

Programme Amendments Guidance – 2020/21

1. Deadline

The deadline for submitting programme amendments to Academic Services for implementation in the 2022-23 academic session is **Friday 11th June 2021**.

However, we would encourage departments and faculties to submit programme amendments at any time throughout the academic year so that these can be processed in a timely manner and avoid any delays.

Any programme amendments submitted from 12th June 2021, will be implemented for the 2023-24 academic session.

2. Submission

All programme amendments must be approved by the Faculty before being submitted to Academic Services.

Once approved at Faculty level, programme amendments should be submitted to Academic Services via one person from the Faculty, usually the Faculty Tutor. It is the responsibility of this individual to ensure that the submission is complete.

When submitting programme amendments, please bear in mind the following points:

1. All submissions should be complete and the final versions of documents, with all of the supplementary information and the requisite signatures / approvals included.
2. Submitting documents in draft or in iterations will only delay approval and may lead to the incorrect document being approved by Academic Services / PAWG and ultimately entered on to Portico.
3. All submissions should be sent as one email per amendment, with the amendment classification and name of the programme in the subject line (e.g. PAF (major) BSc Urban Studies).
4. Each submission should comprise one combined PDF document and a zipped file containing the individual documents.
5. Please do not send PDFs of scanned documents or documents in rich text format.
6. The documents need to be searchable and editable as this ensures a smoother approval process and a quicker and more accurate set up on SITS / Portico.

The Programme Amendment Form (PAF) and all supplementary documentation should be submitted as follows:

- Major and moderate programme amendments should be submitted to acadserv.pmap@ucl.ac.uk.
- Minor programme amendments should be submitted to lifecycle@ucl.ac.uk.

3. Approval Process

3.1 Major Programme Amendments

1. Major programme amendments are considered and approved by the Programme Amendments Working Group (PAWG).
2. The Group will usually identify areas that need to be clarified or issues that need to be resolved with the proposal, prior to approving the major programme amendment. In such instances, an email will be sent to the Programme Leader, Faculty Tutor and, if the programme amendment was submitted by them, additional Faculty contact(s) with the Group's feedback.
3. The final versions of the PAF and **all** supplementary documentation must be resubmitted, indicating where changes have been made to the documentation in line with the Group's feedback. The resubmission must be approved by the Faculty Tutor (or other Faculty contact), before being submitted to Academic Services. The resubmission should be sent from the Faculty Tutor (or other Faculty contact).
4. Once major programme amendments have been approved by PAWG, these are then noted at the next meeting of PMAP.

3.2 Moderate Programme Amendments

1. Moderate programme amendments are not considered by PAWG but are approved at Faculty level and then checked by Academic Services.
2. Where clarification is required or the submission is incomplete, an email will be sent to the Programme Leader, Faculty Tutor and, if the programme amendment was submitted by them, additional Faculty contact(s) with feedback.
3. Once moderate programme amendments have been approved, these are then noted at the next meeting of PMAP.

4. Common pitfalls which delay the approval process - major and moderate programme amendments

Below is a list of areas that are often overlooked and can cause delays to the approval process for major and moderate programme amendments.

4.1 General considerations:

1. Not completing the forms clearly or fully, including revised programme summaries.
2. Not submitting all of the required supplementary documents including module amendment forms, module proposal forms, programme summaries and evidence of the relevant consultations.
3. Not having all of the requisite approvals / signatures on the documentation.
4. Not making it clear that External Scrutineer's comments have been responded to. Where an External Scrutineer has provided commentary and recommendations on a proposed amendment, it must be clear that these comments and/or recommendations have been addressed.
5. Where a new Board of Examiners is requested, the proposer should make a case to explain why the programme cannot be examined by an existing board.

4.2 Common issues with the Programme Amendment Form:

1. Incorrect use of terminology regarding routes and pathways within the programme. For information about the classifications of routes and pathways and the difference between these, please consult the [Academic Manual, Chapter 2, Section 3.2.3](#).
2. Not completing the required consultation of applicants. All applicants must be notified of the proposed programme amendment. Evidence that the consultation has taken place should be provided, including appending the email(s) sent to applicants.
3. Not completing the required consultation of offer-holders. For major and moderate amendments, offer-holders must be provided with four weeks to deliver written feedback to the proposal(s). A reminder of the four week deadline should be provided after two weeks. A lack of feedback within the four week time frame can be considered as an agreement to the change. Should an offer-holder not agree to the change, they must be assisted with transferring their application to another suitable programme or with withdrawing their application. **Evidence that the consultation has taken place should be provided, including appending the email(s) sent to offer-holders. If there are any deferred offer-holders, these should also be included within the consultation.**
4. Not completing the required consultations of current students. For major and moderate amendments, all current students must be notified by email of the proposed change. Current students should be provided with four weeks in which they must provide active consent to the proposed change. A reminder of the four week deadline should be provided after two weeks. Should a student not consent to the change a suitable collective compromise must be agreed with the department. **Evidence that the consultation has taken place should be provided, including appending the email(s) sent to current students. The responses received from these students should also be appended or for larger cohorts, a matrix indicating their responses. Where a response from a student includes a question / query, then evidence of how this was answered should also be included.**
5. The consultations with applicants, offer-holders and current students should be completed before the amendment is submitted to Academic Services, making it clear that the proposed changes will only come into effect if the programme amendment is approved. Please see the guidance around consulting with applicants, offer-holders and current students within the [Academic Manual, Chapter 7, Annex 7.1.4](#).
6. Where a module from another department is being used, there must be evidence of approval from the module 'owning' department, as well as the module 'owning' Faculty within the submission.
7. Any amendments to programmes where there are academic partnerships and/or collaborative activities (along with any associated Memorandums of Agreement) must be approved by UCL's Academic Partnerships Review Group (APRG). Evidence that UCL's Senior Policy Advisor: Partnerships has been consulted on the proposal should be included within the submission. Furthermore, evidence that the academic partner approves the proposed programme amendment should also be submitted.
8. In cases where a programme amendment is being proposed following a request from the Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB), evidence of this request should be submitted (e.g. in the form of an email or letter from the PSRB).
9. Where a placement is being added to the programme, the following points should be taken into consideration:
 - The placement guidance within [Chapter 8 of the Academic Manual](#) must be consulted and it should be indicated within the documentation that this information has been engaged with.

- Consider similar practice elsewhere within the department / Faculty to ensure a consistent approach.
 - Ensure that the placement is given the correct number of hours / credits (i.e. each term should be about 60 credits or 600 hours).
10. Whilst adding a Study Abroad or Placement or Internship Year to an existing programme is possible with a PAF, it should be noted that a new programme will be set up (i.e. there are two programmes on offer). It is not a requirement that the 4 year programme be applied to separately from the outset. The 4 year programme can be discrete and only on offer to existing students rather than externally to new applicants. The student would be admitted to the 3 year programme and transfer to the 4 year programme at a later date. However, there are significant visa implications for international students, of which proposers and students should be aware, if the two programmes are managed in this way. The UG Affiliate Study Abroad Programme Checklist (Academic Manual, Chapter 7, Annex 7.2.9) and evidence that colleagues in the UCL Study Abroad team have been consulted on the proposal should be included within the submission (e.g. in the form of an email).
 11. