# Section A

# Academic Portfolio Changes

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## Forms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A1 | New qualification(After approval in principle, EC will refer to RFC for detailed consideration. RFC will then make a recommendation) |
| A2 | New Course Proposal - Provision to be delivered by KU only |
| A2a | PMG approval form for collaborative partner proposals |
| A2b | Proposal for the approval of a new collaborative partner or new provision to be delivered by a collaborative partner |
| A3 | Course and partner closure and suspension to recruitment |
| A4 | Change to location of delivery  |
| A5 | Addition of a new course pathway or change of title to an existing pathway |
| A6 | Change to the duration, learning mode, delivery mode or intake of a course |
| A7 | Student consultation outcomes regarding transfer to new course |

## Abbreviations in this section

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CMS | Curriculum Management System |
| EC | Education Committee  |
| FLT | Faculty Leadership Team |
| HoRP | Head of Resources and Planning |
| PMG | Portfolio Management Group |
| QAE | Quality Assurance and Enhancement  |
| QAPCC | Quality Assurance Portfolio Change Committee |
| RFC | Regulatory Framework Committee  |
| SPDI | Strategic Planning and Data Insight  |
| UCAS | University and Colleges Admissions Service |

## Purpose

1. This section of the AQSH outlines the procedures for the following changes and additions to the University’s academic portfolio:
* new awards
* new courses
* revalidation of existing courses
* new collaborative partner and provision to be delivered by collaborative partner
* changes to location of delivery
* changes or additions to the duration, mode of delivery of a course and/or intakes
* changes to or additions of course pathways
* changes to course titles
* course closures
* suspensions to recruitment
1. These procedures ensure that proposed changes are considered and approved by a committee at the most appropriate level. The procedures also ensure that an audit trail is maintained and that any approved changes are correctly recorded.
2. The forms in this section are designed to enable the relevant information to be collected to allow for informed decisions to be made for each proposal and identify necessary actions. The forms also serve to give notice to relevant departments of the University about proposed changes to the University’s academic portfolio that affect marketing, recruitment, admission, timetabling, teaching, accommodation and the provision of information technology services and other resources.
3. The following annexes contain flowcharts illustrating the approval of a new course or reapproval of an existing course, the approximate timelines, and the activities in setting up these courses following PMG or QAPCC approval:
4. Annex A: this flowchart illustrates the post-PMG activities following the approval of a proposal to proceed to validation and the validation of a new course.
5. Annex B: this flowchart illustrates the series of events relating to the approval of a new course (not including master’s Award(s) by Learning Agreements – see section H).
6. Annex C: this flowchart illustrates the series of events relating to the approval of a new course that will be delivered by a collaborative partner institution.
7. Annex D: this flowchart illustrates the series of events relating to the revalidation of an existing course.

## **Approval of a new award (qualification**)

1. A new award is one not currently offered by the University, e.g., Bachelor of Hunting (BHunt), Master of Fishing (MFish). A proposal must be submitted to EC on the New Qualification form A1. The proposal will be considered by EC to ensure it fits with the University’s strategic plan and then submitted to the RFC for detailed regulatory consideration. RFC will then make a recommendation to Academic Council. If a new qualification requires any regulatory variances, EC will refer these variances to RFC for approval, prior to validation. The awards/qualifications approved by the University can be found in the [Academic Regulations](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/) – AR1: Awards of the University.

## **Approval of a new course (including higher and degree apprenticeships) to be delivered by Kingston University**

1. A new course is one that is not currently in the University’s portfolio. It may be composed of existing modules or may include new modules.
2. Proposals for new courses to be delivered by Kingston University must be submitted to the Portfolio Management Group (PMG) who will confirm whether the course(s) can proceed to validation.
3. Any proposal for a new Foundation Degree must be accompanied by a proposal for a linked Honours top-up degree. If the linked Honours top-up already exists, this should be identified within the proposal for the Foundation Degree.
4. Proposals for standalone top-up degrees can be presented for approval but must clearly state the qualifications or experience that students would need to have to be admitted onto the top-up.
5. Once the proposal is approved by PMG, the Key Course Contact is required to complete form A2 and submit it to QAE.
6. For cross-disciplinary courses which involves multiple faculty, the faculty leads developing the proposal must discuss and get approval for the proposal from the Deans of both faculties.
7. Lead course contacts, developing a proposal for a new course (including cross-disciplinary courses) should contact Quality Assurance and Enhancement for information about any potential PSRB accreditations.

