

# UCL Academic Manual 2021-22

## Chapter 7: Programme and Module Approval and Amendment Framework

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Chapter 7 is UCL's regulatory framework for the approval, amendment, and suspension/withdrawal of taught academic programmes and modules including taught elements of research degrees. Approval of research degrees is covered in part 9.

Queries about any part of this chapter should be directed to the Senior Policy Advisor (Programme Approval) at [acadserv.pmap@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:acadserv.pmap@ucl.ac.uk)

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# 1 Introduction

1. University College London (UCL) must operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes of study in order to discharge fully its responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities.
2. Queries about any part of this chapter should be directed to the Senior Policy Advisor (Programme Approval) at [acadserv.pmap@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:acadserv.pmap@ucl.ac.uk).

## 1.1 Purposes

1. The main purposes of this chapter are to ensure that:
  - a) Threshold academic standards are met through the approval and amendment processes;
  - b) The appropriate quality of student learning opportunities are available for all taught provision;
  - c) The information provided to students about their studies is complete with regard to programme structure and learning outcomes;
  - d) The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards;
  - e) Due account is taken of internal and external reference points in the approval and amendment processes;
  - f) Robust procedures are followed when modules or programmes are suspended or withdrawn;
  - g) All new taught provision is viable financially, and in terms of student recruitment.

## 1.2 Reference Points

1. This chapter is drafted with reference to [the UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).
2. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the rest of the Academic Manual, in particular:
  - a) Chapter 1: Student Recruitment and Admissions
  - b) Chapter 2: Qualifications and Credit Framework
  - c) Chapter 3: Registration Framework for Taught Programmes
  - d) Chapter 4: Assessment Framework for Taught Programmes
  - e) Chapter 5: Research Degrees Framework
  - f) Chapter 8: Academic Partnerships Framework
3. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the Education Planning pages of the [UCL Teaching and Learning portal](#).
4. The strategic context for taught provision can be found in the following documents:
  - a) [UCL 2034](#)
  - b) [Education Strategy 2016-21](#)
  - c) [Connected Curriculum](#)

## 1.3 Terminology

1. Key to abbreviations:

DTC	Departmental Teaching Committee
FHEQ	The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
PMAP	Programme and Module Approval Panel
PSRB	Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency

2. Throughout this chapter, the term 'Department' is used to refer to relevant units below the Faculty level (e.g. Institute or Division).

## 2 Approval of New Taught Programmes

1. New taught programmes are approved by the UCL Education Committee under powers delegated from the UCL Academic Board. The Education Committee is advised by the Programme and Module Approval Panels (PMAP).
2. Programme approval takes place in two stages: Outline Approval, which is granted by the relevant Faculty Teaching Committee; Final Approval, which is granted by the Education Committee.
3. Faculties and Departments may adopt local practices in addition to those outlined below, such as the involvement of additional committees or the Vice-Dean(s) Education. However, PMAP will continue to require sign-off from the named individuals and groups listed in the Programme Proposal form.

### 2.1 Timelines for the Approval of Taught Programmes

1. For marketing of programmes to be given the best opportunity to attract the highest quality students, for programmes to be included in the prospectus, and for UCL to uphold its responsibilities with respect to consumer protection legislation, the following deadlines are essential:
  - a) For undergraduate programmes:

Final Approval should be achieved not later than November of the calendar year two years prior to the intended start of a programme (22 months in advance of a September start).
  - b) For postgraduate programmes:

Final Approval should be achieved not later than the end of June in the year prior to the intended start of a programme (15 months in advance of a September start).
2. Where it has not been possible to meet the deadlines outlined above, final approval must be achieved not later than the end of September in the year prior to the intended start of a programme (12 months in advance of a September start).
3. While these are the very latest deadlines, programme initiators should be encouraged to begin work on programme development and Outline Approval much earlier to give sufficient time for: effective competition/market appraisal (both within and outside of UCL); development and approval of the business case; obtaining Faculty approval. Programme initiators should aspire to the timelines outlined in Annex 7.1.1: Detailed timelines for Programme Approval and Amendment.
4. Programme initiators should note that in order to be considered at a PMAP meeting, new programme proposals at Outline Approval Stage must be submitted no less than 10 working days in advance of a meeting. Submissions received later than 10 working days in advance of a meeting will be considered at a subsequent meeting of the Panel. A comprehensive list of the dates on which PMAP will meet in 2021-22, as well as the corresponding paper deadlines, can be found in Annex 7.1.2: PMAP 2021-22: Meeting Dates and Paper Deadlines.

