit to the University by the date set out in Schedule 1 in each calendar year:

6.1.1 the draft assessment materials (including where relevant examination papers) for the Course assessments to take place on the dates and at the times described in Schedule 1 in that year; and

6.1.2 the names and academic qualifications of the persons proposed to act as Internal Examiners for the assessments referred to in Clause 6.1.1 together with the name of the person proposed to act as chairperson of the Examining Board.

6.2 The University shall have absolute discretion and without stating reasons to require the Institution to make such amendments as the University shall indicate

to the draft assessment materials and/or examination papers referred to in Clause 6.1.1 and to disqualify from participating in any one or more of the proposed Internal Examiners or the chairperson of the Examining Board and to require immediate replacement of any such person disqualified to the reasonable satisfaction of the University.

- 6.3 Where the Course Language is not English or Welsh, the Institution shall be responsible for and shall bear the costs of arranging for the Translation of any amendments to the draft assessment materials and/or examination papers required by the University in accordance with the University's guidelines.

6.3.1 Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the University and in the case only of assessed elements of the Course that contribute towards the candidates' final award or classification of award the Institution undertakes to submit to the University in each year a sample of the candidates' assessed work together with a translation of this sample. The Institution undertakes to submit such assessed work in accordance with the University's procedures from time to time

6.3.2 Without prejudice to the provisions of Clause 7 the Institution undertakes to comply with the University's policies in respect of the translation of documents from time to time and further undertakes that it will not permit additional or other arrangements to be put in place in respect of the translation of documents hereunder without the prior written consent of the University

6.3.3 Any failure to comply with the provisions of this Clause 6.3 will for the purpose of Clause 7.5 be considered to affect adversely and to a material extent the reputation and integrity of the qualifications of the University.

- 6.4 The Institution shall permit the Examination Board to visit the Institution on the dates specified in Schedule 1 for the purpose of finalising marks awarded to candidates by the Internal Examiners and to determine the awarding of the Qualification to assessed candidates. The Institution shall be responsible for the administration of the Examination Board meetings including without limitation:
- 6.4.1 providing accurate and coherent spreadsheets of marks;
 - 6.4.2 ensuring that an agreed proportion of assessed work and examination papers has been accurately Translated by a person who has been appointed in accordance with the University's procedure for appointing translators from time to time and is available for scrutiny and verification; and
- 6.5 The University shall have absolute discretion in those instances that it deems appropriate to delay the procedure set out in Clause 6.4 in order to ensure the conduct of any investigation which may be deemed necessary by the University in its absolute discretion into any alleged instances of unfair practice or other irregularity at the Institution. Such investigation shall be conducted in accordance with the written procedures of the University from time to time, details of which shall be supplied by the University to the Institution upon request.
- 6.6 The Institution shall be responsible for and shall pay to the University upon demand the reasonable costs of the External Examiners, Moderators, External Experts and any additional necessary personnel of the University required to visit the Institution to undertake the matters referred to in Clauses 6.4 or 6.5, including the cost of air travel, accommodation and daily living expenses.
- 6.7 The Institution shall at all reasonable times permit access to the premises of the Institution by authorised representatives of the University for the purposes set out in Clauses 6.4 and 6.5.
- 6.8 The Institution shall be responsible for taking full and accurate minutes of the meeting.

6.9 The Institution shall arrange and host a meeting of the Joint Board of Studies no less than once a year on the date(s) specified in Schedule 1 (and if no date is there specified on such date as may be requested by the University upon reasonable notice) and shall permit the University's representatives access to attend such meeting.

7. **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

7.1 The University will hold the ultimate responsibility for the academic standard of the scheme.

7.2 The Institution agrees to implement fully the quality assurance procedures made known to it annually by the University. This includes (but is not limited to) compliance with:

7.2.1 the appropriate Regulations and Standing Orders of the University governing the Course;

7.2.2 appropriate administrative procedures relating to the registration of students and the conduct of examinations;

7.2.3 the submission of annual returns and other information as requested by the University; and

7.2.4 Clause 6.9 (annual meeting of the Joint Board of Studies)

7.3 The University from time to time conducts reviews of its validated courses. The Institution agrees to participate fully in any University review of the Course in accordance with the written instructions of the University.

7.4 The Institution agrees to participate fully in all quality assurance and review exercises carried out by any person (including without limitation the UK's Quality Assurance Agency) who is entitled to or required to carry out such exercise whether by operation of law or otherwise.

- 7.5 Where review by the University or by any person pursuant to Clauses 7.3 and 7.4 indicates the existence of, or the University becomes aware of, any actual or potential issue which in the University's opinion (acting reasonably):
- 7.5.1 impairs or may impair the Institution's academic quality and standards;
 - 7.5.2 might adversely affect the reputation and integrity of the University and/or the qualifications awarded by it
- then (at the University's discretion):
- 7.5.3 the University may require the Institution to take appropriate action at the Institution's own cost to resolve any problem or issue within such timescale as the University may impose and in the event of the Institution failing to take action or implement changes to the satisfaction of the University, the University shall be entitled to terminate this Agreement forthwith; or
 - 7.5.4 the University shall be entitled to terminate this Agreement forthwith by notice in writing.
- 7.6 Without prejudice to the other provisions of this Clause 7, the Institution agrees to afford the University's authorised representatives reasonable access to such information, documents, records and data as may be relevant to the Institution's performance under this Agreement.
- 7.7 The Institution shall be responsible for and shall pay to the University upon demand the reasonable costs of the External Examiners, Moderators, External Experts and any additional necessary personnel of the University required to visit the Institution to undertake the matters referred to in Clauses 7.3 and 7.4, including the cost of air travel, accommodation and daily living expenses.
- 7.8 The provisions of the Validation Board's Student Complaints Procedure from time to time shall apply to the Institution and the Institution shall observe and comply with all its obligations as set out in the Procedure and agree to be bound

by any decision made by a Standing Panel constituted by the University to oversee the Procedure's effective practice.

7.9 The Institution shall ensure that each candidate enrolled on the Course is aware of the existence of the University's Student Complaints Procedure and the Institution shall procure that each candidate who requests a copy is given the most current version of the Procedure.

7.10 The Institution shall deliver the Course at the approved Course Campus only. The Institution shall not deliver the Course (or any element of it) at any other location without the prior written consent of the University. The University shall be entitled to withhold its consent in its discretion and shall in no circumstances give its consent without first inspecting and validating any alternative location in accordance with its quality assurance policies and procedures.

8. **INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO THE UNIVERSITY**

8.1 The Institution shall provide the University with such details of teaching staff on the Course as the University shall reasonably require including the qualifications and experience of the teaching staff. The Institution shall notify the University where there is a change to its teaching staff on the Course (giving details of the qualifications and experience of new or replacement staff).

8.2 The Institution shall not without the previous written consent of the University permit the ratio of teaching staff to candidates to fall below the level established at the Course Start Date.

8.3 The Institution shall provide the University with such information in relation to the Course as the University shall require including details of any proposed changes to the Course prior to the Institution effecting such changes.

8.4 Any proposed changes to the Course as outlined in Clauses 8.2 and 8.3 and the employment of any teaching staff for the Course shall be established only subject to the prior written approval of the University.

- 8.5 The University shall hold copies of the relevant definitive documentation pertaining to the scheme and a record of subsequent approved amendments.
- 8.6 In the event of any change in the Institution's legal status which may prevent performance of this Agreement in general including any change in ownership or any condition reasonably describable as a merger or takeover of the Institution the Institution shall provide the University with full details thereof at the earliest available opportunity.

9. **APPEALS**

- 9.1 The provisions of the University's Verification and Appeals Procedure from time to time relating to member institutions of the University shall apply mutatis mutandis to the Institution and the Institution shall observe and comply with all its obligations as set out in the Procedure.

10. **TERMINATION**

- 10.1 The University shall be entitled to terminate this Agreement forthwith by notice in writing:
- 10.1.1 if the Institution fails to make any payment due under this Agreement (including without limitation any payment of the Fees or any part of them) on the due date for payment;
- 10.1.2 if the Institution becomes insolvent or unable to pay its due debts or enters into any arrangement with its creditors or engages in any legal process approximate or equivalent to the appointment of a receiver or liquidator or any other condition reasonably describable as insolvency under the laws of England and Wales;
- 10.1.3 if diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and the country or state in which the Institution is located are for any reason severed or if

any public event occurs or governmental decree is passed which prevents performance of this Agreement in general or the visit or visits contemplated by Clause 6.4 in particular;

10.1.4 if the Institution is in material or persistent breach of the terms of this Agreement and, where the breach is capable of remedy, the Institution has not remedied the same within 28 days of the date of service of any notice pointing out the breach and requiring its remedy;

10.1.5 if unfair practice is established by the University under the terms of its established written procedure referred to in Clause 6.5 and such unfair practice is wholly or partly attributable to default or misconduct on the part of any member of the staff of the Institution;

10.1.6 if the University, acting reasonably, is not satisfied based on the information provided to it pursuant to Clause 8 that the faculty or department of the Institution responsible for delivering the Course or the Institution has sufficient resources to ensure that the Institution's obligations under this Agreement are met; and

10.1.7 pursuant to Clauses 7.5, 12.4 and 13.3.

10.2 Either party shall be entitled to terminate this Agreement for any reason by giving the other 12 months notice in writing to expire no earlier than the end of the Minimum Term or on any subsequent anniversary of the Commencement Date.

10.3 Termination of this Agreement for any reason shall not affect any rights or liabilities which have accrued prior to the date of termination.

10.4 This Clause 10.4 shall survive the termination of this Agreement as shall any other provision so required to survive either by express provision or by necessary implication.

11. **CONSEQUENCES OF TERMINATION**

- 11.1 Upon termination of this Agreement, the University and the Institution shall cooperate in good faith (without creating a binding obligation) to seek and find ways in which students enrolled on the Course may be permitted to participate in an appropriate alternative programme of study at another higher education institution recognised by the Academic Board of the University from time to time.
- 11.2 Upon termination of this Agreement the Institution shall continue to meet all its outstanding obligations under this Agreement and further shall transfer all records information data and documentation relating to the Course or any student enrolled on the Course as requested by the University and do all such acts as reasonably requested by the University to enable the University to perform its non-binding obligations under Clause 11.1.
- 11.3 Termination of this Agreement shall be without prejudice to all other rights and remedies of the parties.

12. **PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL**

- 12.1 The University shall have absolute discretion as to the contents of any statements advertisements or other promotional material prepared by the Institution for publication for the purposes of attracting the candidates to the Course.
- 12.2 The Institution shall not publish any material referred to in 12.1 without the previous written approval of the University.
- 12.3 Save as may be expressly set out in this Agreement, the Institution shall not make any representations on behalf of or hold itself out as the agent or representative of the University or as being able to bind the University in any way.
- 12.4 The Institution agrees to indemnify and keep indemnified the University against all actions claims or demands whatsoever arising from its breach of this Clause 12. The University shall also be entitled to terminate this Agreement forthwith by notice in writing to the Institution if the Institution breaches the provisions of this Clause 12.

12.5 This Clause 12 shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

13. **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

13.1 The Institution shall provide to the University at such times as the University may reasonably request such information and documentation as the University requires to monitor and review the Institution's performance under this Agreement.

13.2 The University shall regularly review the Institution's performance under this Agreement.

13.3 In the event that the University is not satisfied with the Institution's performance following any review the University may terminate this Agreement forthwith by notice in writing to the Institution.

14. **INDEMNITY**

14.1 The Institution shall indemnify and keep indemnified the University against any actions claims or demands on the part of any unsuccessful or partially successful candidate aggrieved by any award or lack of award of a Qualification and all costs incurred in the defence thereof save where such actions claims or demands are properly attributable to the default or negligence of the University. This Clause 14 shall survive the termination of the Agreement.

15. **WARRANTIES AND UNDERTAKINGS**

15.1 The Institution warrants and undertakes that it is and shall remain at all times under the systems of laws to which it is subject authorised and entitled to provide education and has the power to enter into this Agreement and to perform the duties and obligations set out in this Agreement.

15.2 The Institution undertakes that it shall at all times ensure that any premises and/or equipment used by the External Examiners, Moderators or any other employee, representative, officer, agent or contractor of the University shall be safe for use, in a state of good repair and fit for its purpose.

16. **ASSIGNMENT**

16.1 Neither party shall be entitled to assign, novate, sub-contract, charge or otherwise transfer or dispose of its rights or obligations under this Agreement, whether in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the other.

17. **LIABILITY**

17.1 For the avoidance of doubt, the indemnities set out in this Agreement (including without limitation those set out in Clauses 12.4, 14.1, and 17.4) are not subject to Clause 17.3.

17.2 Neither party excludes or limits its liability for fraud, or for death or personal injury arising as a result of its negligence.

17.3 Neither party shall be liable to the other under this Agreement to the extent that it is prevented from complying with its obligations because of any negligence, failure or default on the part of the other. Neither party shall have any liability whatsoever to the other whether in contract tort or otherwise for any losses or damages:

17.3.1 which were not reasonably foreseeable by the parties or either of them at the date of this Agreement; or

17.3.2 to the extent to which they are attributable to any intervening act, omission or event; or

17.3.3 which represent loss of any anticipated or future business, revenue, goodwill or profit.

17.4 The Institution shall be liable for and shall indemnify the University its officers servants employees sub-contractors and agents against any liability loss claim or proceedings whatsoever and all costs incurred in the defence thereof arising out of the breach or negligent performance or failure in performance by the Institution of the terms of this Agreement in respect of:

17.4.1 any damage to property real or personal including any infringement of third party rights; and

17.4.2 any injury to persons, including injury resulting in death

18. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

18.1 This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding of the parties and supersedes any previous agreement between the parties relating to the subject matters of this Agreement.

18.2 Each of the parties acknowledges and agrees that in entering into this Agreement it does not rely on and shall have no remedy in respect of any statement representation warranty or understanding (whether negligently or innocently made) of any person (whether party to this agreement or not) other than as expressly set out in this Agreement as a warranty.

18.3 The only remedy available to a party for breach of the warranties shall be for breach of contract under the terms of this Agreement.

18.4 Nothing in this sub-clause shall operate or exclude any liability for fraud.

19. DENIAL OF PARTNERSHIP

19.1 This Agreement shall not operate so as to create a partnership, joint venture or relationship of employment or of principal and agent of any kind between the parties.

20. NOTICES

20.1 Any demand, notice or other communication to be given or made in writing under this Agreement will be deemed to have been duly given or made as follows:-

20.1.1 if sent by prepaid first class post on the second working day after the date of posting; or

20.1.2 if delivered by hand upon delivery at the address provided for in this Agreement; or

20.1.3 if sent by facsimile on the day of transmission provided that a confirmatory copy is sent by pre-paid first class post on the same working day that the facsimile is transmitted

provided however that if it is delivered by hand or sent by facsimile on a day which is not a working day or after 4.00 p.m. on a working day it will instead be deemed to have been given or made on the next working day. Notices shall not be sent by email.

Any such demand notice or other communication will be addressed to and sent to the recipient at the address shown at the start of this Agreement or at such other address or fax number as may from time to time be notified in writing by the parties as being the address for service provided that in the case of a company it may instead (at the option of the sender) be addressed to the registered office for the time being.

21. **WAIVER**

21.1 The failure to exercise or delay in exercising a right or remedy provided by this Agreement or by law does not constitute a waiver of the right or remedy or a waiver of other rights or remedies.

21.2 A waiver of a breach of any of the terms of this Agreement or of a default under this Agreement does not constitute a waiver of any other breach or default and shall not affect the other terms of this Agreement.

21.3 A waiver of a breach of any of the terms of this Agreement or of a default under this Agreement will not prevent a party from subsequently requiring compliance with the waived obligation.

21.4 The rights and remedies provided by this Agreement are cumulative and (subject as otherwise provided by this Agreement) are not exclusive of any rights or remedies provided by law or in equity.

22. **FORCE MAJEURE**

- 22.1 In this Agreement "**force majeure**" shall mean any cause preventing either party from performing any or all of its obligations which arises from or is attributable to acts events omissions or accidents beyond the reasonable control of the party so prevented including without limitation act of God war riot civil commotion malicious damage compliance with any law or governmental order rule regulation or direction accident breakdown of plant or machinery fire flood storm or default of suppliers (but excluding labour disputes among the Institution's staff).
- 22.2 If either party is prevented or delayed in the performance of any of its obligations under this Agreement by force majeure that party shall forthwith serve notice in writing on the other party specifying the nature and extent of the circumstances giving rise to force majeure and shall subject to service of such notice and to Clause 22.3 have no liability in respect of the performance of such of its obligations as are prevented by the force majeure events during the continuation of such events.
- 22.3 If either party is prevented from performance of its obligations for a continuous period in excess of 90 days the other party may terminate this Agreement forthwith on service of written notice upon the party so prevented in which case neither party shall have any liability to the other except that rights and liabilities which accrued prior to such termination shall continue to subsist.
- 22.4 The party claiming to be prevented or delayed in the performance of any of its obligations under this Agreement by reason of force majeure shall use all reasonable endeavours to bring the force majeure event to a close or to find a solution by which the Agreement may be performed despite the continuance of the force majeure event.

23. **SEVERANCE**

- 23.1 If any term or provision in this Agreement shall be held to be illegal or unenforceable, in whole or in part, under any enactment or rule of law, such term or provision or part shall to that extent be deemed not to form part of this

Agreement but the validity and enforceability of the remainder of this Agreement shall not be affected.

- 23.2 Each undertaking in this Agreement shall be construed as a separate undertaking and if one or more of the undertakings contained in this Agreement is found to be unenforceable or in any way an unreasonable restraint of trade the remaining undertakings shall continue to bind the parties.

24. **EXCLUSION OF THIRD PARTY RIGHTS**

Nothing in this Agreement shall create any rights for third parties under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999. No variation to this Agreement and no supplemental or ancillary agreement to this Agreement shall create any such rights unless expressly so stated in any such agreement by the parties to this Agreement. This does not affect any right or remedy of a third party which exists or is available apart from that Act.

25. **VARIATION**

This Agreement shall not be varied or cancelled unless such variation or cancellation shall be expressly agreed in writing by a duly authorised representative of each party.

26. **DISPUTES AND LAWS**

- 26.1 This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales.
- 26.2 Subject to Clause 26.4, each party irrevocably agrees the Courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction in relation to any claim dispute or difference concerning this Agreement and any matter arising therefrom.
- 26.3 Each party irrevocably waives any right that it may have to object to an action being brought in those Courts to claim that the action has been brought in an inconvenient forum or to claim that those Courts do not have jurisdiction.
- 26.4 The submission to the jurisdiction of the Courts of England and Wales shall not (and shall not be construed so as to) limit the right of the University to bring legal proceedings in any other court of competent jurisdiction including without limitation the courts having jurisdiction by reason of the Institution's domicile. Legal

proceedings in any one or more jurisdictions shall not preclude legal proceedings in any other jurisdiction whether by way of substantive action ancillary relief enforcement or otherwise.

AS WITNESS this Agreement has been signed on the date shown above

SCHEDULE 1

- 1. Commencement Date**
- 2. Subject**
- 3. Qualification**
- 4. Course Start Date**
- 5. Course Campus**
- 6. Maximum Number (of candidates) per intake**
- 7. Maximum Number (of candidates) per intake**
- 8. Date for Joint Board of Studies meeting (Clause 6.9)**
Pre-arranged dates to be agreed by both parties
- 9. Date for submission of draft assessment materials and/or examination papers pursuant to Clause 6.1**
10 weeks in advance
- 10. Dates/times for Course examinations pursuant to Clause 6.1.1**
Pre-arranged dates to be agreed by both parties
- 11. Dates for visit of Examination Board pursuant to Clause 6.4**
Pre-arranged dates to be agreed by both parties
- 12. Course Language**

SCHEDULE 2

**Particulars of minimum qualifications required of candidates prior to admission to
the scheme**

Minimum English Language Requirements:

SCHEDULE 3

FEES

Part 1

1. For the first three years of the Term, and subject to paragraph 2 below, the Fees for each year shall be the **greater** of:
 - i. £15,000 per annum [per cohort of students enrolled on all years of the Course and
 - ii. a sum which is equivalent to [£] multiplied by the total number of candidates enrolled on and who have commenced the Course [for all cohorts i.e. if there are 15 students in the first year, 15 in the second and 10 in the third, this will give a total of 35].
2. The University is entitled to increase the Fees which are payable in the second and subsequent years of the Term by an amount corresponding to any increase in the United Kingdom's retail prices index (all items) and/or any other similar inflationary index. The University may also, in its discretion, increase the Fees payable in the second and subsequent years of the Term to take account of any other matter, factor or event which, in the University's reasonable opinion, may increase the costs associated with this Agreement. The University shall give at least four month's written notice of any increase in the Fees.
3. The parties shall, acting reasonably and in good faith, agree the Fees payable for the fourth and subsequent years of the Term and where the Fees payable shall not in any event be less than the most recent Fees payable by the Institution.
4. The Institution by virtue of being constituted according to the laws of [], is obliged to comply with the requirements of the state of [] concerning the transfers of currency to other countries and in relation to the payment of Fees.

The Institution hereby warrants and represents to the University that it has the capacity to effect the transfer of Fees to the University and in doing so will comply in all respects with the aforementioned laws and requirements.

Part 2

1. The Institution shall provide the University with a statement within 30 days of the commencement of each year of each Course with a statement showing all candidates commencing or remaining on each Course. The University shall be entitled to invoice the Institution for the Fees at any time following receipt of this statement or, if the Institution is late in submitting the statement, no later than 45 days after the commencement of each Course.
2. The Institution shall pay to the University the Fees due in accordance with the University's invoice within 7 days of the date of the invoice.
3. The Fees shall be paid in sterling by telegraphic transfer to the University's nominated bank account from time to time (and unless otherwise notified in writing by the University, the bank account to be credited is account number 83025764 at HSBC plc, 56 Queen Street, Cardiff, Wales, UK). If agreed in writing by the University, the Institution shall be entitled to pay the Fees by cheque in lieu of telegraphic transfer.

Signed for and on behalf)
of the University of Wales)
by a duly authorised representative)

Signed for and on behalf of)
[] by a duly)
authorised representative)

UNIVERSITY OF WALES DEGREE CERTIFICATE - SAMPLE

PRIFYSGOL CYMRU



UNIVERSITY OF WALES

Ardystir drwy hyn ddarhod derbyn
STUDENT NAME
o'r COLEG RHYNGWLADOL (THINC)
i radd
BAGLOR MEWN GWYDDONIAETH
mewn CYFRIFIADURA
gydag **ANRHYDEDD AIL DDOSBARTH, RHAN 1**
ar 1 Hydref 2007

Addysgwyd ac aseswyd y cynllun hwn yn Saesneg

It is hereby certified that
STUDENT NAME
of THE INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE (THINC)
has been admitted to the degree of
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
in COMPUTING
with **SECOND CLASS HONOURS, DIVISION 1**
on 1 October 2007

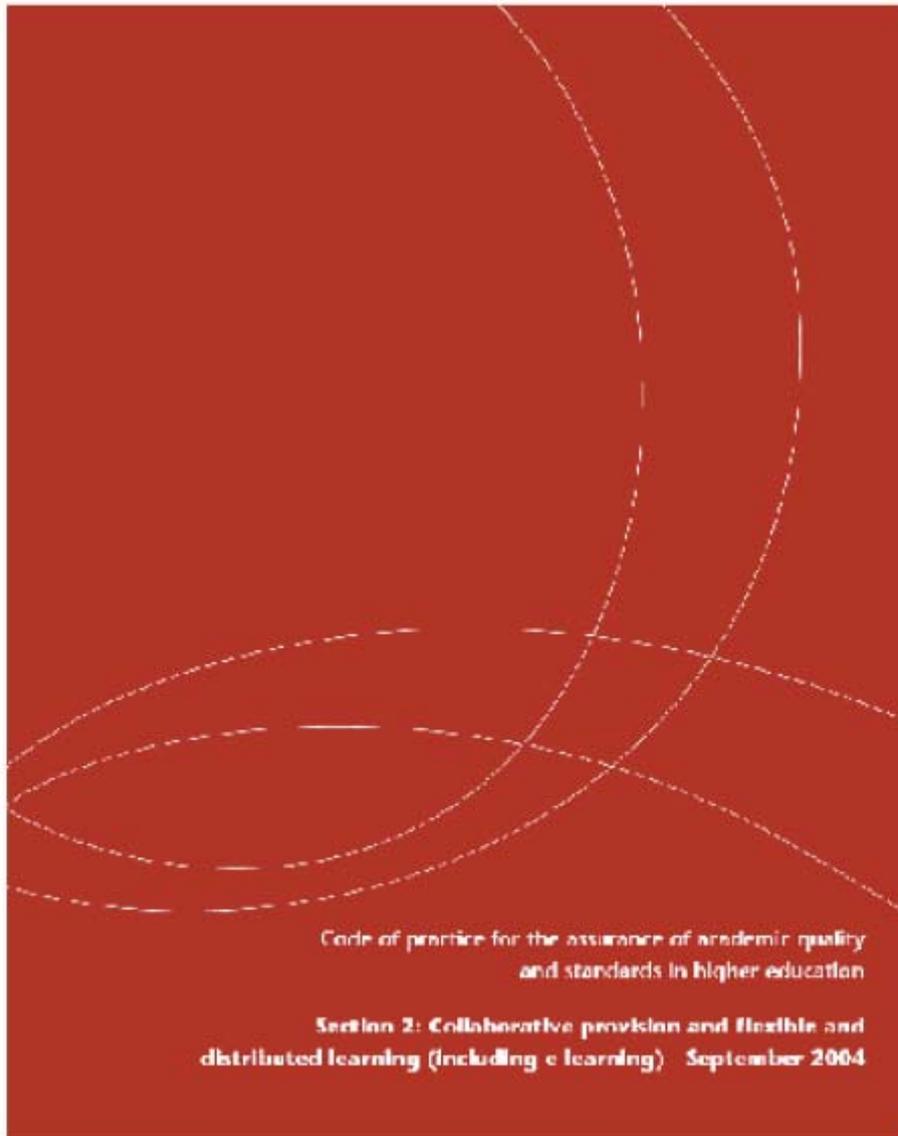
This scheme was taught and assessed in English


IS-GANGHELLOR PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES



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QAA – CODE OF PRACTICE COLLABORATIVE PROVISION



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Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education: Collaborative provision, and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)

Foreword

1 This document is a second edition of a code of practice for collaborative provision, and incorporates a revision of the *Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning*. It is one of a suite of inter-related documents which forms an overall *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code*) for the guidance of higher education institutions subscribing to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (the Agency).

2 The overall *Code* and its 10 constituent sections were originally prepared by the Agency between 1998 and 2001 in response to the Reports of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education and its Scottish Committee (the *Dearing* and *Garrick Reports*). The *Code* supports the national arrangements within the UK for quality assurance in higher education. The *Code* identifies a comprehensive series of system-wide principles ('precepts') covering matters relating to the management of academic quality and standards in higher education. It provides an authoritative reference point for institutions as they consciously, actively and systematically assure the academic quality and standards of their programmes, awards and qualifications.

3 The *Code* assumes that, taking into account principles and practices agreed UK-wide, each institution has its own systems for independent verification both of its quality and standards and of the effectiveness of its quality assurance systems. In developing the *Code*, extensive advice has been sought from a range of knowledgeable practitioners.

4 The *Code* does not incorporate statutory requirements relating to relevant legislation, for example the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001*. It assumes that institutions have an overriding obligation in all such cases to ensure that they meet the requirements of legislation. However, where a section of the *Code* is related to legislative or similar obligations, efforts have been made to ensure compatibility between them.

5 Since 2001, a number of developments in UK higher education have encouraged the Agency to begin a revision of individual sections of the *Code*. In undertaking this task the Agency has also decided to review the structure of the sections and, in particular, to replace the original 'precepts and guidance' format with a 'precepts and explanation' approach, using the explanations to make clear why the precepts are considered important and reducing opportunities for a 'checklist' approach to the *Code*. In doing so the Agency has sought to meet recommendation 4 (part 4) of

the Better Regulation Task Force in its report *Higher Education: Easing the Burden*, November 2003.

6 Revised sections of the *Code* are therefore now structured into a series of precepts and accompanying explanations. The precepts express key matters of principle that the higher education community has identified as important for the assurance of quality and academic standards. Individual institutions should be able to demonstrate they are addressing the matters tackled by the precepts effectively, through their own management and organisational processes, taking account of institutional needs, traditions, culture and decision-making. The accompanying explanations show why the precepts are important.

7 The *Code* is a statement of good practice that has been endorsed by the higher education community. As such it is useful in the Agency's audit and review processes that consider the extent to which an institution, in developing and implementing its own policies, has taken account of the *Code* and its precepts.

8 Institutions may find the explanations useful for developing their own policy and for allowing some flexibility of practice at subject level, depending on local needs. It is important to emphasise that the explanations do not form part of the Agency's expectations of institutional practice when Agency teams are conducting audits and reviews.

9 Academic staff in departments and schools do not necessarily need to be aware of the detail of the various sections of the *Code*, although they might well be expected to be familiar with the institutional policies it informs and any parts which are particularly relevant to their own responsibilities.

10 To assist users, the precepts are listed, without the accompanying explanations, in Appendix 1 to this section of the *Code*.

11 The first version of this section of the *Code*, and of the *Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning*, were published in 1999. The publication of this second version follows consultation with staff in institutions, who have helped to update the *Code* to take account of institutions' practical experience of using the guidance contained in its predecessor.

Introduction

12 This document is a code of good practice for the academic management of collaborative arrangements entered into by UK higher education institutions. It also serves as a code of good practice for the academic management of learning delivered, supported and/or assessed through flexible and distributed arrangements, whether in collaboration with a partner or not. Since many flexible and distributed arrangements are supported through information and communication technology (ICT), the term 'e-learning' will be used here to refer to modes of learning that are ICT-based.

Definitions used in this code

13 In this section of the *Code*, **collaborative provision** denotes educational provision leading to an award, or to specific credit toward an award, of an awarding institution delivered and/or supported and/or assessed through an arrangement with a partner organisation (see *Glossary of terms*, page 39). **Flexible and distributed learning** (FDL) denotes educational provision leading to an award, or to specific credit toward an award, of an awarding institution delivered and/or supported and/or assessed through means which generally do not require the student to attend particular classes or events at particular times and particular locations. Further discussion of the scope of FDL as interpreted within this section of the *Code* can be found in paragraphs 22 to 26 below.

14 The inclusion in these definitions of 'specific credit toward an award' has raised questions of the type 'how much specific credit is needed before this code is applied' to a particular collaborative or FDL arrangement. Such questions are for an institution itself to answer by using this section of the *Code* as a reference point against which to consider and test its own arrangements. There are no boundaries to the applicability of a particular section of the *Code*. Instead, the Agency wishes to emphasise that the *Code* as a whole should be regarded as a reference to widely agreed approaches to good practice in the relevant areas, not as a document specifying required compliance by institutions. What is important is that institutions should carefully consider whether and how a precept should be applied in their own particular circumstances, bearing in mind the explanation of the precept given in the *Code*. It is equally important that the precepts should then be used in a way that can provide the institution with justified confidence in the effectiveness of its management of the quality of its provision and the security of its academic standards.

Collaborative arrangements and FDL arrangements

15 This section of the *Code* is divided into two parts. Part A is concerned with the responsibilities of a UK higher education institution in respect of collaborative arrangements that lead to its academic awards. Where the precepts also apply to FDL

arrangements, this is identified. Part B is concerned with particular aspects specific to the academic management of the delivery, support and assessment of FDL programmes, whether or not these involve a collaborative partner. The rationale for addressing both collaborative and FDL arrangements in this section of the *Code* is that they have many common features in the context of the management of quality and standards. In practice, FDL arrangements are often 'blended' (see below, paragraph 24) with more 'traditional' collaborative arrangements, so it is logical to consider their management as a whole. Nevertheless, the precepts that relate to FDL arrangements are intended to be used as reference points for the academic management of all FDL arrangements, not only those associated with collaborative arrangements.

16 This section of the *Code* is based on the key principle that collaborative and FDL provision, wherever and however organised, should widen learning opportunities without prejudice either to the academic standard of the award or the quality of what is offered to students. Further, the arrangements for assuring quality and standards should be as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those for programmes provided wholly within the responsibility of a single institution and through 'conventional' class-based modes of teaching. The assurance of quality and standards in collaborative arrangements as well as in FDL arrangements creates particular challenges for awarding institutions in the management of the potential risks associated with the complexity of such arrangements. This section of the *Code* is intended to help institutions to manage these risks effectively, and to ensure that the quality of their collaborative provision and FDL provision, and the academic standard of the awards to which such provision lead, are adequately safeguarded.

17 UK HEIs' collaborative links encompass many types of organisation in the UK and overseas, are frequently complex, and often reflect the slow maturing of long-standing and successful partnerships. Over the years, levels of trust may have developed which might appear to render some of the more formal aspects of this section of the *Code's* precepts unnecessary. The best of these mature relationships are characterised by equity, integrity and honesty. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that the formal responsibility of an awarding body for its awards and qualifications places upon it an obligation to make certain that its academic standards are secure. This does suggest a conscious formality in some aspects of the management of a collaborative relationship, which may sometimes seem to run counter to the notion of the equality of the partners. But the formality offers protection to all, students as well as collaborating organisations, and its adoption in this spirit should help to bolster, not undermine, mutual confidence in the operation of partnerships.

Outcomes vs. process

18 Part A is a revised version of Section 2 of the *Code*, first published in July 1999. The revision takes account of the development, since the earlier version, of the UK-wide Academic Infrastructure. In particular, references in the earlier version to the 'equivalence' of aspects of collaborative provision have largely been replaced by

making use of the reference framework offered by the Academic Infrastructure. With this new approach, there is no longer a need to find ways of expressing the 'equivalence' of collaborative programmes to UK-wide expectations for quality of provision and academic standards of awards. This approach removes the need to categorise different types of collaborative arrangement by a type of process, such as 'franchise' or 'validation', or to refer to different types of collaborative relationships, such as 'accreditation' or 'articulation'. Overall, the revision may be characterised as moving from the 'process-based' style of the earlier version to a more 'outcome-based' approach. The focus now is on ends rather than means. Institutions that have made use of the earlier version in developing their quality assurance procedures will see that the basics remain in the content of the revised version but will, it is hoped, appreciate the flexibility now offered by the greater attention to outcomes.