## *Subject to Validation and Validation Timeframe*

1. Faculties are permitted to advertise courses for recruitment after they have been approved to proceed to validation by PMG. If required, an associated ‘Discover Uni’ record will be created, and a link published from the relevant course page. Where courses that have not yet been validated are advertised, the advertisement must clearly state that the course is “subject to approval”.
2. Once courses have been approved by PMG to proceed to validation, they must be validated within the next academic year. If a course is not validated within this period, this must be reported to PMG so that a further academic year may be granted. If a course is not validated within 2 consecutive academic years, approval to proceed to validation will be revoked, thus requiring the course team to restart the process through the submission of a new proposal for consideration and approval by PMG.

1. When validated, a course will normally be permitted to recruit students; however, the QAPCC reserves the right to postpone or suspend recruitment. Postponement or suspension of recruitment will be noted by the Academic Council.
2. Courses that recruit via UCAS should be fully validated (i.e., all conditions signed off) at least 18 months before the intended start date. For all other courses, there must be three clear months between validation and the proposed start date of the course.

## Approval of a new collaborative partner and new provision **(including higher and degree apprenticeships)** to be delivered by collaborative partner

1. Proposals for new courses involving existing or new collaborative partners of the University should be submitted on form A2a to QAE for approval by PMG. Once approved by PMG, the proposal should then be submitted on form A2b to QAE.
2. Proposals for new courses involving existing collaborative partners of the University can proceed to validation once approved by PMG.
3. Proposals for a new collaborative partner should be submitted to PMG at least 12 months in advance of the planned start date of the course such that due diligence and partner approval can be confirmed, and that the appropriate planning, validation, and marketing activities can take place in suitable time. Further details of the partner approval process can be found in Section B of this Handbook.
4. For new collaborative partners, the course proposal cannot proceed to validation until QAPCC approves the due diligence report. Until then the partner is not permitted to market the link with the University or the proposed course provision.

## Significant changes to existing courses

1. Significant changes to existing courses should be processed as detailed in section G of the AQSH.

**Introduction to Validation and Curriculum Design workshop**

1. The Key Course Contact for all new course proposal (including those to be delivered by collaborative partners) should attend an Introduction to Validation and Curriculum Design workshop which will provide information, advice and guidance on the validation process and the support available to course teams during the development phase (see section C for further details).

##

## Changes to location or an additional location of delivery

1. Any request for the relocation or an additional location of delivery of a course from that which was agreed at initial validation, including that delivered by a collaborative partner, must be submitted to QAPCC for approval via a completed form A4 before the planned relocation or addition.
2. Each case should be discussed with the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, prior to QAPCC consideration, to evaluate the complexity of the proposal.
3. In the case of a change or addition of location delivered by a collaborative partner, the QAE team will identify the necessary documentation and/or issues which must be raised prior to, as part of, a site visit, or before final approval is granted.
4. Decisions relating to what level of approval event will be required are made on a case-by-case basis depending on the level of risk. An assessment should be made according to the following criteria:
* Location of new campus/site
* Management arrangement for the new campus or site
* Strength and establishment of the liaison
* Expertise of Liaison Officers on both sides of the link
* Historical evidence of operation of quality assurance and enhancement arrangements
1. The Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement will agree the form of approval event on a case-by-case basis and on consideration of the risks associated with the proposal. Typically, this will be one of the following:
* Approval visits with chair, external panel member and QAE representative
* Approval undertaken via video link with chair, external panel member, and QAE representative. This would include an in-depth resource statement and the submission of a video of the tour of resources if the provision has specialist facilities.
* Approval visit undertaken by the University Liaison Officer (ULO) and/or external examiner and signed off by the Chair of Course and Module Modification Panel.
1. All approval visits must be recorded via a report outlining the findings and any conditions or recommendations. These must be signed off by the Chair in the same way as normal validation conditions, prior to the delivery of KU provision commencing (see Section C).

## Changes or additions to the duration, learning or delivery mode of a course and/or intakes

1. Proposals for changes or additions to the duration, learning mode or delivery mode of a course and/or intakes must be submitted on form A6 to QAE for approval by QAPCC.
2. This type of change will normally be delegated to faculties to process in liaison with QAE, unless the change includes the introduction of blended learning, or to a fully online course or significantly affects the nature of collaborative arrangements. The process that needs to be completed should be discussed and agreed with the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement.
3. Where the proposal is to add a part-time mode to an existing full-time course, this process would only apply to situations where the part-time mode is intended to be marketed as such and offered as an entity in its own right. This does not apply to situations where students are exceptionally allowed to study a full-time course on a part-time basis.