### 2.2 Initial Programme Development

1. The intention to develop a new programme should be reflected in the relevant department's strategic plan and should be included in the Faculty's strategic operating plan. This ensures that any projected increase in student numbers and/or required funding for staffing and learning resources is anticipated.
2. Programme initiators must consider how their programme contributes to the achievement of UCL's strategic aims and objectives as detailed in: UCL 2034; the Education Strategy 2016-21

and the Global Engagement Strategy as well as considering how the programme will embed equality, diversity and inclusion.

3. A programme proposal is usually initiated and developed at department level, in close consultation with relevant members of staff in the Faculty (usually the Faculty Tutor). Programme initiators should consult with the following relevant parties or documents when developing their programme proposal:
  - Head of Department;
  - Faculty Dean (or nominee such as Vice Dean Education);
  - Faculty Tutor;
  - Faculty Head of Marketing and Communications;
  - Departmental colleagues and colleagues in other cognate disciplines;
  - Current or former students studying in cognate areas;
  - School Finance Director;
  - UCL Planning team;
  - UCL Estates team;
  - Communication and Marketing (CAM) colleagues;
  - UCL Arena Centre – for advice on learning, teaching and assessment practice;
  - Library Services;
  - Digital Education;
  - Study Abroad Office and Visa Compliance team - for programmes with an optional or compulsory period of study abroad;
  - Placement Information Pack for programmes that include an optional or compulsory period of placement (For further information on the pack, please refer to Chapter 8 of the 2021-22 UCL Academic Manual);
  - Academic Partnerships Review Group (APRG) – for programmes that will be delivered in partnership with others;
  - UCL Apprenticeships Steering Group – for Level 7 / Masters apprenticeship programmes. (For further information on Level 7 / Masters apprenticeships, please refer to Chapter 11 of the 2021-22 UCL Academic Manual);
  - Communications and Marketing (CAM), including Department and Faculty level colleagues;
  - External colleagues and members of industry;
  - Any professional, statutory or regulatory bodies;
  - The UK Quality Code for Higher Education, developed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education;
  - The Office for Students (OfS) advice and guidance;
  - Other relevant central services (such as Academic Services).

## 2.2.1 Programme Structure

1. Information on the level, structure and components of a programme of study, as well as a list of the approved qualifications, and their threshold requirements, can be found in [Chapter 2, Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).
2. Information on programme length and modes of attendance can be found in [Chapter 3, Registration Framework for Taught programmes](#).
3. Assessment, progression, award and classification should follow the regulations set out in [Chapter 4, Assessment Framework for Taught Programmes](#).
4. Where a programme is made up of multiple routes or pathways leading to different named qualifications, the programme diet and statements of aims and learning outcomes must be clear for each.

5. Interim qualifications are available for all UCL programmes. It is possible to offer these interim qualifications as programmes of study, either connected to a larger award or as standalone programmes. In such cases, a programme summary must be maintained for each programme.

## 2.2.2 Material Programme Information

1. During the development stage, programme initiators should be mindful of the need to provide clear, accessible and accurate information to prospective and current students on the purpose, structure and aims of their programme.
2. Additionally, UCL is obliged, under the Quality Code and under consumer protection legislation, to provide clear and accurate information to prospective students and offer holders. Therefore, programme initiators must identify the following when designing a new programme:
  - a) the level of the programme within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications;
  - b) the intended qualification and any interim qualifications;
  - c) the programme title;
  - d) the overall credit value;
  - e) the programme's aims, objectives and learning outcomes (with reference to relevant subject benchmark statements);
  - f) the entry requirements (both academic and non-academic);
  - g) the programme's structure, including the number and type of contact hours, any compulsory modules, an indication of likely optional modules and the expected workload;
  - h) the overall methods of assessment (both formative and summative);
  - i) the duration of the programme and its modes of study;
  - j) the location(s) of study, including where relevant, any distance learning;
  - k) whether the programme could be accredited by a PSRB;
  - l) whether the programme will be offered in partnership with others;
  - m) whether the programme will have a period in placement or study abroad;
  - n) an initial assessment of the tuition fees to be charged (in consultation with the Dean or nominee);
  - o) any additional costs to students (such as field trips or material costs);
  - p) any barriers to accessibility and how these could be mitigated.
3. The required documents for programme proposals provide space for the programme initiator to record this information.

## 2.2.3 Business Plan and Market Research

1. As detailed in 2.2 Initial Programme Development Section 3, all programme proposals must be accompanied by the PGT business plan template, detailing the anticipated student numbers, the expected income and any additional staffing, learning resources or other additional costs that may be incurred. This business plan must be discussed with and signed off by the Head of Department, Dean of Faculty and School Finance Director. The PGT business plan template can be found in the [Annex 7.2.1](#).
2. All programme proposals must be accompanied by evidence of market research. The completion of the Market Research Question Set provided by CAM (in [Annex 7.2.2](#)) leads to a structured discussion with the CAM Business Partner and Faculty Head of Marketing and Communications on new programme rationale, evidence of demand, competition, proposed content, and graduate outcomes, with a series of recommended actions identified and agreed by the CAM Business Partner.
3. PGT programme proposals must complete a template business plan and market research prior to developing the programme. PGT programmes that cannot demonstrate financial viability and marketability will not be considered for outline approval.

