

# Heriot-Watt University's Mapping to the UK Quality Code

## Course Design and Development

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### Regulatory contexts for the Quality Code

The Expectations and Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) are mandatory for higher education providers in all parts of the UK. Common practices are mandatory in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and while providers in England may choose to work towards them, they are not required to do so as these are not regulatory requirements and will not be assessed as part of the OfS's regulatory framework. National regulators and QAA are not bound by the information in this advice and guidance and will not view it as containing indicators of compliance. This guidance does not interpret statutory requirements.

### Terminology

**Course:** An approved pathway of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads towards a qualification. UK higher education courses must be approved by UK degree-awarding bodies. They might also be referred to as programmes, units or modules.

**Approval:** The formal endorsement of a pathway of study by a UK degree-awarding body. This may also be referred to as 'validation'.

**Key stakeholders:** Those who are vital to the course design and development process, such as students, academics and professional staff.

**External stakeholders:** Those involved in the course design and development process who are external to the provider such as employers and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

**Credit:** A means of calculating and recognising learning, used by most higher education providers, expressed as numbers of credits at a specific level of study and used for the purpose of certification.

**Credit bearing:** Refers to a course and/or award made by a provider that comprises a stipulated number of credits.

## Expectations and Practices

The advice underneath the Expectations and Practices is not mandatory for providers but illustrative of a range of possible approaches.

<p><b>This Theme aims to support UK higher education providers in meeting their responsibilities for the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities of the courses they offer and the credit and qualifications they award, within the context of their own mission, values and strategic objectives. Responsibility for setting and maintaining standards and quality lies with the degree-awarding body. This Theme is relevant to any delivery organisation(s) with which a provider may work. In addition to the responsibility for the quality of learning opportunities of the courses they offer, providers can use course design and development to facilitate a culture of innovation, creativity and continuous improvement through the creation of unique and market- attractive portfolios. It can be informed by feedback from a range of stakeholders/sources and developments. It can reflect multidisciplinary research, contemporary industry practice, pedagogical and technological advancements, and current affairs.</b></p>		
EXPECTATIONS FOR STANDARDS		EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY
<p><b>The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.</b></p> <p><i>The UK frameworks for higher education qualifications provide definitive points of reference for UK higher education providers when designing courses. They also provide a context in which qualifications can be reviewed and developed.</i></p>	<p><b>The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.</b></p> <p><i>Qualifications are determined by level and academic credit. Level descriptors and academic credit values allow providers to accurately describe and market their qualifications in a consistent manner. Not only are they tools for securing threshold academic standards nationally, they allow valid comparisons to be made with qualifications in other nations which enables student mobility.</i></p>	<p><b>Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.</b></p> <p><i>Feedback from key stakeholders/sources and multidisciplinary research allow developers to craft relevant and innovative courses of study. Sources of feedback for course design may include internal and external specialists, prospective, current and past students, employers and PSRBs. The incorporation of a systematic, relevant and stimulating assessment strategy, which enables course and module learning outcomes to be met, is also a key consideration for course design and development.</i></p>
<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Expectations for Standards. Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping document to the 'Assessment' theme.</i></p>		<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Expectations for Standards. Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles, as well as the mapping documents to the 'Monitoring and Evaluation', 'External Expertise' and 'Assessment' themes.</i></p>
Core Practice (Standards)		Core Practice (Quality)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks. <i>In practice, this means that when designing and approving courses, relevant national qualifications frameworks are referred to.</i></li> <li>Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them. <i>In practice, this means that the awarding body or organisation ensures that it maintains responsibility for setting and maintaining standards of a course regardless of where it is delivered.</i></li> <li>The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent. <i>In practice, this means that feedback from external stakeholders is used to inform course design and development.</i></li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses. <i>In practice, this means that course approval processes facilitate the design and development of high-quality, relevant, market-attractive courses which lead to credible and recognised positive outcomes for students.</i></li> <li>The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. <i>In practice, this means that course approval processes ensure that there are appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.</i></li> <li>The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience. <i>In practice, this means that course approval processes ensure that there are appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.</i></li> <li>Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them. <i>In practice, this means that when a course is designed and developed in partnership with an external organisation, the degree-awarding body's course approval processes consider and document responsibilities in relation to delivery, support and monitoring arrangements.</i></li> </ol>
Common Practice (Standards)		Common Practice (Quality)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement. <i>In practice, this means that regular monitoring and evaluation are used to drive improvement and enhancement of course design and development processes.</i></li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provider reviews its core practices for quality regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement. <i>In practice, this means that regular monitoring and evaluation are used to drive improvement and enhancement of course design and development processes.</i></li> <li>The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience. <i>In practice, this means that students are key stakeholders in course design and development processes.</i></li> </ol>
<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Core and Common Practices (Standards). Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping documents for the 'Partnerships', 'External Expertise', 'Assessment' and 'Monitoring and Evaluation' themes.</i></p>		<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Core and Common Practices (Quality). Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping document to the documents for the 'Partnerships', 'Monitoring and Evaluation', 'Enabling Student Achievement' and 'Student Engagement' themes.</i></p>