## Changes to course titles

1. Proposals for changes to course titles should be submitted to PMG for approval.
2. A course title is a key piece of ‘material information’ identified by the CMA and therefore careful consideration should be given to the timing of changes. Changes must, therefore, be approved 22 months before their intended implementation to ensure the course is marketed accurately. Changes proposed after that deadline would only be accepted for exceptional reasons and would require additional actions to be taken to support students holding offers.
3. If the changes to course titles require changes to be made to the course/module(s), the validation process to be followed should be discussed and agreed with the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement.
4. New titles will only apply to new entrants unless there is an exceptional reason (such as PSRB requirement) for the change. Unless an exceptional case is made, current students will graduate with the award title they initially registered for regardless of when they complete (this includes students who are on placement including study abroad, who are required to repeat, or who have interrupted their studies).
5. The application of a new title to an existing cohort will only be considered in very exceptional instances where an evidenced case can be presented for why existing students would be disadvantaged if they kept the original title. Exceptional cases will be considered for approval by the PMG. Students should only be notified of the change once approval has been granted.
6. Following approval, faculties in liaison with QAE should ensure that all affected existing students are presented with the rationale for the change and are given the opportunity to consider the proposal within a defined period of time. Students should be asked by the faculty to accept or reject the transfer to the new course title. The Head of Department should complete form A7 confirming the outcomes from the consultation and submit the form to the Head of QAE for final approval.
7. No student will be made to accept a change of title and students that reject the offer of a changed title will remain on the ‘old’ title. The University accepts that in these exceptional circumstances there will be two titles relating to the same set of learning outcomes.
8. Where the title change is to be applied to an intake which is currently being marketed under the old title, the course team in liaison with Admissions, and Marketing and Communications is required to notify prospective students of the change as soon as this has been approved by the PMG and to revise publicity materials accordingly.

## Addition of course pathways

1. A course pathway is a subject specific route available on a course which leads to a different award title. A pathway will share the same programme learning outcomes with other pathways on the course and will be contained within the same programme specification as the other pathways.
2. Addition of new course pathways should be submitted on form A5 for consideration by the QAPCC. Where pathways will be advertised separately on the University’s website QAPCC may refer this request to PMG to consider the commercial value of the new pathway to the University.
3. Once approved by QAPCC, the nature of the validation event should be discussed and agreed with the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement.
4. Changes to pathway titles should be presented to QAPCC. Any other change should follow the relevant process as detailed in the AQSH.

## Course closure

1. A course is normally validated in perpetuity; however, QAPCC reserves the right to withdraw validation at any time. Withdrawals will be noted by EC. Any new course that does not recruit students for three consecutive years will automatically cease to be in validation.
2. A faculty may decide that it no longer wishes to offer a course as part of its portfolio. A proposal to close a course must be made to QAPCC on the ‘course or partnership closure and suspension to recruitment’ form A3 and must detail whether the course closure relates to other portfolio developments within the faculty.
3. Faculties must consult with the Admissions Manager and the Faculty Marketing Business Partner to assess the impact of students holding offers before the course closure request is submitted to QAPCC. Once a decision has been made to close a course, the faculty must complete and submit the A3 form to QAE by February of the preceding academic year. QAPCC will make the final decision to close the course. In implementing the process of closure, faculties must ensure that all necessary actions have been taken to inform and support students (existing and prospective) and update marketing information. The agreement of any collaborating faculties or partner institutions must be obtained.
4. The University will be responsible for ensuring that adequate standards are maintained for all students remaining on a course that has been closed. The University expects that, under normal circumstances, students registered on a course that is closing will be able to complete their chosen course of study; this applies equally to students studying a KU award delivered by a collaborative partner.
5. Where circumstances occur that the University is not able to continue delivery, the arrangements set out in General Regulations 5 (GR5): [Changes to Academic Provision](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations) and General Regulations 6 (GR6): [Student Protection Plan](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations) will be implemented. This includes how the University will seek to remedy the situation and how it will communicate the circumstances of the change to students and prospective students.
6. Where a partner is unable to continue to deliver the KU award as planned, the Collaborative Partner Contingency Plan (see Section B) and the arrangements as set out in the Student Protection Plan will be put into action. Where a course is being closed, the faculty, in liaison with QAE, must agree with the partner an action plan setting out the arrangements for the course closure and the necessary communication with affected students and applicants (as appropriate).
7. For collaborative arrangements, the closure of the course may also result in the termination of the partnership (see section B).

