Encourage staff in the development of new areas of the curriculum, new teaching methods and in areas of scholarly activity that will help improve the programme; Inform and advise staff of good practice elsewhere and of new developments in the curriculum and teaching methods.

Based on the outcome of the above a decision is made on whether the programme can be recommended for approval.

Aim of review

A programme is reviewed after it has been in operation for a period of up to five years (specified at the time of the previous validation or review event). During this time one or more cohorts is likely to have passed through the programme. This means that staff, students and employers will have had experience of its operation. The aim of a programme review is to re-evaluate, through peer group scrutiny and discussion, the health and viability of the programme, the validity of aims and learning outcomes and to ascertain:

How the programme has been operated and managed during the most recent period of validation;
How standards have been attained and how this has been recognised;
The ways in which the programme has met the needs of the community;
The extent to which all the previously expressed aspirations and ambitions have been fulfilled;
The extent to which the institution has been able to provide an environment in which the programme can flourish.

Based on the outcome of the above a decision is made on whether the programme can continue to be approved.

Roles and Responsibilities

The programme team

The role of the programme team is to plan the programme and present it at the validation or review

Placement supervisors and/or practitioners
Practitioners may contribute professional knowledge and expertise, but will also bring to the discussion their experience of current practice. Placement supervisors will help consider the needs of the profession and issues associated with placements, such as numbers of places, timetabling, student support and staff development.

Members of QMU advisory boards within the subject
Some subject areas have professional advisory boards whose role is to contribute to the curriculum portfolio. A member of the board might join the programme team or contribute in other ways, such as critiquing a draft document.

Members of professional bodies
Representatives from professional bodies may play an advisory role in curriculum development. It is the responsibility of the programme team to check with the professional body whether this is an expectation in planning for validation or review.

Service users
Teams are encouraged to involve service users (clients or customers who might access a service provided by graduates from the programme). Service users can comment on the likely benefits of the programme for the wider community. Based on their experiences of the subject (profession) that is under consideration they play an important role in highlighting their expectations of graduates from the programme.

School representatives
For inter-disciplinary programmes there should be representatives from the contributing School, which might include module co-ordinators or proposed teaching staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Deans of School and Heads of Division

The programme team is responsible for curriculum development, the preparation of documentation, liaison with GQE and submission of a response to conditions and recommendations.

Deans of School are responsible for the strategic direction of the School. All new programmes going forward for validation must be included in School Operational Plans.

The Head of Division is responsible for ensuring that a programme planning team is established and that appropriate staff are assigned to take forward the work of preparation for review or validation. Heads of Division may be involved in the detailed planning process, development and/or delivery of the programme under consideration. However, this is not a requirement.

Roles and Responsibilities

The validation panel

The role of the validation panel is to evaluate the rationale and coherence of the programme and to make a recommendation on its approval through the Student Experience Committee to the University Senate.

The panel will consider separately and collectively the following areas of the programme:

Overall philosophy and rationale;
Aims and learning outcomes;
Marketing and recruitment, including admissions criteria;
Structure and content;
Learning and teaching activities;
Assessment methods and regulations;
Quality assurance and enhancement;
Programme management;
Student support arrangements;
Staff and resources including quality and experience of academic staff.

Key areas that the panel may wish to explore with the team in relation to the above include, but are not limited to:

Stakeholder engagement in developing the new programme;
Alignment with QMU strategies, such as the Student Experience Strategy, Employability Strategy and Graduate Attributes;
Articulation with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework;
Adherence to Benchmark Statements and other external reference points;
Employer and student demand;
Adherence to QMU or professidemic staff.

The review panel

The role of the review panel is similar to that of the validation panel (see above). Additionally the review panel will carry out a critical appraisal of the standing, progress and future of the programme by evaluating:

The academic health and standard of the programme;
Progress and changes in the programme since its validation or last review;
The continuing need for the programme, including the scale of student intake, and its effectiveness and efficiency in staff and resource terms;
The academic validity of proposed changes in the programme, and an assessment of the associated resource requirements.

Roles and responsibilities

The Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement (GQE)

KEY POINT

Programme teams are encouraged to contact staff in the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement at an early stage in their preparation for validation or review. Normally an initial meeting between the event secretary, who will be based in the GQE, and programme leader should take place no later than six months prior to the event. The relevant School Manager will also participate in this meeting. Contact details for GQE are provided on page 39.

Staff in the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement are responsible for aspects of the validation and review process as stated below:

Validation and review schedule
Development and approval of the validation and review schedule each year in consultation with Deans of School, Heads of Division and programme leaders.
Approximate dates for validation and review events will be agreed at least eight months in advance to allow for curriculum development and (where applicable) review of the operation of the programme during the most recent period of validation. Final dates should be confirmed at least three months before the event.

Advice and information
Liaison with programme leaders, panellists and professional bodies as required to offer support and guidance for aspects of the process including:

Timescale
Procedures
Roles and responsibilities
The format of the validation or review event
Documentary requirements
Please note that staff from GQE generally **cannot** advise on curriculum design and development, or completion of module descriptors.
Internal and external reference points including QMU regulations; the UK Quality Code; and SCQF.

Panellists
The nomination of internal panel members (please refer to page 30 for further information)

Arrangements
All arrangements for the validation or review event, including room bookings, hospitality, accommodation and transport for external panel members (please refer to page 30 for further information), or arrangements for a remote event if applicable.

Secretariat support
The provision of professional secretariat support to the panel.
This includes: preparation and circulation of the agenda, the consolidated checklist (as described on page 32) and other supporting documentation prior to the event; participation in the event to advise on due process and QMU policies and procedures; preparation and circulation of the validation or review report following the event.

Roles and responsibilities

Professional and regulatory bodies

The role of individual professional and regulatory bodies in the validation and review process varies and should be determined at an early stage in the planning process. It is the responsibility of the programme leader to notify staff in GQE of the involvement of professional organisations and to provide contact details for representatives with responsibility for liaison with education providers.

Staff in GQE are responsible for formal liaison with professional and regulatory bodies regarding arrangements and procedures and for communicating these to the programme team. Progrtal m with education providers.

Division must establish a Programme Team to undertake more detailed curriculum planning and preparation, if they have not already done so.

Following confirmation from the Academic Planning Board that the proposal can proceed to Stage 3, the Programme Leader/Collaborative Academic Lead must complete and submit stage three paperwork to the School Academic Board in consultation with other members of the proposed Programme Team.

Identification of programme planning team and invitation to join (see page 3 for details of planning team membership).

Schedule for programme development, set out as a project plan with timescales and deadlines. Tasks allocated to different members of the team. Regular, minuted meetings. Consultation with all stakeholders, e.g. employers, professional bodies and external examiners.

Provisional date for validation event agreed with GQE.

Stage 3 Programme Approval form submitted to School Academic Board for discussion. The School Academic Board will be responsible for debating and agreeing the academic rationale. This will include consideration of the following:

> Programme title and subsidiary exit points
> Educational philosophy and aims;
> Appropriateness of the proposed SCQF level;
> Outline content;
> Structure and delivery pattern;
> Core and elective modules – core modules must be clearly identified;
> Balance of new and existing modules;
> Opportunities for linkages and efficiencies through collaboration with existing School provision.

Key point

The programme may not be advertised externally until such time as the School Academic Board has confirmed that it may proceed to validation. At this point, the programme may be advertised as   , until such time as the validation process has concluded. Note that care needs to be taken about the level of detail included at this stage as all published information on University programmes must comply with the guidance issued by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

The School Academic Board will provide feedback to the team that will help to shape the final validation document submitted to the panel. While the SAB does not have authority to veto the development of a new programme, it may raise concerns if it is believed that a programme's design is flawed or the team is not ready to proceed to validation. In such cases, the concerns will be passed to the Dean of the host School and a decision taken whether to postpone the validation.

GQE confirms that all stages of Programme Approval have been completed and that validation may proceed. Final date confirmed (if this has not been done already).

Identification of external panel member(s). The programme team is responsible for contacting the proposed external panellist(s)

Document preparation.

Final documents submitted to GQE four weeks prior to the date of validation. Documents should be submitted electronically.

Identify and invite students, senior managers, ,

Diagram 1 - process for validating a new programme (with recommended timescales)

The timescales below are advisory. Actual timescales may vary. More flexibility is allowed for collaborative programmes, as these are not included in the QMU prospectus.

Pre-validation

Type of programme		Approval stage
PG / Collaborative	UG (UCAS)	
- 23 months	- 27 months	Programme Leader (PL)/Collaborative Academic Lead (CAL) conducts exploratory discussions and/or market research
- 22 months	- 26 months	Approval in principle by Dean of School. Proposal reported to GQE.
- 22 months	- 26 months	PL/CAL completes Stage 1 Programme Approval Form. Stage 1 Programme Approval Form submitted to School Executive Board for outline approval which enables detailed planning to commence.
- 21 months	- 25 months	Outline programme development. Costing completed. Detailed market research conducted. For collaborative

The example below shows how this works in practice for an undergraduate programme due to start in September 2025.

July 2023	Stage 1 paperwork approved by School Executive Team
September 2023	Stage 2 paperwork approved by APB
November 2023	Stage 3 paperwork approved by SAB
October 2024	GQE sets validation date
December 2024	Panel esnpW*nwnsh by

Information about student support services provided by the partner. Where services or procedures differ from what is normally offered at QMU, a statement should be provided explaining how support is equivalent to QMU norms.

A statement on the relationship between QMU and the partner institution and proposed arrangements for quality assurance, including arrangements for moderating student work, and communication between the partners.

Information about staff recruitment policies and how staff will be supported.

A statement on the language of instruction and assessment: if this is not English, the documentation must include details of mechanisms to assure the standard and quality of student work

Further information about the operation of collaborative programmes is available in the Collaborations Manual, which is published on the Partnerships website.

Approval procedures

Review of existing programmes (including collaborative programmes)

All currently validated programmes require to be reviewed and re-validated before the expiry of the validation period (normally five

Preparation and planning

Documents required

Required documentation for validation (to be provided in advance)

The documentation listed below is needed for **every validation** and must be submitted to the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement **no later than four weeks** before the event.

Validation Document, including all module descriptors;
Programme Specification04 Tf1 0 0 1 357.31 642.46 Tm0 g0 G[ )]TJETQq0.00000grme Specification

The use of internal reference points including the University's Student Experience Strategy and Graduate Attributes, policies relating to sustainability, widening access and inclusive learning.
A list of members of the programme planning team.

Consultation and Research

Evidence (in a summarised form) of the consultation engaged in the development of a new programme or in making major changes to an existing programme should be provided. This should include details of who was consulted, by what means, the information those consulted received on which to base an opinion (normally the draft programme proposal or a summary) and a summary of their opinions. It is important to remember to discuss both student and employer demand.

Consultation should take place with the following groups:

Professional and statutory bodies as appropriate;
Current External Examiners on related programmes or other assessors;
Students currently on the programme (reviews only) or related programmes;
Recent graduates from the programme (reviews only) or related programmes;
Potential employers;
Service users, where possible;
Others, as appropriate.

The document should also include information on the programme's target market. Discuss any plans to increase recruitment from previously under-represented groups, e.g. disabled students, direct entrants from FE, or students from previously under-represented genders or cultural backgrounds.

Programme Characteristics

The validation document sets out the essential characteristics of the programme in a narrative format.

Mode of study and programme length (including maximum registration period);
Educational intentions (programme aims);
Learning outcomes in terms of the attainment of knowledge, understanding, skills, experience and, where appropriate, professional development;
Learning and teaching strategies, explaining the rationale for the choice of learning and teaching methods to be used;
The curriculum and its component parts (including relationship to educational intentions and4(o)13(f)-4( )6(t)1 0 0 1 7732 84871 G1.04 Tf-3(i)5(cul)6(um)-6(an)3(d)13( )-44(p)13(r)-3(og)3(r)-3(a

Board of Examiners' arrangements including the involvement of External Examiners in the assessment process.

It can be helpful to include a table showing how formative assessment informs summative assessment. The validation document may also include a draft assessment schedule with approximate submission dates for individual assessment components.

Student Support

In this section you should discuss:

Resource requirements

> Teaching and support staff;
> Teaching and learning accommodation and equipment;
> Learning resources;
> Central resources and services, including Library, IT, and educational technology resources (these should be identified and agreed in advance of the event as part of Stage 2 Programme Approval as described on page 11);
> Others (please specify).

Normally, it will not be necessary for the panel to discuss resource issues in depth, as resource requirements will have been discussed and agreed through the Programme Approval process. However, if the panel does have questions it may be appropriate to raise these at the event. GQE staff can provide guidance, as required.

Management of the Programme

Management arrangements including the constitution and terms of reference of the Programme Committee, Student-Staff Consultative Committee, the role of the programme leader, module co-ordinators and Personal Academic Tutor. Normally these will be consistent with QMU regulations. In this case it is appropriate to cross refer to relevant sections of the Quality website.

Quality Assurance Procedures

Quality assurance arrangements for the management, operation and monitoring of the programme, including student feedback arrangements, evaluation mechanisms, provision for student representation and student support. The documentation should identify any areas where the programme deviates from the standard University quality assurance procedures, citing the reasons, such as professional and statutory body requirements. This section should also be used to highlight any innovative approaches to quality assurance either planned or in operation.

Regulations

Draft regulations should be submitted with the documentation where necessary. In most areas the programme team will use the University regulations. It will be sufficient to state that the programme conforms to QMU regulations, where this is the case.

Validation and review panels will evaluate the validity of any specific regulations for the

Programme teams are expected to seek advice from the Library on the completion of reading lists in module descriptors.

The University provides guidance on a consistent approach to module design. This guidance covers the number of learning hours and volume of assessment. There are some differences between each School. Please contact your School Manager for advice.

Programme specification

The Programme Specification consists of a summary of the information in the programme (validation) document. This is useful for providing succinct details about the programme to external stakeholders.

Use the template provided. Cutting and pasting from the programme document is encouraged, as this ensures the information is consistent across both documents.

Student handbook

The panel needs to see the student handbook in order to satisfy themselves that students receive clear and user-friendly information about the programme.

QMU produces a generic Student Handbook that includes information on systems, regulations, policies and procedures. This Handbook is available on the A-Z pages of the QMU website under the letter H.

The purpose of the Programme Student Handbook is **not** to duplicate the information in the generic Student Handbook. Instead, the Programme Student Handbook should provide specific and local information, for example:

Introduction and welcome from the Programme Leader.
A link to the generic Student Handbook and Essential Information for Students publication.
Details of the Programme structure – where there are different pathways through the Programme, it can be helpful to provide flowchart diagrams and/or case studies (this approach has been commended at previous events).
Information on learning experiences with an overview of the learning, teaching and assessment philosophy.
Information on assessment strategy – formative and summative – it can be good to provide this in table format.
Guidance about how to submit assessments and advice on avoiding plagiarism.
Information on work-based learning, although this may be provided separately.

Cause for concern process – this often takes the form of a flowchart.

Panels are also interested in parity of experience across placement sites, in terms of the student and placement staff experience. This will include support and development opportunities for placement supervisors.

A statement on feedback from employers, service users and other stakeholders and the programme team's response;
A statement on feedback from staff and the team's response;
A statement on mechanisms for gathering student feedback, any issues raised by students during the previous two years and the programme team's response;
A statement of any resource implications that have arisen since the most recent validation or review event;
A statement on any significant changes in the external context; and
A clear statement of proposed changes to the programme.

It should be clear to the reader how the proposed changes follow from the evidence presented.

The following appendices will be provided to the Panel. The Secretary to the Panel can provide support for collating this information.

Previous validation or review report and response to conditions.
Annual monitoring reports for the previous two academic sessions, including a summary of progression statistics and data on graduate employment;
External Examiners' reports and the programme team's response for the previous two academic sessions;
NSS/QSS results (as applicable). (Data from the Partner Organisation Student Survey may be provided for collaborative programmes.)

Programme document

The Programme Document sets out the curriculum and delivery arrangements for the revised programme. Please follow the advice regarding the Validation Document set out on pages 19-22. The only difference is that when reviewing an existing programme it is not necessary to include a rationale for the programme or information about market demand.

Preparation and planning

Reference points for curriculum design

In designing your programme you will be guided by various internal and external reference points.

There are three fundamental principles to bear in mind:

1. All awards of QMU will include the academic content expected for that subject. The depth and complexity of knowledge will be appropriate for the academic level of the award.
2. Degrees that relate to a profession or a particular field of employment will include the skills and knowledge needed to work in that field.
3. Whatever the area of study, QMU has a commitment to support learners in the development of Graduate Attributes that will aid them in their future life, and allow them to make a positive contribution to society.