19 That having been said, it would be a pity not to take the opportunity to consider 'equivalence' of learning opportunities when collaborative or FDL provision does have an equivalent 'home' programme leading to the same named award. In such cases, an institution could well find value in considering how the learning opportunities available to students compare between the collaborative or FDL provision and the 'home' provision. For example, in comparing the appropriateness of physical learning resources, the question to consider is not whether there are identical resources available to the two groups of students, but whether one group is being significantly disadvantaged in learning opportunities relative to the other (taking into account different learning contexts and environments). If so, this suggests that there could be a difference in 'process' that might impact upon equivalence of 'outcome' and should be investigated further.

Serial arrangements

20 A 'serial' arrangement is one in which an awarding institution enters into a collaborative arrangement with a partner organisation which, in turn, uses that arrangement as a basis for establishing collaborations of its own with third parties, but offering the awarding institution's awards. The Agency's experience in audits of collaborative provision leads it to believe that the safeguards offered by the precepts of Part A cannot be fully provided through serial arrangements that limit the awarding institution's ability to control the academic standards and quality of the provision which leads to its awards. If it is to discharge its awarding responsibility properly, and to be in a position to manage potential risk, an awarding institution should have an effective link, as described in precepts A19 and A20, to the assessment of the academic achievement of students on all programmes that lead to its awards. While this responsibility may be readily manageable through a direct relationship with a partner organisation, it becomes much more difficult once the chain of responsibility is extended. Serial arrangements can seriously jeopardise an awarding institution's ability to know what is being done in its name.

Language of study and assessment

21 Some awarding institutions choose to offer collaborative programmes in languages other than those in which they ordinarily work. While this may extend the range of students they can reach, it raises important questions about the capacity of an awarding institution to satisfy itself about the quality of the provision that leads to its awards. Similarly, assessment of students' work in a foreign language poses serious challenges to the ability of an institution to be in proper control of the academic standards of awards made in its name. Institutions which do permit assessment in languages other than those in which they ordinarily work will need to be confident that they have a continuing availability of external examiners who are both able to work easily in all the languages concerned and fully trained to perform their role effectively. Any intervention between the examiner(s) and the work produced by the student, such as language translation, introduces another level of risk in making reliable and valid judgments about student achievement. An awarding institution will need to be especially vigilant in ensuring that students are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by the use of translations of assessed work¹.

Flexible and distributed learning

22 Much of Part B of this section of the *Code* is derived from the Agency's *Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning*, published in 1999. This revision has also taken account of the development of agreed reference points offered in the assurance of quality and academic standards by the Academic Infrastructure. It recognises that modes of learning that are capable of being flexible and distributed are neither confined to distance learning nor to ICT-based learning. The methodologies commonly referred to as 'distance learning' and 'e-learning' are therefore included within FDL in terms of the management of quality and standards. Again, the revision has moved from a process-based to an outcome-based approach.

23 'Flexible and distributed learning' is used here to characterise approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that:

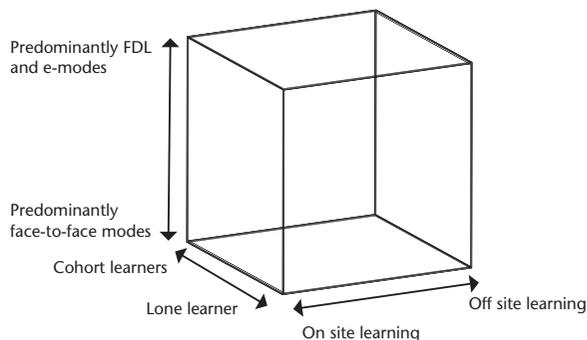
- do not require a student's place of study to be physically located within the institution (the awarding institution) whose academic award is being sought through successful completion of the programme of study;
- do not assume that a student's programme of study is necessarily delivered directly by the awarding institution;
- do not assume that a student is necessarily directly supported by staff of the awarding institution;
- do not assume that a student is routinely working with other students; and

¹ Institutions may find it useful to refer to the Agency publication *Guidelines for higher education institutions in Wales for effective practice in examining and assessing in a language other than the language of tuition* www.qaa.ac.uk/public/guidance_assessing_lang.htm which contains useful advice on a related matter.

- do not necessarily require assessment of a student's achievement to take place at the location of the awarding institution.

A continuum of arrangements

24 The variety of approaches represented by FDL in the UK and elsewhere is now considerable, and embraces a continuum of pedagogical opportunities. At one end of this continuum programme delivery, learner support and assessment are all provided directly by staff of the awarding institution at the awarding institution. The other end of this continuum could be represented by an individual 'distance-learner' who may have no direct contact with the awarding institution, its staff or other students, whose programme of study may be delivered through an organisation (the programme presenter) which is not the awarding institution, and whose support for learning may be available from an organisation (the support provider) which is part neither of the programme presenter nor the awarding institution. Between these extremes is a spectrum encompassing various FDL elements as part of on-campus study, and a range of forms of arrangements involving the awarding institution and, perhaps, support-providing and/or collaborating partner organisations. In addition, wherever located, the student might be engaged in learning, support and/or assessment which are ICT or internet based, in which case the learning element of the mode might be referred to as 'e-mode' learning. This suggests that it might be possible to envisage a space within which a student's experience of learning at any one time could be represented as a function of the size of the group of learners, the location of learning and the mode of learning.



25 These levels of flexibility make it difficult, and not necessarily useful, to structure Part B of this section of the *Code* in a framework that reflects traditional organisational functions. Instead, Part B is structured from the viewpoint of a student experiencing an FDL programme, supplemented by consideration of the particular responsibilities of the awarding institution in the management of an FDL

programme that leads to one of its academic awards. Part B is therefore grouped into three separable elements:

- the delivery of an FDL programme of study;
- the support of students as learners on that programme;
- the security of academic standards of the award and assessment of the achievements of those students.

26 While Part B refers to a 'programme' of study, that is the whole teaching and learning structure that leads to a specific award, a student will frequently experience only elements of a programme - modules or units - approached through FDL methods. Again, readers are reminded that the purpose of this section of the *Code* is to provide a reference which can stimulate questions about academic management, in this case questions about provision that employs elements of FDL among other modes of learning. There is no 'volume of FDL' above which this section of the *Code* 'applies' and below which it does not. What is important is that consideration has been given to the applicability and relevance of the precepts to the provision in hand.

Part A: The responsibilities of an awarding institution in respect of collaborative arrangements that lead to its awards, and in respect of FDL arrangements where appropriate

Responsibility for, and equivalence of, academic standards

A1

The awarding institution is responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name.

The legal power of a higher education institution in the UK to grant awards and qualifications carries with it a responsibility to ensure that the academic standards of all its awards and qualifications are consciously and carefully secured.

A2

The academic standards of all awards made under a collaborative arrangement should meet the expectations of the UK Academic Infrastructure. This applies equally to awards made as a result of FDL arrangements.

The UK's Academic Infrastructure provides a set of common reference points that enables comparable academic standards to be established in different higher education institutions, without jeopardising their autonomy and diversity. Explicit use of the Academic Infrastructure enables awarding institutions, their students, employers and the general public to have confidence that an award or qualification is of a standard recognised and acceptable within the UK.

The aims, learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment methods of a collaborative programme of study can be described in a 'programme specification' that shows how the programme content relates to relevant subject benchmark statements, and that the award is appropriately located within the relevant Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

Because the awarding institution is a UK institution, and the award a UK award, it is appropriate to make reference to relevant UK subject benchmark statements. There may, however, be cases where the cultural context of an overseas collaboration requires some divergence from the UK-centred subject benchmark statement and, indeed, cases where points of reference other than UK references legitimately apply to cross-border collaborative and FDL arrangements. This may be entirely reasonable, as it might equally be reasonable in a collaboration within the UK, but such divergences can lead to misunderstandings if not explicitly acknowledged and explained. The programme specification provides a ready means for addressing these matters. Guidance on programme specifications may be found at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/progspec/contents.htm>

Policies, procedures and information

A3

Collaborative arrangements should be negotiated, agreed and managed in accordance with the formally stated policies and procedures of the awarding institution.

Collaborative arrangements that are firmly based on the commitment and support of both the awarding institution's and the partner organisation's central authorities reduce the risk of the arrangement foundering. By formally stating in writing the policies and procedures that underpin any arrangement, the chances of this happening will be minimised. See also below, precept A10.

A4

An up-to-date and authoritative record of the awarding institution's collaborative partnerships and agents, and a listing of its collaborative programmes operated through those partnerships or agencies, should form part of the institution's publicly available information. This also applies to FDL programmes where these warrant a separate identification.

A higher education institution's public credibility depends in part on its willingness to be open and informative about its activities. Collaborative activities carry risks and can be viewed with suspicion. Public confidence in the awarding institution and its collaborative provision will be enhanced if its activities are conducted openly. In the case of FDL provision, it may be unrealistic for an institution to list all of its programmes that involve some FDL elements, but where a programme is offered entirely or principally through an FDL arrangement, an institution might see merit in identifying it as such as part of its publicly available information.

A5

The awarding institution should inform any professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB), which has approved or recognised a programme that is the subject of a possible or actual collaborative arrangement, of its proposals and of any final agreements which involve the programme. This applies equally to programmes for which significant FDL arrangements are developed after the programme has been approved or recognised. In any case, the status of the programme in respect of PSRB recognition should be made clear to prospective students.

PSRBs sometimes limit their accreditation, approval or recognition of programmes or awards to particular modes or locations of delivery. On occasion the status of an award or programme delivered away from the awarding institution and/or through FDL arrangements may not be clear. It is very important that students or applicants are not misled, through accident or design, into thinking that a programme they are

applying for, or are already pursuing, is accredited, approved or recognised, when this is not the case. A definitive ruling on this matter can be obtained from the relevant PSRB.

A6

The awarding institution's policies and procedures should ensure that there are adequate safeguards against financial or other temptations that might compromise academic standards or the quality of learning opportunities.

An awarding institution's arrangements with other organisations can on occasion create opportunities for corrupt practices and illegal financial transactions. If these are allowed to happen they inevitably degrade the value of an institution's awards and are likely to damage its own reputation and that of UK higher education more generally. They can also give rise to heavy legal costs. Financial considerations may also have a bearing on standards and quality in matters of recruitment and progression, and in policy and practice in resourcing. The introduction of safeguards against these opportunities occurring may therefore be seen as a basic requirement of any sound collaborative arrangement or FDL arrangement that involves third parties.

A7

Collaborative arrangements should be fully costed and should be accounted for accurately and fully. This applies equally to FDL arrangements.

The purpose of this precept is to remind awarding institutions that financial risks associated with collaborative or FDL arrangements can be considerable, especially if they provide an important element of an institution's income. It is incumbent on an institution to ensure both that its financial management arrangements are strong enough to manage the risks effectively, and that the financial arrangements themselves do not jeopardise the integrity of the academic standards and quality of the provision or the interests of students.

Institutions that are subject to the financial regulations of public funding bodies may find that there are specific requirements or limitations in respect of the use of publicly-provided resources for the purpose of collaborative arrangements and other similar activities. Likewise, institutions may be subject to statutory financial obligations in some foreign jurisdictions.

Selecting a partner organisation or agent

A8

The educational objectives of a partner organisation should be compatible with those of the awarding institution.

A relationship where educational objectives are well matched can enable both the partner organisation and the awarding institution to achieve developments and benefits that neither could gain alone. Equally, basic incompatibility of values, outlook, objectives and methods between partners can lead to an unsatisfactory relationship with serious adverse consequences for students, programmes and awards.

A9

An awarding institution should undertake, with due diligence, an investigation to satisfy itself about the good standing of a prospective partner or agent, and of their capacity to fulfil their designated role in the arrangement. This investigation should include the legal status of the prospective partner or agent, and its capacity in law to contract with the awarding institution.