## 2.2.4 Programme Development with the UCL Arena Centre

1. Programme initiators for all taught programmes must contact the UCL Arena Centre to discuss their programme proposal, in accordance with the timelines provided in [Annex 7.1.1](#).
2. Initiators are strongly encouraged to attend a programme development workshop through UCL Arena Centre. This workshop, developed with input from CAM and Careers, will support programme initiators in the preparation of programme approval documentation.
3. Programme initiators should not enrol on the workshop until the Business case and market research have been signed off.
4. Programme initiators can find further information at [Annex 7.2.3](#) and should take account of the UCL Assessment Load Model which can be found at the Education Planning pages of the [UCL Teaching and Learning portal](#).

## 2.3 Outline Approval

1. Outline approval is confirmed at Faculty level and requires sign off from the Head of Department; DTC Chair; Dean of Faculty; School Finance Director and FTC Chair. In order to confirm outline approval, reviewers must satisfy themselves that:
  - a) The proposal is included in and/or is in line with department and faculty level strategic operating plans;
  - b) The business case is appropriate, is backed by reliable market research and has accounted for all associated costs;
  - c) The proposed programme will not directly compete with other programmes of study operating in the Faculty or elsewhere in UCL;
  - d) The programme initiator(s) have sought or are in the process of seeking advice and guidance from relevant professional services teams or academic colleagues;
  - e) That the proposed curriculum is current, appropriate for the level of study and is in line with the relevant subject benchmark statements;
  - f) The constituent modules are suitable for the programme, the assessment is appropriately balanced across the modules and any new modules have been reviewed by an external scrutineer;
  - g) The proposed programme of study is in line with relevant UCL strategies, such as UCL 2034, the Education Strategy 2016-21 and the Global Engagement Strategy;
  - h) If the proposed programme constitutes additional growth in student numbers, there is sufficient space, staffing and resource to accommodate this and that comments from UCL Estates have been taken into account;
  - i) Proposals to make use of modules from other programmes of study, departments or faculties have been discussed and agreed with the relevant Head(s) of Departments and Faculty Tutor(s).
  - j) Programme proposers for all taught programme proposals have discussed the proposal with the UCL Arena Centre and, where advised, attended a workshop through the Arena Centre on programme development.
2. In addition, reviewers must not approve proposals until all paperwork has been correctly completed. This includes ensuring that:
  - a) All documents have been signed in the appropriate place by the named role holder or approved delegate. This is crucial for audit purposes;
  - b) All document fields have been completed with the appropriate information, including where relevant, an indication that the field is not applicable;
  - c) The documents contain no errors or typos;
  - d) All information is presented in a clear and accessible format. This is particularly important when describing the programme structure or the assessment format.



3. Once satisfied, reviewers should provide feedback to the programme initiator on further developments that could be made to the proposal, in preparation for the submission of the programme proposal for consideration by PMAP.
4. PGT programmes that do not get financial viability and marketability approval will not be considered by PMAP for outline approval.

## 2.3.1 Information and Documentation Required

1. A summary of the minimum information and corresponding documentary evidence required for outline programme approval, is provided below:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Information required</b>	<b>Corresponding documentary evidence</b>
<b>Named Roles</b>	Initiator, programme lead, external scrutineer (if known), other nominees	Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)
<b>Structure</b>	Proposed start date  Location(s), level(s), mode(s) of study  Qualification title(s) and interim qualification(s), including proposed routes/pathways  Any programme specific entry requirements  New modules proposed and an indicative list of any existing modules	Draft programme summary (Annex 7.2.5)  Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)
<b>Description</b>	Programme Description (c. 500 words)  Strategic fit (with UCL 2034, Education Strategy, Faculty and Department strategies, Connected Curriculum; c. 250 words). Comment / Endorsement from UCL Planning team	Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)
<b>Internal Partnerships</b>	Description of intent to make use of existing modules, and other internal partnerships.	Evidence of approaches made to departments for any anticipated module or staff sharing. (This will usually take the form of email correspondence)