External

QAA Subject Benchmark statements
These are reviewed regularly by the sector and provide guidance around the key content expected of degrees in various subjects. Note that subject benchmarks relate mainly to undergraduate degrees.

The criteria for external panel members are as follows:

Arrangements

Submission of documents

KEY POINT

It is the responsibility of the programme team to forward the validation or review documentation to GQE by the date agreed which is **no later than four weeks** prior to the event. Please note that this deadline is not flexible.

In the case of a joint validation or review event, the deadline for submission of documentation is agreed in consultation with the relevant professional or regulatory body. In some cases professional and regulatory bodies can require documentation up to eight weeks in advance of the meeting. It is therefore essential to check requirements early in the planning process. This is the responsibility of GQE.

The programme team is required to submit one copy of each of the documents required to GQE. All documentation should be submitted electronically. Staff from GQE will arrange for copies to be forwarded to the panel and professional body representatives in advance of the meeting. Please note that GQE is not responsible for sharing documents with members of the programme team. This is the responsibility of the programme leader.

Other information required from the programme team

Staff in GQE will also need the following information in advance of the meeting: list of all staff members, students, placement educators and others attending on behalf of the programme planning team. For events that are held in person, GQE will organise name plates. For events held remotely, GQE will coordinate meeting invites.

Documents provided by GQE

GQE will circulate the following documentation to each member of the panel three weeks in advance of the meeting:

On the day

Expectations

Validation and review events provide opportunities to engage in academic debate about all aspects of programmes with the intent of validating its integrity, quality and fitness-for-purpose. Furthermore, they provide excellent opportunities to discuss enhancement and share good practice. The expectation is that all members of the team will participate, not just the programme leader(s). As it is meant to be a constructive dialogue, the team will have the opportunity not only to respond to requests for clarification but also to provide examples of good practice. All areas which might be problematic and lead to conditions or failure to validate must be explored during the meeting so that the team can defend and explain their rationale, and so that they will understand the outcome. When the panel's decision is announced, the team will have the opportunity to ask for clarification.

Meetings

Meetings may be held on campus or online. The meeting format will depend on a range of factors, including team and panel preferences, professional and regulatory body

Meeting with service users

This applies most often for healthcare programmes where there is professional and regulatory body involvement. The purpose of the service user meeting is to learn about the experience of people engaging with the service/profession that is under consideration and the qualities they would expect from a graduate practitioner.

Private meeting of panellists who are members of professional bodies

Some professional and regulatory bodies require private meetings during the event to discuss professional approval or accreditation. Typically these meetings do not involve QMU staff.

Outcomes

The validation or review panel will make one of the following recommendations to the Student Experience Committee and to Senate:

1   That the programme (continues to) be validated subject to conditions (all conditions must be satisfied before the programme can be considered validated);

2   That the programme (continues to) be validated (with further advisory recommendations, if appropriate);

3   That the programme should not be (re-)validated

Conditions of validation relate to issues that, if not satisfactorily addressed, would prevent the programme from running. Recommendations are advisory in nature, although it is expected that programme teams will give these serious consideration. Panels are therefore expected to maintain a clear distinction between mandatory conditions and recommendations.

Where the panel imposes a significant number of conditions, this may bring into question the validity of the programme. The maximum number of conditions applied normally should not exceed five. In cases where more than five conditions are set by the panel, the programme will not normally be validated. Panels are asked to state conditions and recommendations in clear and unambiguous terms.

If the programme is (re-)validated, or (re-)validated subject to conditions, then the panel must also set the date for review. This is usually five years, based on the nature of the programme, mode of delivery and duration. A shorter period of validation, whilst possible, would be wholly exceptional. A shorter validation period than five years may reflect the degree of confidence the panel has in the programme, or may reflect some changes anticipated in the short term. Where the period of validation is shorter than five years, the reasons for this decision will be clearly recorded in the report of the event.

The panel will identify aspects of the programme worthy of noting, commendation and wider dissemination. Commendations are detailed in the event report and summary and disseminated through meetings of key academic committees.

The panel's decision is communicated to the team directly after the final private meeting.

referred to in order to confirm programme specific regulations or options available for a student with special circumstances.