## Suspension of recruitment

1. A faculty may decide that it wishes to suspend recruitment to a course, normally due to lack of demand. The course will remain in validation. Faculties must consult Admissions, Marketing and QAE to ensure that appropriate actions are identified to protect existing and prospective students prior to the decision being taken to suspend recruitment to a course.
2. Annually the QAE team will supply faculties with a list of suspended courses and those that have not recruited for 2 years to facilitate decisions regarding continued suspension to recruitment or course closures. Once the faculty has decided to suspend a course, they must complete form A3 and submit it to QAE by February of the preceding academic year for approval by QAPCC. Once approved, QAE will ensure that relevant Directorates are informed.
3. Courses will be suspended for one year at a time; therefore, faculties are required to submit the A3 form for courses that are to remain suspended to QAE for approval by QAPCC. A course that was not suspended, but fails to recruit students, will be deemed as being suspended for recruitment that year and a retrospective A3 form will be required to be completed and noted by QAPCC.
4. The maximum length of time that recruitment can be suspended to a course consecutively is three years. If the period of suspension is more than three years, the course will no longer be in validation and the faculty will be required to submit a course closure request using form A3 form. If the faculty wishes to commence recruitment to the closed course the usual approval and validation processes will apply.

## QAPCC Debrief

1. After each QAPCC, QAE will produce a QAPCC debrief paper which will be circulated to nominated colleagues including those in Academic Registry, Student Services, Planning, International Office, Faculty Marketing Business Partners, and relevant colleagues within the faculties, to notify them of the decisions taken at each QAPCC and to enable them to take the necessary actions required by their departments.

## The ‘Discover Uni’ Record (formerly the Unistats record)

1. The University is required to publish ‘Discover Uni’ records for all undergraduate courses (with some exceptions which are outlined on the [HESA](https://www.hesa.ac.uk/)website) prior to these courses being advertised.
2. The mechanisms described in this section will ensure that the required data for ‘Discover Uni’ record can be collected in a timely way and communicated to the relevant departments.

## Appendix A: Summary of Academic Portfolio Change Requests

| **Type of request** | **Refer to** | **Form(s) required** | **Committee** | **What happens after committee approval?** | **Further forms required?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| New course proposal to be delivered by KU | Faculty HoRP | PMG forms to be accessed via the HoRP | PMG | PMG debrief circulated. Proposal can proceed to validation. | A2 to set up course in CMS (doesn’t go to a committee) |
| New course proposal to be delivered by existing partner (new course or existing KU course) | PMG | A2a | PMG | PMG debrief circulated. Proposal can proceed to validation. | A2b to set up course in CMS (doesn’t go to a committee) |
| New collaborative partner | PMG | A2a | PMG | PMG debrief circulated. Proposal cannot proceed to validation until due diligence approved by QAPCC. | A2b to set up course in CMS (doesn’t go to a committee) |
| Due diligence of new collaborative partner | QAE | Completed by QAE | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Proposal can proceed to validation. | A2b if not already received |
| Course title changes | Faculty HoRP | PMG forms to be accessed via the HoRP | PMG | PMG debrief circulated. Course title change can be implemented. Approval event may be required if there are changes to the course structure/modules – refer to QAE.   | A7 if faculty wants to offer current students to transfer to new title (doesn’t go to a committee) |
| Significant changes to existing courses | QAE | G1 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated. Changes proposed can be processed via enhanced CMMP. | A7 but will need to be done later in the process (doesn’t go to a committee) |
| Addition of pathway  | QAE | A5 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated. Approval event may be required - refer to QAE. | No |
| Change of title to an existing pathway | QAE | A5 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Change can be implemented. Approval event may be required if there are changes to the course structure/modules – refer to QAE.  | No |
| Change to delivery mode (primarily campus based/mainly campus based/mainly online/fully online) | QAE | A6 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Approval event may be required - refer to QAE | No |
| Addition/changes to learning mode (full time, part time, degree app) | QAE | A6 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Addition/change to learning mode can be implemented.  | No |
| Addition/changes of intakes | QAE | A6 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Addition/change to intake can be implemented.  | No |
| Changes to duration of a course | QAE | A6 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Change to the duration of the course can be implemented.  | No |
| Changes or addition of location of delivery | QAE | A4 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Approval event may be required - refer to QAE | No |
| Course closure | QAE | A3 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Course closure can be implemented.  | No |
| Partnership closure | QAE | A3 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Partnership closure process can be implemented by QAE.  | B11 Termination Action Plan (please refer to QAE to confirm if this is needed) |
| Course suspension to recruitment | QAE | A3 | QAPCC | QAPCC debrief circulated.Suspension to recruitment can be implemented.  | No |