Category	Information required	Corresponding documentary evidence
<p><b>External Partnerships (essential if any partnership activity envisaged)</b></p>	<p>Name of the proposed academic partner.</p> <p>Evidence of approaches to the academic partner.</p> <p>Description of any year abroad or placement year, including how it will be organised and assessed.</p> <p>Description of any Level 7 / Masters Apprenticeship programme, including how it will be organised, managed and assessed.</p>	<p>Draft Academic Partnership Proposal Form (for APRG). (For further information, refer to Chapter 8 of the 2021-22 UCL Academic Manual)</p> <p>Evidence of discussion with Senior Policy Advisor (Academic Partnerships) (For further information, refer to Chapter 8 of the 2021-22 UCL Academic Manual)</p> <p>Evidence of engagement with Placements Information Pack (for placements). (For further information, refer to Chapter 8 of the 2021-22 UCL Academic Manual)</p> <p>Evidence of discussion with UCL's Study Abroad Team (Annex 7.2.9 UG Affiliate / Study Abroad Programme checklist)</p> <p>Evidence of discussion with, and endorsement from, the UCL Apprenticeships Steering Group. Completion of the Level 7 / Masters Apprenticeship Feasibility Form (Annex 7.2.10)</p>
<p><b>Business case</b></p>	<p>Market research</p> <p>Programme income and expenditure, including fee levels</p> <p>Student number projections</p> <p>Comment / Endorsement from UCL Estates and Planning teams</p>	<p>UCL CAM Market Research question set (Annex 7.2.2) and/or additional external market research, HESA market overview, or surveys.</p> <p>Completed and signed business case template. (Annex 7.2.1)</p> <p>Programme Proposal Form. (Annex 7.2.4)</p>

Category	Information required	Corresponding documentary evidence
<b>Externality</b>	Statement on externality to date, and proposed externality in future development	Where relevant, evidence of discussion or engagement with external bodies or PSRBs.
<b>Sign-off</b>	DTC; Head of Department; Faculty Dean; FTC; School Finance Director. With recommendations as appropriate	Programme Proposal Form. (Annex 7.2.4)

## 2.3.2 Outline Approval Process

1. Once approved by the Faculty, programme proposals must be submitted to the PMAP Secretary by the Faculty Tutor. These proposals are circulated to members of the Education Committee and relevant professional services teams and are considered at the next PMAP meeting.
2. PMAP formally considers the programme proposal at this stage.
3. Once granted, outline programme approval status is valid for 24 months. If the final programme proposal is not approved within this 24 month period, a new programme proposal must be submitted.
4. Once outline approval is considered at a PMAP meeting, programmes may be advertised on departmental websites in the following format:
  - a) Programme title and intended qualification;
  - b) Anticipated start date;
  - c) A brief description of the programme content and structure omitting references to particular modules or credit values;
  - d) The following disclaimer:  
Please note that this programme is still subject to final approval. As such, the content and structure of the programme is subject to change and may differ from the outline given here. As soon as the programme has been approved it will be advertised in its finalised form and applications will be taken on this basis. If you'd like to be notified when this programme has been approved and applications are open, please email [relevant departmental contact].
5. Once outline approval is given, the relevant team in Academic Services will complete the initial set-up the programme in the student information system and confirm with the department, faculty and relevant professional services teams when this has been done. They will then carry out the relevant tasks in their respective areas.

## 2.4 Final Approval

1. Final approval is confirmed by Education Committee and requires sign off from the Head of Department; DTC Chair; Dean of Faculty; FTC Chair and PMAP. To confirm final approval, reviewers at Faculty level must satisfy themselves that the criteria required for outline approval are still met. In addition, PMAP must satisfy itself that:
  - a) The proposed programme of study is in line with relevant UCL strategies, such as UCL 2034, the Education Strategy 2016-21 and the Global Engagement Strategy;

- b) The business case is appropriate, is backed by reliable market research and has accounted for all associated costs;
  - c) The proposed programme will not directly compete with existing programmes of study in other departments or faculties;
  - d) The programme initiator(s) have consulted widely with colleagues from cognate departments to identify possibilities for module or resource sharing and that there is evidence of any agreements made;
  - e) The programme initiator(s) have responded to the feedback provided at outline approval stage and made developments or amendments where appropriate;
  - f) The proposed programme of study is in line with UCL's regulations, particularly the Qualifications and Credit Framework, the Assessment Framework for Taught Programmes and the Registration Framework for Taught Programmes;
  - g) The proposed programme of study is in line with relevant external benchmarks, such as the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications;
  - h) That the material programme information (as outlined in the programme summary) is clear and easy to understand;
  - i) The programme initiator(s) have discussed the proposal with current or prospective students and acted on their feedback;
  - j) The proposal has been reviewed by an appropriately qualified external scrutineer;
  - k) Agreements are in place for any proposed external partnerships.
2. Once approved by PMAP, a programme will normally begin admitting students. As such, PMAP must assure itself that the programme will not pose a risk to standards, the student experience or UCL's reputation.