The definitive document is expected to be available to students, prospective students, professional bodies and other bodies or authorities that need to know about the programme. A full set of definitive programme documents is held by the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement.

Each student enrolled on the programme has a right to receive the information included in the definitive document. The information supplied to students may contain additional material on e.g. learning and teaching methods, booklists for the year, any resources required (e.g. laptop, Internet access) study notes, information on membership of professional bodies, etc.

Staff are required to inform students at the start of each year of the detailed basis of the continuous assessment to be used in each subject. The student handbook for the programme can serve as the vehicle for the provision of such information.

The programme leader is responsible for ensuring any necessary revisions are made to copies of the definitive document held by the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement

Further information and contacts

Further information on all aspects of the validation and review process are available from:

Dawn Martin, Assistant Secretary, Governance and Quality Enhancement
Email: dmartin1@qmu.ac.uk

Further information on validation and review for collaborative programmes is available from:

Sheila Adamson, Partnership Development Manager
Email: sadamson@qmu.ac.uk

This resource is available in different formats on request.

All key resources and templates are available on the Quality website.

Feedback can be submitted electronically to Dawn Martin (contact details as above)

References

QMU Quality website
SCQF website
QAA website
Enhancement Themes
AdvanceHE

Abbreviations

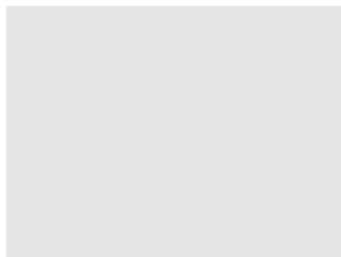| APB	Academic Planning Board
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
IS	Information Services
LEAD	Learning Enhancement and Academic Development
LTP	Learning and Teaching Panel
PDP	Personal Development Planning
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
GQE	Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement
QMU	Queen Margaret University
SAB	School Academic Board
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SEC	Student Experience Committee
SETS	(HCPC) Standards of Education and Training
SITS	Student Records System
SOPS	(HCPC) Standards of Proficiency

Acknowledgements

This booklet draws on work by Dr Kate Morss, former Director for the Centre of Academic Practice.

QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY
Review and revalidation of MSc PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE
27 April 2021 by Microsoft Teams

09.30 – 10.30   Private meeting of Panel

10.30 – 12.45   Meeting with the Programme Team giving the Panel the opportunity to discuss the Programme and any issues relating to the following points[4]:

        Programme title, overall aims and objectives
        Demand for the Programme, recruitment and admissions
        Structure and content
        Learning, teaching and assessment
        Programme management, QA and enhancement
        The student experience
        Staff experience

12.45 – 13.30   Lunch

13.30

APPENDIX II KEY UNIVERSITY STRATEGIES

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Student

and with students and to engage with projects that are co-ordinated under the auspices of

STUDENT EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2021-26: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The QMU Student Experience Strategy is concerned with the holistic student experience. This encompasses both the student learning experience, and aspects of the wider student experience that support and complement student learning. The Strategy is relevant for all of our students based in Edinburgh, as well as distance learning students and students at our partner institutions around the world.

The Student Experience Strategy for the period 2021-2026 has been developed in partnership between the University and the Students' Union, drawing on the outcome of consultation and co-creation with students and staff. Embracing and extending this 'Students as Partners' approach will be fundamental to our plans for implementation of the Strategy, and students and staff will work collectively to deliver this.

Principles

Our overarching principles for the student experience are listed below. These are inter-related and of equal importance.

All QMU students experience a transformative journey through outstanding learning and teaching and co- and extra-curricular opportunities that enable them to achieve their individual goals and enhance their well-being.

We share individual and collective responsibility for enhancing and placing the student experience at the heart of our thinking and action[erie)nm6671ET4ual and collective responsibility e resp

The QMU Student Experience Strategy 2021-26.

As the infographic shows, key areas of priority are presented under one of five action headings. These are supported by three overarching themes of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Students as Partners; and Sustainability and Social Justice that cut across the student experience during the period of Strategy. These themes are fundamental to the delivery of an outstanding student experience, and underpin all of our actions and activities

STUDENT EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2021-26 ACTIONS

These actions are underpinned by a detailed delivery plan, which is subject to annual review, evaluation and prioritisation through the Student Experience Committee. Our actions under each of the headings will be informed by our experiences during COVID-19, drawing on good practice and learning from positive as well as negative experiences.