There are a number of areas where experience has shown that due diligence enquiries are needed to ensure that a satisfactory relationship can be established with a reliable and effective partner. These include:

- the public and legal standing of a prospective partner organisation or agent in their own country;
- the standing of a prospective partner organisation or agent in the UK determined in the light of experience of other UK institutions and from public documents such as reports of the Agency and its predecessor bodies on collaborative arrangements with UK institutions;
- the financial stability of a prospective partner organisation;
- the ability of the prospective partner organisation to provide the human and material resources to operate the programme successfully;
- the ability of the prospective partner organisation to provide an appropriate and safe working environment for students on the programme;
- in the case of overseas collaborative or FDL arrangements, the ability of the awarding institution to operate within the legislative and cultural requirements of that overseas country and, at the same time, address the points of reference offered by the UK's Academic Infrastructure.

Written agreements with a partner organisation or agent

A10

There should be a written and legally binding agreement or contract setting out the rights and obligations of the parties and signed by the authorised representatives of the awarding institution and the partner organisation or agent.

Partnerships are more likely to succeed when all partners fully understand their rights and responsibilities. For this a written and legally binding agreement or contract is indispensable. Institutions will, of course, want to take advice from their legal advisers on the content of all agreements and contracts. The following list highlights some important matters which relate particularly to academic standards and quality and that may, with advantage, be borne in mind when considering the drafting of an agreement or contract for a collaborative partnership or an FDL arrangement that involves other parties:

- the need to distinguish between those aspects of the arrangement that relate to the institutional-level relationship between the parties, and those aspects particular to the programme(s) of this collaborative arrangement;
- clarification of the extent to which the agreement represents the approval of the partner organisation to engage in collaborative activity with the awarding institution and/or approval to deliver specific programmes leading to named awards;
- the need to agree on the source and location of any published quality-related information that may be required, eg by a funding council;
- the need to define the role, responsibilities and delegated powers of any agent in each arrangement;
- the need to be secure in respect of matters relating to copyright and intellectual property rights;
- specification of the role of external examiners in ensuring that the awarding institution can fulfil its responsibility for the academic standards of the awards;
- termination and mediation provisions and financial arrangements to be followed if the arrangement ceases;
- specification of the legal jurisdiction under which any disputes would be resolved;
- inclusion of provisions to enable either institution to suspend or withdraw from the agreement if the other party fails to fulfil its obligations;
- specification and adequacy of the residual obligations of both parties to students on termination of the collaborative arrangement, including the obligations of the awarding institution to enable students to complete their studies leading to the award;
- the possibility of establishing a formal agreement of responsibilities between the student, the awarding institution and the collaborative partner(s).

The list is not meant to be exhaustive, but may be helpful as an aide-memoire.

A11

The agreement or contract should make clear that any 'serial' arrangement whereby the partner organisation offers approved collaborative and/or FDL provision elsewhere or assigns, through an arrangement of its own, powers delegated to it by the awarding institution, may be undertaken only with the express written permission of the awarding institution in each instance. The awarding institution is responsible for ensuring that it retains proper control of the academic standards of awards offered through any such arrangements (see also paragraph 20 of the Introduction).

'Serial' arrangements can severely curtail the ability of an awarding institution to ensure that the academic standards of awards made in its name are being safeguarded. The financial value of a UK higher education qualification can make the possibility of 'sub contracting' a programme to a commercial enterprise particularly attractive and it can be very difficult to unpick these arrangements once they have begun. The purpose of this precept is to alert awarding institutions to the potential risk if a partner organisation is authorised to offer an arrangement of its own that leads to an award of the awarding institution. The responsibility of an awarding institution to exercise effective control of awards made in its name is paramount, although it might choose to delegate some of its responsibility for the management of the quality of provision (see precept A12 below). A significant risk in serial arrangements is that the 'chain' of information is too long for the awarding institution to be in a position to have full confidence in its ability to control its academic standards effectively.

Assuring academic standards and the quality of programmes and awards

A12

The awarding institution is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the quality of learning opportunities offered through a collaborative arrangement is adequate to enable a student to achieve the academic standard required for its award. This applies equally to learning opportunities offered through FDL arrangements.

An awarding institution is responsible for assuring the quality of the learning opportunities of programmes that lead to its awards, but it might choose to delegate operational aspects of this responsibility to a partner organisation where it has confidence that the partner has the capacity to accept and discharge that responsibility. The purpose of this precept is to remind an awarding institution that it should be able to satisfy itself, and stakeholders, on a regular basis that any delegated responsibility is being properly discharged. An awarding institution needs to consider carefully the distinction between responsibility for some aspects of

quality management, which it may choose to delegate, and responsibility for the security of the standard of the award, which remains with it at all times.

A13

An awarding institution that engages with another authorised awarding body jointly to provide a programme of study leading to a dual or joint academic award should be able to satisfy itself that it has the legal capacity to do so, and that the academic standard of the award, referenced to the FHEQ (the SCQF in Scotland), meets its own expectations, irrespective of the expectations of the partner awarding body.

Programmes of study that lead to dual awards involve the granting of separate awards by both partner organisations. The two awards are based on the same assessed student work, and an awarding institution will need to satisfy itself that it is content to make an award on this basis, and able to do so within its regulations. Despite the collaborative nature of the study, responsibility for each award, and its academic standard, remains with the body awarding it and cannot be shared between the partners. Because of this it is important that institutions are able to satisfy themselves that the standards and quality of their awards are not jeopardised by the arrangements they have entered into with partners.

Institutions offering dual awards through a credit-based structure will need to be alert to the consequences of each participating institution offering credit for the same piece of work, thereby potentially doubling the credit value (for transfer and accumulation purposes) of a module or unit that has been successfully completed.

Joint awards, where a single award is granted for successful completion of one programme of study offered collaboratively by two or more institutions, raise questions of the nature of the legal basis for pooling or combining powers to make awards. An awarding institution will need to satisfy itself that it has the legal and regulatory capacity to grant awards jointly with other organisations, especially where this involves pooling or combining powers granted within different legal jurisdictions.

A14

The scope, coverage and assessment strategy of a collaborative programme should be described in a programme specification that refers to relevant subject benchmark statements and the level of award, and that is readily available and comprehensible to stakeholders. This applies equally to programmes offered through FDL arrangements.

Students, potential students, employers and other stakeholders need to be able to satisfy themselves that awards obtained through collaborative or FDL arrangements are fully equivalent to other awards offered at a similar level by the same awarding

body. To this end, reference via programme specifications to the relevant qualification descriptor and subject benchmark statement will provide useful information and a source of reassurance.

A15

The awarding institution should make appropriate use of the *Code* to ensure that all aspects of the *Code* relevant to the collaborative arrangement are addressed by itself and/or the partner organisation, and should make clear respective responsibilities of the awarding institution and a partner organisation in terms of addressing the precepts of the *Code*. This applies equally to FDL arrangements that involve other organisations.

The purpose of this precept is to emphasise that the Agency's *Code* offers a point of reference for the assurance of many aspects of the management of academic standards and quality of provision. In the case of provision offered through collaborative arrangements or FDL arrangements that involve partners, an awarding institution will wish to ensure that its partners have an explicit understanding of what is expected of them in terms of the reference points set out in the precepts of the *Code*.

A16

In the case of a collaborative or FDL arrangement with a partner organisation, or engagement with an agent, the awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that the terms and conditions that were originally approved have been, and continue to be, met.

The purpose of this precept is to serve as a reminder that the existence of a written agreement is not in itself sufficient to ensure that its terms and conditions are being met effectively. Regular monitoring and review, at institutional or programme levels as appropriate to the original partnership agreement, or agreement with an agent, will help to confirm this. The frequency and nature of monitoring and review may be decided best by reference to 'fitness for purpose'.

A17

The awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that staff engaged in delivering or supporting a collaborative programme are appropriately qualified for their role, and that a partner organisation has effective measures to monitor and assure the proficiency of such staff. This applies equally to staff engaged in delivering or supporting an FDL programme.

The quality of both teaching and other aspects of learning support is critically important for all students, irrespective of the mode of programme delivery. It is essential that students can rely on the quality of those who teach them and support their learning in other ways. The use of properly qualified staff, and the effective

monitoring of their proficiency, are important aspects of an awarding institution's responsibility for assuring the standards and quality of its collaborative or FDL activities. Recognising that inexperienced staff are not necessarily properly qualified from the outset, this precept should be taken to include the responsibility of an awarding institution for ensuring that staff are properly trained and developed.

A18

The awarding institution should ensure that arrangements for admission to the collaborative or FDL programme take into account the precepts of Section 10 of the Agency's Code on Student recruitment and admissions (2001), or any successor document.

The quality of admission procedures is an important aspect of the overall quality of an institution's academic activities. Collaborative provision and FDL arrangements create particular requirements, especially in international contexts. Areas that may require particular care include:

- entry requirements and academic prerequisites;
- recognition of foreign qualifications and credits;
- arrangements for the accreditation of prior learning and the assessment of prior experiential learning (AP[E]L);
- language proficiency;
- information about the status of students in relation to the awarding institution;
- cultural assumptions about higher education learning methods.

Assessment requirements**A19**

The awarding institution is responsible for ensuring that the outcomes of assessment for a programme provided under a collaborative or FDL arrangement meet the specified academic level of the award as defined in the FHEQ (or SCQF in Scotland), in the context of the relevant subject benchmark statement(s).

The FHEQ /SCQF, which has been adopted by higher education institutions in the UK, covers all academic provision, wherever and however offered. No distinction is made between provision offered directly by the awarding institution itself, on its own premises, and that offered through collaborative and FDL arrangements. To make sure that this uniformity is maintained, it is important that the assessment of students is carried out consistently, at the appropriate level for the award being assessed, and with appropriate reference to the relevant elements of the Academic Infrastructure - the FHEQ/SCQF and subject benchmark statements.

A20

The awarding institution should ensure that a partner organisation involved in the assessment of students understands and follows the requirements approved by the awarding institution for the conduct of assessments, which themselves should be referenced to Section 6 of the Agency's Code on Assessment of students (2000), or any successor document.

UK higher education institutions that have the power to grant their own academic awards are legally autonomous bodies and can exercise considerable discretion over their assessment practices. A partner body may have little knowledge at the outset of a relationship about the requirements that will be placed upon it in assuring the security of assessments and their effective conduct. In the case of overseas partners or agents, some of these requirements may be considered surprising or unusual in the local context. It is therefore very important that all involved in the assessment of students be given explicit information and briefing about processes, acceptable and non-acceptable practices and the conduct of assessment. It is particularly important that local custom and practice are not accepted where these may jeopardise the integrity of the assessment process or the consistency of its application across the awarding institution as a whole.

External examining

A21

External examining procedures for programmes offered through collaborative arrangements should be consistent with the awarding institution's normal practices. This applies equally to programmes offered through FDL arrangements.

The external examiner system is a defining characteristic of UK higher education and an indispensable way of allowing an awarding institution to be sure that its academic standards are both appropriate and being safeguarded. Consistency of application of external examination procedures in collaborative or FDL arrangements is a central element in maintaining standards and quality in those activities. Any departures from external examiners' normal activity should be thought through very carefully and at the highest level, in advance of their implementation, and accepted only where it is clear that standards and quality will not be jeopardised.

A22

The awarding institution must retain ultimate responsibility for the appointment and functions of external examiners. The recruitment and selection of external examiners should be referenced to Section 4 of the Agency's Code on External examining (2004), or any successor document.