## 2.4.1 Information and Documentation Required

1. A 'Response to PMAP' document will need to be completed and submitted with the final submission to PMAP, detailing how and where in the documentation previous issues raised by the Panel have been addressed. This document is issued to the initiator(s), by the Secretary to PMAP, once outline approval has been considered by PMAP.
2. A summary of the minimum information and corresponding documentary evidence, required for final programme approval is provided below:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Information required</b>	<b>Corresponding documentary evidence</b>
<b>Named Roles</b>	Initiator, programme director, External Scrutineer, other nominees	Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)
<b>Material programme information</b>	As outlined in section 2.2.2	Approved programme summary (Annex 7.2.5)  Module proposal forms (for all new modules) (Annex 7.3.1)  Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)

<b>Category</b>	<b>Information required</b>	<b>Corresponding documentary evidence</b>
<b>Description</b>	<p>Programme Description (c. 1,000 words)</p> <p>Strategic fit (with UCL 2034, Education Strategy, Faculty and Department strategies, Connected Curriculum; c. 500 words)</p> <p>Confirmation of enclosures and processes completed with detail of changes made following Outline Programme Approval</p>	<p>Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)</p> <p>'Response to PMAP' document</p>
<b>Internal Partnerships</b>	<p>Confirmation of approval to make use of existing modules, and other internal partnerships</p>	<p>A signed statement confirming that the relevant Head(s) of Department(s) agree to proposed module or staff sharing. (This will usually take the form of email correspondence)</p>
<b>External Partnerships (essential if any partnership activity envisaged)</b>	<p>Confirmation of APRG approval (to be granted in advance of programme approval)</p>	<p>Draft Memorandum of Agreement with partner. (For further information, refer to Chapter 8 of the 2021-22 UCL Academic Manual)</p>
<b>Business case</b>	<p>Note on updates following Outline Approval, if appropriate</p> <p>Additional details in cases of variation from Outline Approval stage for Dean's consideration</p>	<p>Updated and signed business case template. (Annex 7.2.1)</p> <p>Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)</p>
<b>Externality</b>	<p>Statement on externality used in development</p> <p>External Scrutineer's review and response (where relevant)</p> <p>Note on engagement with Subject Benchmark Statements, Qualification Characteristics</p>	<p>Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)</p> <p>Completed External Scrutineer's Report (Annex 7.2.7)</p> <p>Evidence of External Scrutineer's suitability (if not external examiner) such as academic CV.</p>

Category	Information required	Corresponding documentary evidence
		(Annex 7.2.8)  PSRB report (if appropriate)
<b>Sign-off</b>	Department TC; Head of Department; Faculty Dean; Faculty TC; PMAP; Education Committee	Programme Proposal Form (Annex 7.2.4)

## 2.4.2 Final Approval Process

1. Once approved, the relevant team in Academic Services will finalise the set up of the programme in the student record system and confirm with the department, faculty and relevant professional services teams when this has been done. They will then carry out the relevant tasks in their respective areas.
2. Once the programme has been set up, it will usually open for applications at the earliest opportunity. There may be occasions where this has to be delayed, for example, to await a signed memorandum of agreement.

## 2.4.3 Probationary Review Following Final Approval

1. New taught programmes will be reviewed after the first two years that the programme runs. If the programme is not on course to meet targets after two admission cycles, the programme team should consider action that might need to be taken in respect of programme design or marketing. After three admission cycles, Planning will review the programme against the business plan to ensure that it is viable as demonstrated in the business plan. Probationary Review can be found in [Annex 7.2.11](#).

# 3 Approval of New Modules

1. New modules require approval by Faculty Teaching Committee following endorsement by the Department.
2. New module proposals must be reviewed by a suitably qualified external scrutineer (usually an external examiner).
3. New module proposals must be completed and submitted using a Module Proposal Form (Annex 7.3.1).
4. Introducing a new module may also mean a change to a programme requiring a Programme Amendment form. In this case, the procedure and deadlines set out for programme amendment should take precedence. For more information see Chapter 7, Section 4: Programme Amendment.
5. All new modules for the forthcoming academic year (2022-23), must be submitted for approval by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