## Guiding Principles with Mapping from HWU Practices

A 'Reference' document is available to use in conjunction with this mapping document.

The guiding principles given here are not mandatory for any provider. They are a concise expression of the fundamental practices of the higher education sector, based on the experience of a wide range of providers. They are intended as a framework for providers to consider when establishing new or looking at existing higher education provision. They are not exhaustive and there will be other ways for providers to meet their requirements.

Guiding Principles (Standards and Quality)	Heriot-Watt University Practice
<p><b>1. Strategic oversight ensures that course design, development and approval processes and outcomes remain consistent and transparent.</b></p> <p>As well as assuring the standards and quality of their courses, providers ensure that their academic portfolio is reflective of their mission and strategic objectives. Strategic oversight enables providers to set clear direction and promote a shared understanding of the processes for, and outcomes of, course design, development and approval. It enables providers to oversee the integration of the academic and business aspects of course approval in an objective manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Senate is responsible for the governance, regulation and promotion of Learning and Teaching, Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Scholarship at the University. The Senate has strategic oversight of course/programme design, development and approval.</li> <li>The University's Studies Committee, is responsible for (as delegated by the Senate and the University Committee for Quality and Standards) undertaking consideration and approval of the academic conditions associated with the establishing, modifying, or withdrawing of undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses, programmes and disciplines.</li> <li>The University mission and strategic objectives is ensured within the academic portfolio at four levels consistent with the global Academic Management Structure for Learning and Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The membership of the Senate includes Academic representatives from each School</li> <li>University Committee for Quality and Standards (UCQS) which is a sub-committee of the Senate which is responsible for maintaining academic standards and ensuring alignment with the University Strategy. The Terms of Reference ensure that there are at least 4 members of the Senate and a Dean form part of the membership of the Committee</li> <li>The University's Studies Committee which has the authority to approve programmes. The Terms of Reference ensures that there are at least 6 members of the Senate and is chaired by a Dean.</li> <li>The School Studies Committees, which is chaired by the Director of Academic Quality (a member of UCQS), is responsible for overseeing the quality and standards of the School's entire taught provision all modes and locations. The role of the School Studies Committee is detailed within the Academic Management Structures at Multiple Campuses document.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>The portfolios of programmes offered by Schools are aligned with the University Strategy 2018-25. On an annual basis Schools review their current portfolio. The Schools' Learning and Teaching Enhancement Plans are aligned with the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy (which is aligned to the University's Strategic Plan). As part of the University's Academic Approval process, Schools must document the programme's alignment with the University's Strategy, which include enhancing student learning. Examples of specific enhancement areas for inclusion at the approval stage are: development of research-informed learning skills and employability skills; induction and transition.</li> <li>The University has in place a four-part Code of Practice (COP) for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes, which provides a framework for managing the University's provision delivered across various locations and by various modes. The COP is in the process of being revised/replaced with a new Global Code of Practice for which the Expectations and principles of the Code were approved in September 2019. The new Global COP, which has been mapped against the UK Quality Code, outlines expectations and key principles for the design and development of programmes and courses.</li> <li>Amongst other things, programme design will be informed by a consideration of the knowledge, understanding and skills that students are expected to learn, as determined by various internal and external reference points, eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University's Learning and Teaching Strategy</li> <li>School's Learning and Teaching Enhancement plans</li> <li>Subject benchmark statements</li> <li>Professional Regulatory and Statutory Bodies</li> <li>Employers/Industry factors</li> <li>National Agenda</li> </ul> </li> <li>While all academic matters, including approval, are ultimately the responsibility of the Senate, business matters are the responsibility of the University Executive. Consequently, in parallel with the academic approval process, a separate business approval process operates. The two approvals streams intersect, and are considered holistically and in parallel, at both School and University level. At the School level, this consideration takes place at the School Management Board and in the person of the Head of School, supported by the Director of Learning and Teaching and the Director of Administration. At the University level, this consideration takes place at Annual Planning Round meetings with each School and in the person of the Vice-Principal of the University, supported by the Directors of Planning and of Finance.