The recruitment, selection and appointment of external examiners is one of the key ways in which an awarding institution exercises control over assessment practices and the academic standards of awards. Delegation of this activity to a partner may be appropriate in some circumstances, but only where the awarding institution is unequivocally satisfied of the partner's capacity to undertake the task in a fully responsible, reliable and consistent manner.

A23

External examiners of collaborative programmes must receive briefing and guidance approved by the awarding institution sufficient for them to fulfil their role effectively. This applies equally to FDL programmes.

Awarding institutions need to be satisfied that external examiners know exactly what is required of them and have sufficient expertise and experience to enable them to play their role effectively.

External examiners for collaborative and FDL activities should be expected to participate in briefing events provided by either the awarding institution or the partner organisation. The awarding institution should note in particular precept 8 of Section 4 of the Agency's Code on *External examining* (2004) that, '...external examiners must be properly prepared by the recruiting institution to ensure they understand and can fulfil their responsibilities'. In the case of FDL programmes, external examiners need to be in a position to appreciate the FDL environment in which they will be examining, and to understand any special circumstances relating to particular methods of assessment, such as on-line assessments, where different time zones might add another dimension of complexity.

Certificates and transcripts

A24

An awarding institution should ensure that:

- it has sole authority for awarding certificates and transcripts relating to the programmes of study delivered through collaborative arrangements. This applies equally to programmes delivered through FDL arrangements;
- the certificate and/or transcript records (a) the principal language of instruction where this was not English, and (b) the language of assessment if that was not English*. Where this information is recorded on the transcript only, the certificate should refer to the existence of the transcript;
- subject to any overriding statutory or other legal provision in any relevant jurisdiction, the certificate and/or the transcript should record the name and location of any partner organisation engaged in delivery of the programme of study.

Certificates and transcripts represent the main sources of verification of the granting of an award or qualification. They are extremely valuable documents and can be the subject of theft and forgery. The physical security of blank documents is therefore important, as is the authority to issue certificates and transcripts. The ultimate responsibility for the security and accuracy of certificates and transcripts has to lie with the body in whose name they are issued. If the awarding institution wishes to devolve responsibility to a partner organisation for issuing these documents, it should ensure that it has retained the means to exercise proper control over all certificates and transcripts that are issued in its name.

It is important that the information contained on a certificate or transcript should not omit anything that is needed for a full understanding of a student's achievement. The guidelines provided by UUK, SCOP and the Agency on the content of transcripts provides advice on this. The European Diploma Supplement may also be helpful as a guide to international good practice in this area. The principal language of study and/or assessment, where this is not English, is a key piece of information for those who need to refer to certificates and transcripts. Omission of this information is likely to mislead and in some countries may cause difficulties in the recognition of all awards from the awarding institution.

* except for awards for programmes or their elements relating to the study of a foreign language where the principal language of assessment is also the language of study.

* Reference in this section of the *Code* to 'foreign language' or a language that is 'not English' does not include programmes provided and assessed by Welsh institutions in the Welsh language.

Information for students

A25

The minimum level of information that prospective and registered students should have about a collaborative programme is the programme specification approved by the awarding institution. This applies equally to an FDL programme.

Confidence in an awarding institution's standards and quality is in great measure dependent on the completeness and accuracy of the information available about them. The programme specification provides a ready way of providing this information. It should also offer prospective and registered students a clear and explicit statement of the nature of the programme and its relationship to national expectations about the academic standards and quality of the subject being studied and the award being sought.

A26

The information made available to prospective students and those registered on a collaborative programme should include information to students about the appropriate channels for particular concerns, complaints and appeals, making clear the channels through which they can contact the awarding institution directly. This applies equally for students registered on an FDL programme.

Awarding institutions acknowledge different levels of responsibility for students registered on collaborative or FDL programmes. It is important that all students and prospective students should understand the nature of their formal relationship with their awarding institution, and which organisation is responsible for which part of their learning experience. In the case of complaints and appeals, and to avoid confusion and unnecessary dissatisfaction, the awarding institution should ensure that their own responsibilities, and those of their partners, are clearly distinguished and advertised. See also Section 5 of the Agency's *Code on Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters* (2000).

A27

The awarding institution should monitor regularly the information given by the partner organisation or agent to prospective students and those registered on a collaborative programme. This applies equally to students registered on an FDL programme.

Awarding institutions may find that, despite everyone's best efforts, information for students falls short of what is needed by them. A regular check on the information actually being provided, including user surveys, can help to ensure that it remains accurate, complete and up to date.

Publicity and marketing

A28

The awarding institution should ensure that it has effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to its collaborative provision, and provision offered through FDL arrangements.

In the competitive world of higher education recruitment, especially in some overseas markets and through FDL arrangements, publicity and marketing assumes great importance. Information designed to attract potential applicants can, on occasion, be over enthusiastic in its desire to establish a competitive advantage. Unsustainable assertions and claims can readily mislead. This is to nobody's benefit as it only causes dissatisfaction and resentment. It can also give a false picture of UK higher education, with adverse consequences for its national and international reputation. Because of this it is important that an awarding institution take responsibility for information about programmes leading to its awards, particularly where the information is published by others on its behalf. The awarding institution should satisfy itself that this control is exercised consistently and fairly and that the public cannot reasonably be misled about the collaborative arrangement or about the nature and standing of the programmes and awards provided under the arrangement.

Part B: Aspects specific to flexible and distributed learning

Introduction

27 This section addresses the management of FDL provision in the context both of the awarding institution's students studying remotely, whether or not through a collaborative arrangement with a partner organisation, and of its students registered for study on its own campus. The delivery of an FDL programme of study to a student, the learning support available to the student and the assessment of the student's achievement might be carried out as discrete functions by the awarding institution, a programme presenter and a support provider, as separate bodies, and this section of the *Code* will make a distinction between delivery, support and assessment functions. Clearly, all these functions might also be carried out by the awarding institution alone, with, for example, an academic department of the institution in the role of both programme presenter and support provider, but even in this situation the terminology of separate functions draws attention to the need for absolute clarity in a student's - and an awarding institution's - understanding of the different dimensions of the learning opportunities offered through FDL.

E-learning

28 Recent developments in learning that uses information and communications technologies ('e-learning'), have given rise in some quarters to the belief that this approach requires an entirely separate and distinct form of quality assurance. While it is true that some technical aspects of e-modes of learning do require particular ways of meeting specific challenges, it is nonetheless also the case that most of the questions that need to be asked, and answered, about academic management are common to both e-learning and other FDL methods, and may be considered under the headings of delivery, support and assessment. The Agency has therefore decided not to prepare separate guidance on the quality assurance of e-learning, but has incorporated into this section of the *Code* some precepts and explanations that are the concern of e-learning alone, clearly identifying these instances where they occur in the text. In the case of some entirely technical aspects of the quality assurance of e-learning, reference is made to relevant British Standards Institute publications.

Delivery

29 Precepts B1 and B2 below are concerned with aspects of assuring the quality of the programme of study delivered to a student through an FDL arrangement. The precepts are couched in terms of a student's experience of study through FDL. They do not specify who is responsible for assuring particular aspects of quality of programme delivery. It is the responsibility of the awarding institution to specify the respective responsibilities of the programme presenter, support provider and

itself in assuring quality of programme delivery, within the context of the awarding institution retaining ultimate responsibility for quality and standards.

B1

Students should have access to:

- **documents that set out the respective responsibilities of the awarding institution and the programme presenter for the delivery of an FDL programme or element of study;**
- **descriptions of the component units or modules of an FDL programme or element of study, to show the intended learning outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment methods of the unit or module;**
- **a clear schedule for the delivery of their study materials and for assessment of their work.**

Students need information before they start their programme of study to enable them to make appropriate preparations for an FDL approach, and to plan the management of their time. Programme specifications, course handbooks and module or unit guides might usefully contribute to such information, as would a schedule which makes clear the sequencing and other relationships between the whole course structure, and individual modules or units. Students need to know about any scheduled opportunities for support by tutors, and about deadlines for formative and summative assessments.

If information is available in a variety of formats, this will help to avoid students being prevented from accessing it through cost, disability, or lack of equipment (see also precept B2).

B2

The awarding institution, whether or not working through a programme presenter, should ensure that students can be confident that:

- any FDL programme or element offered for study has had the reliability of its delivery system tested, and that contingency plans would come into operation in the event of the failure of the designed modes of delivery;
- the delivery system of an FDL programme or element of study delivered through e-learning methods is fit for its purpose, and has an appropriate availability and life expectancy;
- the delivery of any study materials direct to students remotely through, for example, e-learning methods or correspondence, is secure and reliable, and that there is a means of confirming its safe receipt;
- study materials, whether delivered through staff of a programme presenter or through web-based or other distribution channels, meet specified expectations of the awarding institution in respect of the quality of teaching and learning support material for a programme or element of study leading to one of its awards;
- the educational aims and intended learning outcomes of a programme delivered through FDL arrangements are reviewed periodically for their continuing validity and relevance, making reference to the precepts of Section 7 of the Agency's *Code on Programme approval, monitoring and review (2000)*, or any successor document.

Delivery systems convey course content, and enable participant interaction and learner support. While they need to be tailored to the environment in which students are expected to work, they also need to take account of the lowest levels of technology available to students and students' special educational needs. The piloting or testing of a delivery system before its operational launch will help the presenter to gain a better understanding of the risks involved, and how to manage those risks. In an e-learning environment, it is the responsibility of the programme presenter to ensure that the system is free from contamination by viruses at the point of delivery, and has password-protected access where appropriate.

Consideration should be given to how alternative forms of delivery would come into action in the event of failure of the principal delivery system, or where students are unable to meet scheduled events - students should be able to expect that the system would fail safe. A schedule in advance of the course (see precept B1 above) will, at least, enable students to identify the non-arrival of anticipated materials or events, and access to contact details will enable students to respond quickly to any failure of the principal delivery system.

Students should be able to expect that their FDL study materials are subject to the same rigour of quality assurance as the awarding institution would use for any of its programmes of study.

Learner support

Precepts B3 to B6 below are concerned with aspects of assuring the quality of learner support that is available to a student in an FDL arrangement, whether this is a whole programme or just an element of study. The precepts are couched in terms of what the student might experience. They do not specify who is responsible for assuring particular aspects of quality of learner support. It is the responsibility of the awarding institution to specify the respective responsibilities of the programme presenter, support provider and itself in assuring quality of programme delivery.

In the case of programmes with elements of support through e-learning, an awarding institution may wish to make such use as it thinks appropriate of *BS8426: A code of practice for e-support in e-learning systems* (BSI, 2003).

B3

Prospective students should receive a clear and realistic explanation of the expectations placed upon them for study of the FDL programme or elements of study, and for the nature and extent of autonomous, collaborative and supported aspects of learning.

Prospective students whose only experience of learning is through directed teaching need to be aware of the different challenges and opportunities of autonomous learning, and of their responsibilities as autonomous learners. They need clear guidance on the characteristics of learning required for their FDL studies, and on the general expectation of time commitment that they should be making.

Particularly in an e-learning environment, students may need time to understand and become familiar with technologies that are new to them. They may need some introductory support, possibly involving access to on-line learning environments prior to the start of the course so that equipment and technical access can be tested and new skills practised. Consideration might be given to the need to assign an identified contact prior to the commencement of study to enable the programme presenter to ensure that the student's induction and preparation have been adequate.

B4

Students should have access to:

- a schedule for any learner support available to them through timetabled activities, for example tutorial sessions or web-based conferences;
- clear and up to date information about the learning support available to them locally and remotely for their FDL programme or elements of study;
- documents that set out their own responsibilities as learners, and the commitments of the awarding institution and the support provider (if appropriate) for the support of an FDL programme or element of study.