# 4 Programme Amendment

## 4.1 Principles of Programme Amendment

1. UCL has an obligation to provide clear, accurate and timely information to prospective students, applicants, offer holders and current students.
2. UCL also promotes the importance of offering an adaptive, research led curriculum in preparing its students to contribute to and participate fully in the private, academic and wider public arena.
3. As such, the principle regarding amendments to any part of a programme is that changes should be approved prior to the opening of a new application cycle and should apply to the next new cohort of students registered on the programme for the forthcoming academic year.
4. Where it is necessary to make a programme amendment after applications have opened, UCL has obligations to its applicants, offer holders and current students.
5. If a programme has already received applications, the applicants must be informed of any amendment that has been approved, the rationale for the amendment, and the process by which they can transfer or terminate their application if they so wish.
6. If UCL has already issued offers of admission to a programme, the offer holders must be consulted on the proposed change, informed of the rationale, notified of the outcome and assisted with transferring or terminating their application if they so wish.
7. Where it is intended for the programme amendment to affect current students or students that have met the requirements of an accepted offer, these students must be consulted and give their agreement to the amendments. The amendment cannot be approved without this agreement.
8. Where an amendment to a current programme is necessary due to circumstances outside of UCL's control, such as the sudden loss of a member of academic staff or the outcome of a PSRB visit, the programme amendment must be approved by Education Committee's nominee.
9. Amendments to individual modules are covered in [Chapter 7, Section 5: Module Amendment](#). Amendments to modules that are compulsory for a programme of study will trigger the programme amendment process where individually, or in combination with changes to other modules, they represent a programme amendment as defined below.
10. If it is proposed to amend a module delivered in conjunction with a UCL Academic Partner, UCL's Senior Policy Advisor (Academic Partnerships) should be consulted in the first instance.
11. Consideration should also be given to ensuring that any conditions of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies are satisfied upon amendment.
12. Amendments cannot be made to programme codes assigned by Academic Services.
13. The addition or removal of existing optional/elective modules can be undertaken through the Curriculum Data Management (CDM) process where programme diets are updated. It does not require the completion of a Programme Amendment Form but use of optional/elective modules outside of the programme's lead department must be agreed with the relevant teaching department. Evidence of this agreement should be retained.
14. Where it is intended for a programme amendment, such as a change in title, to apply to a programme that recruits both to the full qualification and its associated interim qualifications, this must be clearly stated, and a new programme summary provided for each qualification.
15. Information on programme length and modes of attendance can be found in [Chapter 3, Registration Framework for Taught Programmes](#).
16. All programme amendments for the forthcoming academic year (2022-23), must be submitted for approval by 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021.



17. All programme amendments for the academic year 2023-24 should be submitted for approval by the end of Term 3 2021-22.

## 4.2 Programme Amendment Classifications

1. Programme amendments are split into three different classifications – major, moderate and minor. The level of authority required for each classification is different, as is the process which must be followed, but all programme amendments must be requested on a Programme Amendment Form. From September 2021, the Programme Amendment Form must be completed on Portico and can be accessed via the Programmes’ task within the Curricular Management menu. It will only be visible to staff with the appropriate rights. Major and moderate amendments must be reviewed by an external scrutineer, and all must be approved by the Head of Department and the Faculty.
2. This system is in place to safeguard the academic standards of qualifications, to ensure that there is appropriate information sharing between faculties, and to ensure that the incremental and cumulative change to programmes is monitored and recorded.
3. An indicative list of the types of programme amendments that can be requested and their corresponding classification, can be found in the table below:

<b>Major Amendments</b>	1.	Addition, amendment or removal of a third or more of the programme’s compulsory module credit
	2.	Addition of non-condonable modules or making existing modules non-condonable
	3.	Change to the intended qualification and/or FHEQ level e.g. MSc, PG Dip, BA
	4.	Change to the credit value of the programme
	5.	Amendment to the programme’s entry requirements, if outside UCL’s standard entry requirements, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English language requirement;</li> <li>Specific academic requirements, such as subject/qualification requirements, or other discrete competencies;</li> <li>Specific PSRB requirements/registration/loss of accreditation;</li> <li>Required DBS level.</li> </ol>
<b>Moderate Amendments</b>	6.	Change of programme title
	7.	Addition or removal of routes or pathways within a programme
	8.	Change to the advertised duration and/or addition of a placement or period of study abroad <sup>1</sup>
	9.	Change to the location(s) of study, e.g. campus-based/mixed-mode or change of main teaching campus
	10.	Converting interim qualifications into stand-alone programmes of study
	11.	Temporarily suspending recruitment to a programme of study (or one of its named routes)
	12.	Change to the programme’s Progression and Award Rules
	13.	Other changes to the programme at the discretion of the Faculty Tutor

<sup>1</sup> For placements, please refer to the Placement Pack in Chapter 8 of the UCL Academic Manual and submit completed paperwork alongside the Programme Amendment Form.

For Study Abroad, please submit the UG Affiliate / Study Abroad programme checklist ([Annex 7.2.9](#)) alongside the Programme Amendment Form.