</li> <li>All the University's courses/programmes must sit within the SCQF framework, be consistent with the Subject Benchmark Statements, and adhere to the QAA Quality Code. Where programmes are accredited by UK Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), their requirements and guidelines will be taken into account. In addition, programmes offered outside the UK must also meet the academic standards of, and be aligned with, the qualifications frameworks and other educational requirements (as prescribed by the government accreditation authorities and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies) of the overseas countries within which the University operates.</li> <li>Decision-making takes place at the appropriate levels; course approval and programme business case approval takes place at the School level where the subject expertise lies. Consideration of the sufficiency of learning and teaching resources and support will be taken at the School level. Programmes are initially approved by the School Studies Committee after which proposals are submitted to the University's Studies Committee for approval. Approvals are communicated to the Senate through standard reporting mechanisms. The Academic Review process provides a mechanism for programme re-approval.</li> <li>An online and automated 'Programme Approvals Management System' was implemented in September 2015 and a new 'Global Curriculum Management System' is due to come into effect from September 2020. Once all approvals, regulations and policies have been satisfied, the definitive programme documentation are formally approved within the Programme Approval Management System.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All programmes are reviewed annually and periodically; the outcomes inform future design and development. The University's Annual Monitoring and Review (AMR) process comprises two key elements School Annual Monitoring and Review (SAMR) and Partner Annual Monitoring and Review (PAMR), for which reports are submitted and reviewed at a University level. Academic Quality produces an summary report and action plan for consideration and approval by University-level committees. Following completion of the AMR process an annual dissemination event takes place. Student feedback is also taken into consideration as part of the re-design and development of courses and programmes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Accessible and flexible processes for course design, development and approval facilitate continuous improvement of provision and are proportionate to risk.</b></p> <p>Course design and development processes should be straightforward and tailored to the perceived level of risk. This encourages constructive engagement from staff, students and other stakeholders, and supports the continuous improvement of courses. Engagement can be effectively supported by providing accessible information, which details key steps, timescales, roles and responsibilities, and links to external/internal reference materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expectations for the University's degrees are outlined within Part Two of the Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes. Principle 2.1 requires that the academic standards and the quality of learning of the University's programmes and awards, across all locations and modes, must meet the formal Expectations of the UK Quality Code and must be properly located in the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework and be consistent with the Subject Benchmark Statements.</li> <li>Where programmes are accredited by UK Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), their requirements and guidelines will be taken into account.</li> <li>Programmes offered outside the UK must also meet the academic standards of, and be aligned with, the qualifications frameworks and other educational requirements of the overseas countries within which the University operates. For example: the Knowledge and Human Development Agency in Dubai; the Malaysian Qualifications Agency and Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.</li> <li>The legal power of Heriot-Watt University as a UK degree-awarding body means that the institution is responsible for the academic standards of all credit and awards granted in its name. This responsibility is never delegated. For Approved Learning Partners and Articulations, Heriot-Watt University is the awarding body and is solely responsible for the academic standards of its awards. In the case of Joint Collaborative Partnerships, the University makes the award in conjunction with another Institution(s) (<i>COP Principle 3.1: Academic Standards in Partnership Programmes</i>). Refer to the mapping document to the 'Partnerships' theme.</li> <li>The University's Academic Approval process provides a framework within which courses and programmes are approved. The approval process is tailored to the perceived level of risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courses and minor modifications to existing programmes that are low risk and do not impact on the learning outcomes are approved at the School Studies Committee.</li> <li>New programmes and major modifications to existing programmes are escalated by the Schools Studies Committee to the University's Studies Committee for approval.</li> <li>The business cases for new partnerships or new disciplines, together with the necessary academic and business due diligence are scrutinised and approved at School level before going forward to a named Senior Officer or the University Executive for institutional approval.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Consideration and decision-making in relation to the sufficiency of learning and teaching resources, and local student support, takes place at the School level. All students have access to pastoral and academic support through Schools and the Professional Services (eg, Disability Services, Counselling, Academic Skills support etc). Refer to the mapping document to the <i>Enabling Student Achievement</i> theme.</li> <li>All Schools comply with the University's regulations when developing new programmes and modifying existing programmes. The design, development and approval of courses and programmes are underpinned and supported by University policies, processes and guidelines which are published on the web and disseminated to staff through School reporting and management structures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A four-part Global Code of Practice for the Management, Assurance and Enhancement of Taught Programmes for managing the University's provision delivered across various locations and by various modes. Part 2 of the GCOPM focuses on arrangements for the management of Programmes and Partnerships. (<i>Expectations and Principles were approved by UCQS in September 2019</i>).</li> <li><a href="#">Guidelines</a> on complying with SCQF.</li> <li>Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System (HAPS) to ensure consistency of assessment decision-making across all of the University's taught awards.</li> <li>A common Academic Management Structure for global management of Learning and Teaching is in place which ensures <i>engagement of staff at the appropriate stages who are able to access procedural documents and guidelines for approval procedures</i>. For example, Directors of Learning and Teaching and Directors of Academic Quality (who are members of UCLT and UCQS respectively) have a key role for ensuring awareness and engagement. Their responsibilities are clearly outlined with the Academic Management Structure document.</li> <li>University guidelines are in place for the approval of courses, programmes and disciplines. The procedures for approval were revised in view of the introduction of the Student Administration Service (SAS) system in May 2010. All proposals going to the appropriate Committee should now be routed through the Programme Approval Management System (PAMS).</li> <li>PAMS recognises the Global and Multi-campus deliveries and allows for flexibility of programmes and courses depending on the requirements of each campus</li> <li>Curriculum structure guidelines (and a series of toolkits for re-designing learning, teaching and assessment) which highlight mandatory components but allow an element of flexibility for implementation</li> <li>Curriculum structure toolkits for re-designing learning, teaching and assessment.</li> <li>Policy on Programme Titles, Learning Outcomes and Courses.</li> <li>Handbook of the University's Studies Committee</li> </ul> </li> <li>The membership of the School Studies Committees includes representation from all relevant disciplines and campuses. The membership of the University's Studies Committee includes representation from each School.</li> <li>Each School within the University has at least one contact staff member who has particular responsibilities for disability issues in their School. The Disability Advisors (within Wellbeing Services) liaise regularly with these staff members and also with Personal Tutors and lecturers, to co-ordinate support for all disabled students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Internal guidance and external reference points are used in course design, development and approval.</b></p> <p>The credibility of courses is anchored in recognised national</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expectations for the University's degrees are outlined within Part Two of the Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes. Principle 2.1 requires that the academic standards and the quality of learning of the University's programmes and awards, across all locations and modes, must meet the formal Expectations of the UK Quality Code and must be properly located in the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework and be consistent with the Subject Benchmark Statements. Additionally, all programmes must incorporate the core academic objectives of the University's Curriculum Structure Guidelines.</li> </ul>



<p>and European frameworks, applicable PSRB requirements and degree-level Apprenticeship Standards. These reference points help to maintain sector-recognised standards by offering consistency across the range of provision. Providers also develop and use internal guidance against which courses are designed, developed and approved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where programmes are accredited by UK Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), their requirements and guidelines will be taken into account.</li> <li>• A range of external expertise contributes to the design, development, delivery and review of the University's courses and programmes in various and multiple ways. Some practices are formalised, particularly processes at the University level, whilst others are common and standard practice embedded into routine daily activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ External Examiners and Chief External Examiners</li> <li>◦ Accrediting bodies such as PSRBs, MQA, KHDA</li> <li>◦ Employers; business; industry partners</li> <li>◦ Industrial Advisory Boards</li> <li>◦ Students (current and past)</li> <li>◦ Internal staff (external to the subject being approved/reviewed)</li> <li>◦ Professional Services staff and staff providing a student support role</li> <li>◦ Independent external consultants (specific example from Edinburgh Business School)</li> <li>◦ External reference points such as the SCQF Framework; QAA Benchmark Statements; QAA Quality Code; HWU academics acting as External Examiners at other HEIs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Programmes offered outside the UK must also meet the academic standards of, and be aligned with, the qualifications frameworks and other educational requirements of the overseas countries within which the University operates. For example: the Knowledge and Human Development Agency in Dubai; the Malaysian Qualifications Agency and Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.</li> <li>• Mandatory expectations in relation to course and programme design, are communicated through and guided by codes of practice, policies, procedures and guidance documents. A common Academic Management Structure for global management of Learning and Teaching is in place, applicable to all Schools across the five campuses. The model provides remits and responsibilities of key committees and roles within Schools (including those for the management, operation and development of programmes). The structure ensures engagement of staff at the appropriate stage, for example, Directors of Learning and Teaching and Directors of Academic Quality (who are members of UCLT and UCQS respectively) have a key role for ensuring awareness and engagement. Their responsibilities are clearly outlined with the Academic Management Structure document.</li> <li>• In addition to the University's Approval process, as part of the contract with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) for Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs), a validation event is required for each new GA programme which Heriot-Watt University has provided since September 2018.</li> <li>• The Academic Approval process is supported by Guidelines on the Approval of Disciplines, Programmes and Courses, which provides details of a systematic process for the approval of courses and programmes, progressing from the School level to the University level (ie Studies Committee). Compliance with mandatory requirements (internal and external) is assured by the Studies Committee, as part of the approval process. (<i>See Guiding Principle 2 above</i>).</li> <li>• There are clear Terms of Reference documents for the University's Studies Committee (<i>web</i>) and the School Studies Committee (<i>within the Academic Management Structure document</i>). Structures and responsibilities are also referenced within the four-part Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes.</li> <li>• Refer to the mapping to the External Expertise theme.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Feedback from internal and external stakeholders is used to inform course content.</b></p> <p>Continuous engagement with internal and external stakeholders such as students, academic colleagues from other providers, employers and professional bodies informs the design and development of courses, ensuring the continuing relevance of curricula, assessment methods and teaching approaches. Within their own context, a provider might consider how stakeholder input is gathered and integrated as part of the core process. The nature and extent of external input should be proportionate to the stage of the process, the decision being taken and the level of risk associated with the development.</p> <p>The membership of the University's Studies Committee (a sub-committee of the University Committee for Quality and Standards) includes student representation.</p>	<p>A range of external expertise contributes to the design, development, delivery and review of the University's courses and programmes in various and multiple ways. Some examples are provided below, and further information can be found in the External Expertise mapping document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Studies Committees comprise members from different disciplines, thereby bringing about an element of externality at the design/early approval stages. The membership of the University's Studies Committee includes academic staff from all Schools, and, in 2019 an external representative was appointed, to make contribution to the approval of new programmes and major modifications to existing programmes.</li> <li>• External examiners provide informal and formal feedback on programme quality, delivery, assessment etc. that feeds into the enhancement process. They are also crucial in benchmarking academic provision against expected UK standards. Also of importance is insight from HWU staff who act as External Examiners at other institutions, who gain useful knowledge of the operation of the discipline in other institutions.</li> <li>• The feedback from Industrial Partners for student placements informs the design and development of courses. Industrial Advisory Boards operate in Schools at the discipline level, advising the individual disciplines on their programme and courses on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies review and re-accredit on a generally 5 year timescale. In general this requires the provision of detailed information on the programmes to be (re-)accredited including full details on courses and assessments, project work etc., followed by a visit by a team from the PSRB to meet with various staff and student groups. Other professional accreditation bodies in general require reaccreditation every three years. This commonly involves provision of evidence that the syllabus and assessment methods remain comparable with the professional standards of the body. A formal part of Annual Monitoring and Review and Academic Review, is the reporting of PSRB accreditation outcomes occurring within the period under review.</li> <li>• Students are involved in monitoring and review activities at all levels (from course to University-level). Opportunities to engage in the monitoring and evaluation of their courses are provided through various mechanisms, such as surveys, student-staff committees and representative structures (Sabbatical Officers, School Officers and Class Representatives). In addition to providing feedback on their experience through the University's Academic Review process, student representatives contribute to the process as full members of a Review Team.</li> <li>• University practice is to seek student engagement in the major review of courses and programmes.</li> <li>• Student feedback results inform decisions about course and programme design/re-design, as well as the Annual Monitoring and Review process for which outcomes and actions are considered by University-level committees, informing policy review and development.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of the University's Student Representation System, School Officers are appointed within Schools. Students are members of School-level committees (ie School Studies Committee and School Learning and Teaching Committee) and are normally the School Officer. These committees consider, for example: future programme developments; policies, procedures and strategies; NSS results; Academic Review outcomes and action plans; Annual Monitoring and Review outcomes and action plans. The membership of the University's Studies Committee (a sub-committee of the University Committee for Quality and Standards) includes student representation. Sabbatical Officers represent the student body on University-level committees where strategic level discussions take place, and which influence the design and re-design of courses and programmes; for example, the University Committee for Learning and Teaching and the Student Learning Experience Committee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Development of staff, students and other participants enables effective engagement with the course design, development and approval processes.</b></p> <p>Providers determine the criteria which underpin effective course design within their organisational context, including how the criteria are reflected in the course. To achieve desired outcomes and to use collective expertise, providers should support those involved. Internal and external stakeholders require clear information and guidance, and those new to these processes will need appropriate support to facilitate their contribution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriately qualified staff are appointed through the University's formal recruitment process. An Induction Programme is available for all new staff. All probationary academic staff are assigned to a senior colleague as their Academic Mentor as per the Academic Probation Policy. Academic mentors provide new staff with support for the delivery of courses. Development needs will be identified as part of the probationary period and through the University's Performance and Development Review process.</li> <li>Development courses and events for staff at all campuses are delivered through the Organisational Development team within Human Resource Development Directorate. Staff across all campuses can access, via the Staff Portal, the LinkedIn Learning online resource for additional training and development. Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (within Information Services) supports the staff and student experience at Heriot Watt by encouraging the application of good learning and teaching practice. From September 2019 the newly launched Learning and Teaching Academy will be to provide the institutional focal point for identifying and sharing good practice in learning and teaching across all five campuses.</li> <li>The University's Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PGCiLT), which was revised in May 2018, takes into account the expectations of the UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Course Design and Development. Course design and evaluation of teaching are key elements of the new PGCiLT and are integrated into all courses within the programme. Components of the programme may be part of the probationary requirements for new academic staff. Other forms of academic development may be specified as part of the academic probationary period.</li> <li>A range of external expertise contributes to the design, development, delivery and review of the University's courses and programmes in various and multiple ways; examples of some which may be used are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher Education Academy</li> <li>Accreditation bodies/Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies</li> <li>External Examiners/Chief External Examiners</li> <li>Industrial Advisory Boards</li> <li>External Partners</li> <li>Industrial, commercial, social and public companies</li> <li>Schools/Colleges</li> <li>Students (current and past)</li> <li>Internal staff (external to the subject being approved/reviewed)</li> <li>Professional Services staff and staff providing a student support role</li> <li>Other HEIs/academics through the research community</li> <li>External reference points such as the SCQF Framework; QAA Benchmark Statements; QAA Quality Code; HWU academics acting as External Examiners at other HEIs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Curriculum Structure Guidelines and Toolkits provide guidance to staff for the design and development of courses. The guidelines provide full details of the core requirements of courses.</li> <li>An online and automated 'Programme Approvals Management System' was implemented in September 2015 and a new 'Global Curriculum Management System' is due to come into effect from September 2020. The University's Academic Approval process, which includes standard programme/course proformas and templates, are embedded in the Programme Approval Management System, which serves as guidance/training to staff involved in the design, development and approval stages of a course and programme. This encourages staff to consider all relevant aspects of course and programme design.</li> <li>An Academic Management Structure at multiple campuses is in place. Formal individual roles, as well as support and approval networks (at the programme, discipline and School levels) are in place for the design, development, approval and implementation of new courses and programmes.</li> <li>Schools are responsible for ensuring new academic staff are fully acquainted with courses and programmes; this includes the provision of the approved documentation that stipulates the aims, learning outcomes and syllabus courses and programmes.</li> <li>During the design, development and approval stages (at programme, discipline or School levels) collaboration may take place with Deans and Academic Registry with regard to development and approval processes.</li> <li>In relation to the University's Studies Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experienced School representatives are appointed as members and new members are supported by existing, with whom they are paired for scrutinising proposals.</li> <li>In January 2019, when the new single Studies Committee came into operation, new members were briefed by previous members, on the process for scrutinising proposals.</li> <li>Committee members are referred to the Guidelines on the Approval of Disciplines, Programmes and Courses and the relevant Committee Handbook (Studies Committee).</li> <li>In May 2014, the Senate approved the membership of external representatives onto three University Committees, including the Studies Committee, which have responsibility for approving programmes.</li> <li>External academic expertise, in relation to the design of specialist programmes may at times be requested by the Studies Committee. The Committee may recommend (and previously has), that a proposing School seeks advice/guidance from another School where specific expertise may reside.</li> <li>The Chair and Clerk of Studies Committees are available to provide advice and guidance on the development and approval of new programmes, specifically in the application of mandatory requirements.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Regular contact is maintained between Schools and the academic support infrastructure (such as Library and IT) to ensure appropriate support for course delivery.</li> <li>The Student Union provides training to School Officers and students who represent the student body on University Committees and Academic Review Teams.</li> </ul>

<p><b>6. Course design, development and approval processes result in definitive course documents.</b></p> <p>Approval processes should ensure that definitive course documentation is produced accurately and fairly describing the learning opportunities, intended student outcomes and support offered. Providers are responsible and accountable for the information they produce and for ensuring definitive course documentation remains current, transparent, focused on the intended audiences and complies with any external or legal requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the University's courses/programmes must sit within the SCQF framework, be consistent with the Subject Benchmark Statements, and adhere to the QAA Quality Code. Where programmes are accredited by UK Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), their requirements and guidelines will be taken into account. In addition, programmes offered outside the UK must also meet the academic standards of, and be aligned with, the qualifications frameworks and other educational requirements (as prescribed by the government accreditation authorities and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies) of the overseas countries within which the University operates.</li> <li>• An online and automated 'Programme Approvals Management System' (PAMS) was implemented in September 2015. PAMS has a single point of responsibility within the Registry Directorate to ensure that the process for design, development and approval is maintained. The University's Academic Approval process, which includes the standard programme/course proformas and templates, is embedded in the Programme Approval Management System ensuring that an accurate and complete record of the definitive programme and course documentation is maintained (including information about aims, learning outcomes, syllabus and assessment).</li> <li>• A new 'Global Curriculum Management System' is due to come into effect from September 2020.</li> <li>• The design, development and approval process to ensure transparency and currency is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ The programme leader is responsible for completing the standard programme/course proformas and templates for approval at School level</li> <li>◦ New and modified courses are formally approved in PAMS by the Schools</li> <li>◦ Minor programme modifications are formally approved by Schools and approved within the PAMS by the Registry Directorate.</li> <li>◦ Once programmes are approved at School level the programme proposals for major modifications/new programmes and withdrawals are elevated to the University's Studies Committee for consideration and approval.</li> <li>◦ Once all approvals, regulations and policies have been satisfied, the definitive programme documentation are formally approved within the Programme Approval Management System</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Once courses/programmes are formally confirmed as 'approved' within the Programme Approval Management Systems they are uploaded to the website and made available to staff, students and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Course design, development and approval processes are monitored, reviewed and enhanced.</b></p> <p>Providers ensure that course design, development and approval processes remain effective and continue to contribute to the enhancement of the provision offered (see also Monitoring and Evaluation Theme). In evaluating processes, providers may draw upon a wide range of evidence including feedback from academic staff, professional services, students and external stakeholders. There are also opportunities to identify and benchmark against sector best practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University's Academic Approval process incorporates the requirements of all major authorities, such as: QAA UK Quality Code; CMA; KHDA (Dubai); MQA (Malaysia); the University's own requirements.</li> <li>• Strategic principles for monitoring and evaluation are approved by primary committees of the University on behalf of the Senate. Activities are consistently applied and constantly monitored to ensure they are useful, timely and credible, and remain fit for purpose. Processes must remain effective so as to produce outcomes that the University can use to improve organisational planning, performance, enhancement and decision making. Monitoring and evaluation outcomes will be used to monitor the implementation of the University Strategy (2025), the Learning and Teaching Strategy (2018-2025) and the Research and Innovation Strategy.</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation processes operate at all levels (course, programme, discipline, School, University), engaging all staff at various stages of the processes. Routine and standard monitoring and review activities, undertaken at the course, programme and discipline levels, feed into higher-level formalised processes, such as Annual Monitoring and Review and Academic Review.