Academic, technical, or pastoral support to learners in FDL programmes might include face-to-face meetings and/or on-line support. Students need to be well informed about the opportunities available to support their learning. They generally find it helpful if that information is specific about such matters as the frequency of such opportunities, and offers guidance on the anticipated response times from those who may be dealing with technical queries. They need to know about particular technical requirements for e-modes of learner support, or particular modes of required or optional attendance, such as residential classes or field trips.

Students should be in a position to appreciate their own responsibilities in terms of responding to requests for information, and for participation in individual or group activities that facilitate learning. They need to know the ground rules and protocols for communication with other students and tutors, and to be in no doubt about which events and activities are compulsory and which are optional.

B5

Students should have:

- **from the outset of their study, an identified contact, either local or remote through email, telephone, fax or post, who can give them constructive feedback on academic performance and authoritative guidance on their academic progression;**
- **where appropriate, regular opportunities for inter-learner discussions about the programme, both to facilitate collaborative learning and to provide a basis for facilitating their participation in the quality assurance of the programme;**
- **appropriate opportunities to give formal feedback on their experience of the programme.**

Clarity in the arrangements for feedback to students and guidance on their academic performance and progression is particularly important for a student studying under an FDL arrangement where the awarding institution is not also the support provider.

Where it is appropriate, collaborative learning opportunities can provide a strong dimension of student support, whether through scheduled group meetings or through web-based methods. The planning into the programme of study of such inter-learner discussions would be determined by the nature of the programme, its location (on-site or off-site) and its aims and intended outcomes.

Students should always have formal opportunities to feed back on the experience of their programme on a regular basis, and FDL programmes are no exception. Methods might include feedback from local learner support groups, on-line surveys and web conferencing. The methods used should be checked for fitness for purpose, recognising that there may be questions of anonymity with electronic modes which need to be taken into account. It is particularly important in an FDL arrangement,

where the awarding institution is not also the programme presenter or support provider, that it is clear who is responsible for processing feedback from students, and who is responsible for telling the students about any action to be taken as a result of their feedback.

B6

The awarding institution, whether or not working through a support provider, should be able to ensure that students can be confident that:

- staff who provide support to learners on FDL programmes have appropriate skills, and receive appropriate training and development;
- support for learners, whether delivered through staff of a support provider or through web-based or other distribution channels, meets specified expectations of the awarding institution for the quality of learner support for a programme of study leading to one of its awards.

The 'appropriate skills' for staff involved in FDL arrangements include both technical competence in the use of the relevant delivery systems and pedagogic expertise in design for delivery, learner support and assessment in FDL. Students on FDL programmes should be able to expect that the staff who design their programmes have relevant technological and pedagogical expertise, and awarding institutions should be able to satisfy themselves that this is the case. Institutions might consider the merits of including aspects relevant to FDL in the development programmes that they provide in teaching and learning for newly-appointed staff, and in opportunities for the continuing professional development of established staff.

Students based on an awarding body's campus can normally expect to have ready access to support services such as pastoral support, academic counselling, library and IT support, and careers guidance. An awarding institution will need to consider how it might make it possible for FDL students to access such services. It needs to be clear to students on FDL programmes which services are available to them from the awarding institution and from the programme presenter or support provider, and which are not. Awarding institutions should note where other sections of the Agency's *Code* refer to the expectation of services being available to its students, for example, as in Section 8 on Career education, information and guidance (2001).

Assessment of students

Precepts B7 and B8 below are concerned with aspects of assuring the security of assessment of students' achievements in programmes of study undertaken through FDL arrangements. They are couched in terms of what students should be able to expect in relation to assessment of academic performance in an FDL programme of element of study.

In the case of programmes with elements of IT-based assessment, an awarding institution may wish to make such use as it thinks appropriate of *BS7988: Code of practice for the use of information technology (IT) in the delivery of assessments* (BSI, 2002), as well as *BS8426: A code of practice for e-support in e-learning systems*.

B7

Students should have access to:

- **information on the ways in which their achievements will be judged, and the relative weighting of units, modules or elements of the programme in respect of assessment overall;**
- **timely formative assessment on their academic performance to provide a basis for individual constructive feedback and guidance, and to illustrate the awarding institution's expectations for summative assessment.**

Information on the methods of assessment used to test achievement of intended learning outcomes would normally be included in the programme specification, but is also likely to be supported by more detailed assessment briefs which are related to the individual units of the programme. Precepts 7 and 10 of Section 6 of the *Code on Assessment of students (2000)* set out expectations for the provision of criteria for the marking and grading of assessments, and for the rules and regulations for progression, final awards and classifications. The early issue of information on assessment methods, criteria and regulations will assist students following FDL programmes in the planning of their work.

Campus-based students have opportunities for face-to-face communication with staff about academic performance. Students studying remotely through an FDL arrangement may require greater planning of opportunities for formative assessment and appropriate feedback on the outcomes of assessment more generally.

B8

The awarding institution, whether or not working through a programme presenter or support provider, should ensure that students can be confident that:

- **their assessed work is properly attributed to them, particularly in cases where the assessment is conducted through remote methods that might be vulnerable to interception or other interference;**
- **those with responsibility for assessment are capable of confirming that a student's assessed work is the original work of that student only, particularly in cases where the assessment is conducted through remote methods;**
- **any mechanisms, such as web-based methods or correspondence, for the transfer of their work directly to assessors, are secure and reliable, and that there is a means of proving or confirming the safe receipt of their work.**

Where material is sent electronically, staff need to be sure that students have had clear instructions on the format and security measures that they should adopt.

Administrative and ICT systems associated with the receipt and recording of assessed work should be demonstrably robust enough to withstand interception or interference.

Awarding institutions need to consider how they can best guard against potential malpractice (including plagiarism) in remote assessment. In some FDL environments, there may be particular issues relating to the authentication of a student's work, especially when assessment is conducted on-line or remotely.

In such cases, awarding institutions may wish to refer to the detailed and technical guidance given in BS7988. As a starting point, students should at least be provided with a statement which explains the awarding institution's position on the use of unfair means and the penalties which may ensue, and requires them to confirm acceptance of the terms of that statement.

The methods used to record the receipt of students' assessed work need to be considered from a fitness-for-purpose viewpoint. There should, at least, be a system to permit students to confirm that their assessed work has been received safely and within deadline. Where this system is devolved to a level below that of the programme presenter, for example, to local tutors, the awarding institution should be in a position to be confident that the system is robust. Even so, it might be wise to advise students who have to transfer their assessed work by mail or electronic means to keep a copy of their work.

Appendix 1

The Precepts

Part A

A1

The awarding institution is responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name.

A2

The academic standards of all awards made under a collaborative arrangement should meet the expectations of the UK Academic Infrastructure. This applies equally to awards made as a result of FDL arrangements.

A3

Collaborative arrangements should be negotiated, agreed and managed in accordance with the formally stated policies and procedures of the awarding institution.

A4

An up-to-date and authoritative record of the awarding institution's collaborative partnerships and agents, and a listing of its collaborative programmes operated through those partnerships or agencies, should form part of the institution's publicly available information. This also applies to FDL programmes where these warrant a separate identification.

A5

The awarding institution should inform any professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB), which has approved or recognised a programme that is the subject of a possible or actual collaborative arrangement, of its proposals and of any final agreements which involve the programme. This applies equally to programmes for which significant FDL arrangements are developed after the programme has been approved or recognised. In any case, the status of the programme in respect of PSRB recognition should be made clear to prospective students.

A6

The awarding institution's policies and procedures should ensure that there are adequate safeguards against financial or other temptations that might compromise academic standards or the quality of learning opportunities.

A7

Collaborative arrangements should be fully costed and should be accounted for accurately and fully. This applies equally to FDL arrangements.

A8

The educational objectives of a partner organisation should be compatible with those of the awarding institution.

A9

An awarding institution should undertake, with due diligence, an investigation to satisfy itself about the good standing of a prospective partner or agent, and of their capacity to fulfil their designated role in the arrangement. This investigation should include the legal status of the prospective partner or agent, and its capacity in law to contract with the awarding institution.

A10

There should be a written and legally binding agreement or contract setting out the rights and obligations of the parties and signed by the authorised representatives of the awarding institution and the partner organisation or agent.

A11

The agreement or contract should make clear that any 'serial' arrangement whereby the partner organisation offers approved collaborative and/or FDL provision elsewhere or assigns, through an arrangement of its own, powers delegated to it by the awarding institution, may be undertaken only with the express written permission of the awarding institution in each instance. The awarding institution is responsible for ensuring that it retains proper control of the academic standards of awards offered through any such arrangements (see also paragraph 20 of the Introduction).

A12

The awarding institution is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the quality of learning opportunities offered through a collaborative arrangement is adequate to enable a student to achieve the academic standard required for its award. This applies equally to learning opportunities offered through FDL arrangements.

A13

An awarding institution that engages with another authorised awarding body jointly to provide a programme of study leading to a dual or joint academic award should be able to satisfy itself that it has the legal capacity to do so, and that the academic standard of the award, referenced to the *FHEQ* (the *SCQF* in Scotland), meets its own expectations, irrespective of the expectations of the partner awarding body.

A14

The scope, coverage and assessment strategy of a collaborative programme should be described in a programme specification that refers to relevant subject benchmark statements and the level of award, and that is readily available and comprehensible to stakeholders. This applies equally to programmes offered through FDL arrangements.

A15

The awarding institution should make appropriate use of the *Code* to ensure that all aspects of the *Code* relevant to the collaborative arrangement are addressed by itself and/or the partner organisation, and should make clear respective responsibilities of the awarding institution and a partner organisation in terms of addressing the precepts of the *Code*. This applies equally to FDL arrangements that involve other organisations.

A16

In the case of a collaborative or FDL arrangement with a partner organisation, or engagement with an agent, the awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that the terms and conditions that were originally approved have been, and continue to be, met.

A17

The awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that staff engaged in delivering or supporting a collaborative programme are appropriately qualified for their role, and that a partner organisation has effective measures to monitor and assure the proficiency of such staff. This applies equally to staff engaged in delivering or supporting an FDL programme.

A18

The awarding institution should ensure that arrangements for admission to the collaborative or FDL programme take into account the precepts of Section 10 of the Agency's *Code of practice* on Student recruitment and admissions (2001), or any successor document.

A19

The awarding institution is responsible for ensuring that the outcomes of assessment for a programme provided under a collaborative or FDL arrangement meet the specified academic level of the award as defined in the *FHEQ* (or *SCQF* in Scotland), in the context of the relevant subject benchmark statement(s).

A20

The awarding institution should ensure that a partner organisation involved in the assessment of students understands and follows the requirements approved by the awarding institution for the conduct of assessments, which themselves should be referenced to Section 6 of the *Agency's Code on Assessment of students (2000)*, or any successor document.

A21

External examining procedures for programmes offered through collaborative arrangements should be consistent with the awarding institution's normal practices. This applies equally to programmes offered through FDL arrangements.

A22

The awarding institution must retain ultimate responsibility for the appointment and functions of external examiners. The recruitment and selection of external examiners should be referenced to Section 4 of *Code on External examining (2004)*, or any successor document.

A23

External examiners of collaborative programmes must receive briefing and guidance approved by the awarding institution sufficient for them to fulfil their role effectively. This applies equally to FDL programmes.

A24

An awarding institution should ensure that:

- it has sole authority for awarding certificates and transcripts relating to the programmes of study delivered through collaborative arrangements. This applies equally to programmes delivered through FDL arrangements;
- the certificate and/or transcript records (a) the principal language of instruction where this was not English, and (b) the language of assessment if that was not English*. Where this information is recorded on the transcript only, the certificate should refer to the existence of the transcript;
- subject to any overriding statutory or other legal provision in any relevant jurisdiction, the certificate and/or the transcript should record the name and location of any partner organisation engaged in delivery of the programme of study.