<b>Minor Amendments</b>	14.	Addition, amendment or removal of under a third of the programme's compulsory module credit
	15.	Removal or addition of classifiable interim or alternative qualification(s)
	16.	Removal or addition of a new mode of study e.g. part-time or flexible/modular
	17.	Amendment to the programme's entry requirements, if within UCL's standard entry requirements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) English language requirement</li> <li>b) Specific academic requirements, such as subject/qualification requirements, or other discrete competencies;</li> <li>c) Specific PSRB requirements/registration/loss of accreditation;</li> <li>d) Required DBS level</li> </ul>
	18.	Change to or addition of a point of entry
	19.	Amendment to the programme's PSRB accreditation status, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) New PSRB accreditation application;</li> <li>b) Recognition/loss or non-renewal of an existing PSRB accreditation;</li> <li>c) Recognition/change to an existing PSRB accreditation or recognition status.</li> </ul>

4. Major programme amendments must be authorised by the Head of Department and the Faculty, they must be scrutinised by a suitably qualified external scrutineer and they must be submitted via Portico for final approval. This to ensure that academic standards are maintained and incremental or cumulative changes to programmes are recorded.
5. Moderate programme amendments must be authorised by the Head of Department and the Faculty, they must be scrutinised by a suitably qualified external scrutineer and they must be submitted via Portico for information. This is to ensure that any changes are recorded centrally and circulated to other faculties and relevant professional services departments.
6. The Chair of PMAP can nominate a moderate programme amendment for additional scrutiny by PMAP where they feel that the cumulative impact of the amendment warrants it.
7. Minor programme amendments must be authorised by the Head of Department and the Faculty and submitted via Portico. This is to ensure that any amendments to programmes can be recorded in the student information system and circulated to relevant professional services departments.

# 5 Module Amendment

1. The principle regarding amendments to any part of a module is that changes will apply to the next delivery of the module after the change has been approved.
2. Formal processes for module amendment are required to ensure that proposed changes are subject to scrutiny, and that where changes to modules have a significant impact upon the programmes to which they contribute, the appropriate programme amendment process is triggered.
3. If it is proposed to amend a module delivered in conjunction with a UCL Academic Partner, UCL's Senior Policy Advisor (Academic Partnerships) should be consulted in the first instance.

## 5.1 Amendments to Compulsory Modules

1. If the module is, or is intended to become, a compulsory part of one or more programmes, then that could trigger programme amendment and require a Programme Amendment Form. In this case, consideration must be given to whether the change of one or more modules represents a major, moderate or minor programme-level amendment as defined in 4.2 above, and the associated action taken.
2. Additionally, changes to some aspects of modules, particularly compulsory modules, may result in the need to inform applicants and consult with offer holders and/or current students, in line with UCL's obligations under consumer protection legislation. For further information see Chapter 7, Section 4.1: Principles of Programme Amendment.

## 5.2 Module Amendment Classification

1. UCL's module amendment process is differentiated so that changes deemed major are subject to additional external scrutiny: this system is in place to safeguard the academic standards of qualifications and to ensure that modules cannot drift incrementally from their original approved state without appropriate external validation.
2. Consideration should also be given to ensuring that any conditions of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies are satisfied upon amendment.
3. Amendments cannot be made to module codes assigned by Academic Services.

### **Major amendments**

4. Major amendments require the completion of a Module Amendment Form (Annex 7.5.1). They must also have external scrutiny and Department and Faculty approval. The following changes are classified as Major:
  - a) Changes to the credit value of the module;
  - b) Changes which affect one third or more of the intended learning outcomes;
  - c) Every third minor amendment following the last major amendment;
  - d) Any amendment that triggers a programme amendment.

### **Minor amendments**

5. Minor amendments require the completion of a Module Amendment Form (Annex 7.5.1) and Department and Faculty approval. They do not require external scrutiny. The following changes are classified as Minor:
  - a) Changes to the weighting of assessment;
  - b) Changes of assessment methods/criteria;
  - c) Changes which affect under one third of the intended learning outcomes;

- d) Balance of learning activities;
  - e) Change of module title;
  - f) Change of teaching department;
  - g) Introduction of an alternative mode of delivery, e.g. different FHEQ level or different assessment pattern for affiliate students;
  - h) Other changes at the discretion of the Faculty Tutor
6. All module amendments for the forthcoming academic year (2022-23) must be submitted to the Student Lifecycle Team (via the Programme and Module Hub on the Student Records and Faculty MS Team) by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

## 6 Programme / Route Suspension or Withdrawal

1. Any suspension or withdrawal of a programme (or one of its named routes) must be undertaken in such a manner that the interests of current students, and students who have applied to the programme, are fully protected, ensuring UCL meets its obligations under consumer protection legislation, as outlined in the advice provided by the Competition and Markets Authority (Annex 7.1.3). Advice should be sought from the relevant Faculty Tutor as early as possible to ensure that the appropriate procedures are followed.