</li> <li>• Feedback from a range of stakeholders contributes to the design, development, delivery and review of the University's courses and programmes in various and multiple ways (<i>see External Expertise mapping</i>). Those involved in the design, delivery and approval of courses and programmes are in constant contact with Academic Quality staff and the Dean of the University, who clerk/chair and manage the academic approval process. This allows the University to receive constant feedback on the effectiveness of the process and the extent to which course design and development processes meet their requirements.</li> <li>• The University monitors student survey data and a series of institutional Key Performance Indicators to measure student performance and progress towards the University's strategic objectives. Examination Boards consider student performance and will consider, and make recommendations in relation to, unusual course results. (<i>See Monitoring and Evaluation mapping</i>).</li> <li>• Feedback from a wide range of stakeholders is used to inform monitoring and evaluation processes, such as: students, staff, PSRBs, External Examiners, employers, industry, external partners, etc. The Planning Office is responsible for the compilation and analysis of statistical data relating to learning and teaching and the student learning experience (including key performance indicators). The Planning Office provides Schools with the data they require to undertake relevant and timely analysis, for improving course design, learning and decision-making. Close liaison with Schools and Academic Registry takes place to ensure data collected, analysed and distributed is accurate, relevant, credible valid, reliable and timely.</li> <li>• All programmes are reviewed through the University's Annual Monitoring and Review process, and on a five-year basis through the Academic Review process. Outcomes from AMR and Academic review will at times result in changes on how the School conducts its learning and teaching and what degree programmes it continues to offer. As part of this process consultation with the student body will take place. AMR and Academic Review outcomes will be used to monitor the implementation of the University Strategy (2025), the Learning and Teaching Strategy (2018-2025) and the Research and Innovation Strategy.</li> <li>• Students are involved in monitoring and review activities at all levels (from course to University-level). Opportunities to engage in the monitoring and evaluation of their courses are provided through various mechanisms, such as surveys, student-staff committees and representative structures (Sabbatical Officers, School Officers and Class Representatives) and Academic Review. Outcomes and impact upon operational and strategic developments are considered at various forums and committees, providing opportunities to disseminate good practice and enhancement of the process. Consequently, the processes will be revised to address any issues raised or to implement improvements.</li> <li>• The student body is represented on School and University committees where strategic level discussions take place, and which influence the design and re-design of courses and programmes; for example, the School Studies Committee, the University Committee for Learning and Teaching and the Student Learning Experience Committee.</li> <li>• Where programmes are delivered through, or in collaboration with, partner institutions, monitoring and review responsibilities are outlined within the partnership contract. The Annual Monitoring and Review process incorporates a Partner Annual Monitoring and Review element, which requires the collaborative production of annual reports and action plans by the School and the partner institution.</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual review processes have been enhanced with more external benchmarking data on programme recruitment performance in relation to competitors, as well as holistic review of all key performance indicators including DLHE and NSS outcomes. Employer skills and job needs are also considered in detail through use of bespoke data tools.</li> <li>• Since the implementation of the Programme Approval Management System in 2015 the University have continued to ensure that the system is fit for purpose and made revisions and updates to the system in October 2018. A new 'Global Curriculum Management System' is due to come into effect from September 2020 and the development will include consultation with relevant stakeholders including School and University's Studies Committee members.</li> <li>• The University benchmarks its processes against those in place at other HEIs, for example, in 2017 a small team from Academic Quality visited St Andrews University to see how they automated the approval of their programmes and courses.</li> <li>• Refer to the mapping for the Monitoring and Evaluation theme</li> </ul> |
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30 January 2020