A25

The minimum level of information that prospective and registered students should have about a collaborative programme is the programme specification approved by the awarding institution. This applies equally to an FDL programme.

A26

The information made available to prospective students and those registered on a collaborative programme should include information to students about the appropriate channels for particular concerns, complaints and appeals, making clear the channels through which they can contact the awarding institution directly. This applies equally for students registered on an FDL programme.

A27

The awarding institution should monitor regularly the information given by the partner organisation or agent to prospective students and those registered on a collaborative programme. This applies equally to students registered on an FDL programme.

A28

The awarding institution should ensure that it has effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to its collaborative provision, and provision offered through FDL arrangements.

* except for awards for programmes or their elements relating to the study of a foreign language where the principal language of assessment is also the language of study.

* Reference in this section of the *Code* to 'foreign language' or a language that is 'not English' does not include programmes provided and assessed by Welsh institutions in the Welsh language.

Part B

B1

Students should have access to:

- documents that set out the respective responsibilities of the awarding institution and the programme presenter for the delivery of an FDL programme or element of study;
- descriptions of the component units or modules of an FDL programme or element of study, to show the intended learning outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment methods of the unit or module;
- a clear schedule for the delivery of their study materials and for assessment of their work.

B2

The awarding institution, whether or not working through a programme presenter, should ensure that students can be confident that:

- any FDL programme or element offered for study has had the reliability of its delivery system tested, and that contingency plans would come into operation in the event of the failure of the designed modes of delivery;
- the delivery system of an FDL programme or element of study delivered through e-learning methods is fit for its purpose, and has an appropriate availability and life expectancy;
- the delivery of any study materials direct to students remotely through, for example, e-learning methods or correspondence, is secure and reliable, and that there is a means of confirming its safe receipt;
- study materials, whether delivered through staff of a programme presenter or through web-based or other distribution channels, meet specified expectations of the awarding institution in respect of the quality of teaching and learning-support material for a programme or element of study leading to one of its awards;
- the educational aims and intended learning outcomes of a programme delivered through FDL arrangements are reviewed periodically for their continuing validity and relevance, making reference to the precepts of Section 7 of the Agency's *Code on Programme approval, monitoring and review* (2000), or any successor document.

B3

Prospective students should receive a clear and realistic explanation of the expectations placed upon them for study of the FDL programme or elements of study, and for the nature and extent of autonomous, collaborative and supported aspects of learning.

B4

Students should have access to:

- a schedule for any learner support available to them through timetabled activities, for example tutorial sessions or web-based conferences;
- clear and up-to-date information about the learning support available to them locally and remotely for their FDL programme or elements of study;
- documents that set out their own responsibilities as learners, and the commitments of the awarding institution and the support provider (if appropriate) for the support of an FDL programme or element of study.

B5

Students should have:

- from the outset of their study, an identified contact, either local or remote through email, telephone, fax or post, who can give them constructive feedback on academic performance and authoritative guidance on their academic progression;
- where appropriate, regular opportunities for inter-learner discussions about the programme, both to facilitate collaborative learning and to provide a basis for facilitating their participation in the quality assurance of the programme;
- appropriate opportunities to give formal feedback on their experience of the programme.

B6

The awarding institution, whether or not working through a support provider, should be able to ensure that students can be confident that:

- staff who provide support to learners on FDL programmes have appropriate skills, and receive appropriate training and development;
- support for learners, whether delivered through staff of a support provider or through web-based or other distribution channels, meets specified expectations of the awarding institution for the quality of learner support for a programme of study leading to one of its awards.

B7

Students should have access to:

- information on the ways in which their achievements will be judged, and the relative weighting of units, modules or elements of the programme in respect of assessment overall;
- timely formative assessment on their academic performance to provide a basis for individual constructive feedback and guidance, and to illustrate the awarding institution's expectations for summative assessment.

B8

The awarding institution, whether or not working through a programme presenter or support provider, should ensure that students can be confident that:

- their assessed work is properly attributed to them, particularly in cases where the assessment is conducted through remote methods that might be vulnerable to interception or other interference;
- those with responsibility for assessment are capable of confirming that a student's assessed work is the original work of that student only, particularly in cases where the assessment is conducted through remote methods;
- any mechanisms, such as web-based methods or correspondence, for the transfer of their work directly to assessors, are secure and reliable, and that there is a means of proving or confirming the safe receipt of their work.

Appendix 2

Glossary of terms used in this section of the *Code*

In the vocabulary of collaborative and FDL arrangements, many words are given different meanings or are used in different ways by different institutions and in different countries. This is a source of actual and potential confusion. It is important that readers of this section of the *Code* should be aware of the way in which its compilers have chosen to use words relevant to collaborative and FDL arrangements. As an aid to clarity for readers of this section of the *Code*, a glossary of terms is given below. The glossary is here to provide descriptions: it does not imply endorsement, approval, or disapproval by the Agency of any of the functions, processes or arrangements that are described in the glossary.

Academic Infrastructure has been developed by the Agency in cooperation with the whole of UK higher education. It is a set of nationally agreed reference points that help to define both good practice and academic standards. It addresses all award-bearing activity, wherever or however provided. It incorporates the *Code*, the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)* - one for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the other for Scotland), subject benchmark statements, and guidance on programme specifications, the definition of each of which is given below.

Agent is used to describe a person or organisation employed by the awarding institution to facilitate a collaborative arrangement or aspects of an FDL arrangement through the provision of service functions.

Award is any UK higher education award or qualification as defined by the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)* for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or for Scotland.

Awarding institution is a university or other higher education institution empowered to award degrees, diplomas, certificates or credits by virtue of authority given to it by statute, Royal Charter, or the Privy Council, or under licence from another authorised body. It is the UK institution whose academic award is the award to which a programme of study leads.

Code of practice (the *Code*) is a suite of inter-related documents published by the Agency which, taken together, form an overall *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* for the guidance of higher education institutions subscribing to the Agency.

Delivery system refers to the means by which instruction and information is provided to a student on an FDL programme. It may be people-based, paper-based, web-based, or based on media such as audio or video links or recordings. Many FDL programmes employ a mixture of methods, each selected on the basis of being appropriate for its purpose. There is advantage in considering a back-up system for

cases where the principal delivery system might be sensitive to failure of equipment or public services.

Dual award describes collaborative arrangements under which two or more awarding institutions together provide programmes leading to separate awards being granted by both, or all of them.

Framework for higher education qualifications (the *FHEQ*) for institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland sets out the descriptors of the five levels of higher education qualifications awarded by universities and colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The *FHEQ* for institutions in Scotland sets out the six levels of higher education qualifications awarded by universities and colleges in Scotland; this is part of the wider *Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)*. Qualification descriptors in both consist of a statement of the outcomes and achievements that a student should be able to demonstrate for the qualification to be awarded, and a statement of the wider abilities that the typical student could be expected to have developed in the process of attaining that award.

Joint award describes collaborative arrangements under which two or more awarding institutions together provide programmes leading to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants.

Level is a broad indicator of the relative demand, complexity, depth of study and autonomy of learning associated with a particular award. Descriptions of the levels of UK higher education awards are given in the *FHEQ* and the *SCQF*.

Partner, or partner organisation, is the term used to describe the institution or other body or individual with which the awarding institution enters into an agreement to collaborate. It is also used to describe an institution or other body which the awarding institution commissions to deliver aspects of an FDL programme and/or to provide learner support. It does not presuppose any particular form of legal relationship between the organisations involved.

Programme (of study) is the approved curriculum followed by a registered student. A programme may be multidisciplinary, or refer to the main pathways through a modular scheme. In this section of the *Code* it is used to mean the academic provision which is the subject of a collaborative or FDL arrangement. The provision might be only part of a full programme, in which case it is referred to in this section of the *Code* as an **element** of the programme of study

Programme presenter is the term used to indicate the body charged with delivering a programme to the student. In many cases the programme presenter will be a part of the awarding institution, but the programme presenter could be an organisation that is not part of the awarding institution. The programme of study might be designed by the awarding institution, or the programme presenter, another body approved by the awarding institution, or a combination of these, but the definition of a 'programme designer' is not needed in these notes since it is a basic precept that

the ultimate responsibility for approving the design of a programme of study leading to an academic award must lie with the awarding institution.

Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) is used to denote organisations which are authorised to accredit, approve or recognise specific programmes in the context of the requirements for professional qualification. Some such organisations have a prescribed statutory or regulatory responsibility to accredit, approve or recognise programmes and/or to determine the academic standards and professional or vocational components of such programmes.

Programme specifications provide concise published statements about the intended learning outcomes of programmes of study, information about the teaching, learning, learning support and assessment methods used to enable the learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated, and show how the units of study that make up the programmes will relate to levels of achievement.

Quality assurance is the means through which an institution ensures and confirms that the conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by it or by another awarding body.

Support provider is the term used to indicate the organisation, group or person(s) charged with providing learner support to students of a programme. Learner support may be provided directly by the awarding institution or by the programme presenter, but learner support could also be made available to students through a separate support provider, particularly in the form of 'local' support for students remote from the awarding institution and programme presenter.

Appendix 3

Membership of the Working Group for *Section 2 of the Code: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)*

Pam Boulton	Director of Quality Enhancement, University of Derby
Svava Bjarnason	Head of Policy Research, Association of Commonwealth Universities
Rosemary Cardell	Director Academic Management and Standards, University of London External System
Dr Kate Clarke	Director, Validation Services, Open University
Professor Aldwyn Cooper	Pro Vice-Chancellor Operations, University of Glamorgan
Dr Peter Easy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, The University of Gloucestershire
Frances Foster	Academic Registrar, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College representing the Standing Conference of Principals
Ruth Moir	Director of Academic and Customer Services, Interactive University
Dr Derek Pollard	Chair, Council of Validating Universities
Seb Schmoller	Independent Consultant
Jonathan Slack	Chief Executive, Association of Business Schools
Professor David Unwin	Emeritus Professor, Birbeck College, University of London Formerly Learning Programme Director, UK eUniversities Worldwide Limited
Professor David Webb	Senior Dean and Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, The Nottingham Trent University
David Young	Policy Adviser, Universities UK
Peter Williams	Chief Executive, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
Dr David Buckingham	Assistant Director, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and Learning and Teaching Support Service, University of Exeter
Carolyn Campbell	Assistant Director (International), The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Validation Board	The Board's duties are defined by the University as pertaining to "the responsibility of advising the Academic Board on all matters relating to the validation of degree and other courses offered... at selected centres outside Wales".
Executive Committee	The Executive Committee comprises of up to six members of the Validation Board and is charged with formulating an overall international strategy for endorsement by the Validation Board and with the annual and quinquennial monitoring of validated centres.
Validation Unit	The Validation Unit provides the administrative machinery enabling the Validation Board to promote, validate and monitor courses at international centres.
Moderators	<p>Appropriate persons drawn from within the University of Wales, appointed to ensure that the appropriate policies and procedures of the University are established and maintained at each Validated Centre.</p> <p>As well as maintaining and developing the academic basis of the validated programme the Moderator has responsibility for ensuring that the University's assessment and examination conventions are explained to the Validated Institution and adhered to at all times.</p>
External Examiners	Persons appointed by the University having been deemed suitable to examine a validated programme and who are not on the teaching staff of the University of Wales. External Examiners are appointed according to criteria laid down by the Academic Board.
External Experts	Persons qualified to act as an Advisor to the Institution with regard to subject specific course developments and to provide additional subject guidance to the Institution who are not members of the teaching staff of the University or of a member institution of the University or of the Institution.