The Learner Journey
Provide high quality and personalised support to all students as they transition from pre-entry through to graduation and beyond.
Map a range of learner journeys to enhance signposting to available support, resources and campus facilities.

APPENDIX III   GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES - applicable to all QMU programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate) with effect from January 2022

Definitions

Active Learner	
Investigative and curious	You are willing to ask questions and don't automatically accept statements of fact without evidence.
	Where there is a gap in knowledge or a question is unanswered, you have the

Willing to lead and innovate	You are willing to challenge received

APPENDIX IV Guidance on developing taught postgraduate programmes

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DEVELOPING A NEW TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME: staff guidance

1 Introduction

This guidance has been developed as a reference for all staff at QMU who wish to develop a taught postgraduate programme at Master's-level (M-level), or who are involved with the operation of such an award. The guidance offers a structure for a range of awards, and it allows different types of awards to be developed.

Responsibility for developing this guidance sits with the Student Experience Committee (SEC). SEC has a remit to *establish and review strategies, policies and procedures that support and enhance the student experience, assure and enhance academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience,*

Category 3: Professional or practice Master's degrees: Examples of professional or practice Master's include the MBA, MDiv, LLM and MSW, post experience MAs and MScs and some integrated Master's.

Professional or practice Master's degrees usually aim to enable graduates to qualify for entry into a profession, subject to any further conditions required by the PSRB; or to provide development opportunities related to particular professions or employment settings.

Integrated Master's degrees[6]: Integrated Master's degrees are delivered through a course that combines study at the level of a bachelor's degree with honours with study at Master's level during the latter stages of the course. As such, a student usually graduates with a Master's degree after a continuous course of study.

Integrated Master's degree courses typically include study equivalent to at least one full-time academic year at level 11 in Scotland (for example, at Master's level).

2   Level of Awards

Within the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](#), there are two parameters that determine qualifications: level of learning outcomes and volume of outcomes, calculated as number of credits. SCQF Level 11 includes a number of qualifications that differ only in the volume of credit, not in level of outcomes. The taught awards of Queen Margaret University that are delivered at SCQF Level 11 category are as set out in paragraph 1.2 of this Framework. Credit definitions for each of these qualifications are given in the [Quality Assurance Agency's Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions (QAA 2014).](#)

Standards of awards will be determined by the demand made on students and their response to that demand. Standards will be benchmarked against the appropriate external reference points such as expectations of professional bodies and standards of similar awards in other universities as determined by the external examining system.

3   Purpose

QMU taught postgraduate degrees are aligned with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level descriptor for the Master's degree, which includes generic information around the skills, capabilities and qualities of all holders of the Master's (level 11) qualification.

3.1   Aims

The shared aims of all taught postgraduate programmes at QMU are to enable students to:

Develop a deeper understanding of the relevant body of knowledge and their personal and professional skills in order to contribute to development of a subject area, field, or profession.
Engage in critical reflection on practice and independent study for lifelong learning.

3.2   All validated taught postgraduate programmes will have programme-specific aims and learning outcomes. Programmes may also have learning outcomes that reflect expectations of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. The programme-specific outcomes must be cross-referred to the SCQF Level 11 descriptors and defined in the Programme Specifications.

associated materials. Advice and guidance is available from the Admissions Team.

The process and arrangements for entry with Advanced Standing can be found in the Regulations governing Recognition of Prior Learning (certificated and experiential).

5.2   Period of registration

Minimum and maximum periods of registration are set out in the [University's Registration Regulations](#).

6   Structure

6.1   The module

A module is a self-contained part of a programme with separate aims, pre-requisites, content and assessment as defined in the module descriptor. Each module offered is subject to a process of approval and review, which is designed to ensure the module meets the expectations for SCQF level 11, that it has been designed taking account of all relevant internal and external reference points, and that it meets the needs of students and employers. Learning, teaching and assessment methods for each module will vary according to the subject and context. However, all modules require similar student effort and meet the requirements of level 11 of the SCQF.

The building block of the taught postgraduate programmes is the standard module (20 credits), which is defined in terms of study time (approximately 200 hours per 20 credit module). The equivalent of nine 20-credit modules are to be completed to fulfil the requirements of a 180 credit Master's programme.

Modules can be offered as core or elective units of study. Module viability for electives is determined by the Dean of School in conjunction with the University's Academic Planning Board. When a module has to be withdrawn at short notice, the affected students will be guided to viable alternatives.

6.2
Postgraduate   Certificate
Assessment Regulations

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assessment strategies will be designed to enable independent progress within a supportive framework.

Guided by the principles of constructive alignment, and recognising diversity of learning styles and background, learning will be facilitated and assessed using strategies most appropriate to support achievement of learning outcomes within the discipline.

Constructive alignment is an outcomes-based approach to teaching, in which the learning outcomes that students are intended to achieve are defined before teaching takes place. Teaching and assessment methods are then designed to best achieve those outcomes and to assess the standard at which they have been achieved.

Teaching and assessment strategies will enable students to develop their full potential by recognising and building on prior knowledge and experience and by facilitating development of subject-related knowledge and skills and the QMU Graduate Attributes. Strategies should develop and reward critical, evaluative and enquiry-based approaches to study.

Students should have a broad appreciation of the range of methodologies that are available to researchers, including both quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry. They should understand the general principles and characteristic practices of those various approaches to research, for example, the theoretical underpinnings, data gathering techniques and forms of data analysis. Students should be able to appreciate the reasons why researchers come to adopt a particular methodology which is appropriate both to their object of study and to the aims of their investigation. They will also benefit from an understanding of the ethical and political issues that can arise in the planning, conduct and presentation of a research project.

Students should be facilitated to develop a deeper working knowledge of the key methodologies that are employed in their chosen subject area or discipline. They should be able to critically evaluate contemporary research developments in that field. Most importantly, students should develop the conceptual and practical skills necessary to carry out independent research in the form of a Master's dissertation, or other major project, so that they are competent to define a manageable topic of study, decide on appropriate strategies for inquiry, development, analysis and conclusions, and are able to present results in appropriate formats and media.

The Master's project is amongst the most important learning activities for Master's students and is therefore usually weighted equivalent to two or three 20-credit modules. Dependent on the award, this significant assessment may be a dissertation, an original and creative work, a work-based study, a portfolio or a professional intervention, but it must include theoretical evaluation and analysis of a high standard equivalent to a piece of empirical research, and must contribute to the development of the subject or profession. Further information is provided in Appendix one.

In the following circumstances academic collusion represents a form of plagiarism:

Academic collusion is deemed to be unacceptable where it involves the unauthorised and unattributed collaboration of students or others work resulting in plagiarism, which is against University discipline.

Resources to support good academic practice are available on the Library and Effective Learning Service website. Additionally, all QMU students (undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate) have access to Studiosity.

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In order to keep taught postgraduate programmes dynamic, current and responsive to the need for change, various alterations may be implemented with due authorisation. Please refer to the Programme Development, Modification, Monitoring and Review section of the Governance and Regulations. Normally changes should be proposed and approved well in advance of the implementation date and usually at least one semester before the proposed change (accepting that the programme may run across three semesters in the year).The Assistant Secretary, Governance and Quality Enhancement can offer advice.

15   Further information

For further information on University policies please refer to the Quality website

roject guidance

Important: This Appendix provides generic guidance on the expectations and management of the Master's dissertation or other major project (the project). It is recognised that a variety of project models are in place across the University, and more specific guidance should be provided in the Definitive Document and other program3en13( )]TJETQq0.0

b)   Develop critically, strategically and in depth a topic or area of interest arising from the work undertaken within the taught modules contributing to the programme and in the student's area of academic or professional interest.

c)   Develop further the research skills as acquired through the taught research modules and/or other research content, to demonstrate an ability to set the project in its wider context, to sustain argument and to present conclusions.

c)   Present and be able to defend their rationale, approach or methodology, outcomes and conclusions.

3   Points to cover in the Definitive Document/student facing materials

When designing a new taught postgraduate programme, it will be important to consider and clearly define within the Definitive Programme Document and student facing materials the following key points:

Student responsibilities
Programme Leader responsibilities
Dissertation supervisor (or equivalent) responsibilities
The process for agreeing the project topic
The structure and format of the project
How to present the project

should refer to the individual programme handbook/module descriptor for detail of projects of this nature.