### 6.1 Suspending a Programme / Route

1. Suspension of a programme of study (or one of its named routes) is a moderate programme amendment. Programme leads that want to suspend a programme/route should follow the procedure outlined in Chapter 7, Section 4: Programme Amendment.
2. If a programme/route has been suspended for more than two academic years, it will be assumed that it is no longer active and will be withdrawn by the relevant professional services team. The programme lead will be notified prior to the processing of the withdrawal.

### 6.2 Withdrawing a Programme / Route

1. Programmes (or named routes on a programme) that will not be offered to students from a known date should be formally withdrawn using a Programme Withdrawal Form (PWF) (Annex 7.6.1).
2. The proposal to withdraw a programme or route must be approved by the relevant Department and Faculty before being put forward for noting at a PMAP meeting.
3. In order for a programme/route to be withdrawn or suspended from the appropriate publicity materials, the relevant central services will be advised by Academic Services.
4. Where a programme is delivered in collaboration with an external partner, the appropriate Termination of Academic Partnership form should also be completed. This can be found in Chapter 8: Academic Partnerships Framework.

# 7 Module Suspension or Withdrawal

1. Modules may be formally withdrawn by the department through the student record system prior to the cut-off date set by the relevant team in Academic Services. Modules that are not being delivered in a specific academic session can be suspended until the next cycle.
2. Departments have an obligation to provide a module that has been previously advertised to students as running, either as part of module selection or as part of marketing material given to applicants or offer holders. A module must not be withdrawn without consultation with these students.
3. If the withdrawal or suspension of a module will affect currently enrolled students, these students must consent to it. If the withdrawal or suspension of the module is beyond UCL's control, for example, due to the loss of a staff member, the programme lead must reach an agreed compromise with the students.
4. If the withdrawal or suspension of a module results in a change to the published programme diet, as recorded in the programme summary, a programme amendment form must be completed and submitted to the relevant body for approval. The module must not be withdrawn/marked as inactive without this approval. For more information see [Chapter 7, Section 4: Programme Amendment](#).
5. Adherence to the cut-off dates for the curriculum maintenance cycle is essential for ensuring that the correct information is provided to students in line with the UCL's obligations under consumer protection legislation.

## 8 The Curriculum Maintenance Cycle

1. Departments are responsible for confirming the following for the next academic session (2022-2023) via the student record system:
  - a) Modules which are suspended;
  - b) Detailed information for modules which are available in that academic session; and
  - c) Changes to any programme diets
2. The dates by which departments must update curriculum data are published in the Student and Registry Services (SRS) calendar each year.
3. The processes for maintaining curriculum data in the student record system are not intended for capturing amendments to programmes and modules, or the creation of new modules. These should be submitted in line with the relevant regulations in Chapter 7 of the Academic Manual. The relevant teams in Academic Services are responsible for the set-up of new modules and programmes in the student record system.
4. Further advice and support on the curriculum maintenance cycle can be obtained from the Student Lifecycle team ([lifecycle@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:lifecycle@ucl.ac.uk)).

## 9 Research Degrees

1. The programme approval processes detailed elsewhere in this chapter relate to taught programmes.
2. Research-only degrees (e.g. MPhil, PhD) must be approved by the Lead Department/Division and the Lead Faculty before submission for final approval by Research Degrees Committee.
3. Initiators of new research degree programmes should contact the Senior Policy Advisor (Programme Approval) at [acadserv.pmap@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:acadserv.pmap@ucl.ac.uk) in the first instance.
4. For all new proposed doctorates, a Doctoral Programme Proposal Form ([Annex 7.9.1](#)) and Programme Summary (Research Programmes) ([Annex 7.9.3](#)) must be completed.
5. If the Lead Department/Division is new, or has no existing doctoral programme, it must first meet the requirements to recruit and register doctoral students specified by Research Degrees Committee. A Recruitment of Research Students to Academic or Research Departments (Divisions/Institutes/Units) – Application Form ([Annex 7.9.4](#)) must be completed.
6. For all new proposed MRes degrees, a Programme Proposal form ([Annex 7.2.3](#)) with the addition of the MRes Final Programme Proposal Appendix ([Annex 7.9.2](#)) must be completed.
7. Programme amendments should follow the procedure outlined in [Chapter 7, Section 4: Programme Amendment](#). Major amendments to research degrees are ultimately approved by Research Degrees Committee, rather than PAWG (on behalf of PMAP). However, major amendments to the taught elements of the programme will need PAWG approval prior to submission to Research Degrees Committee.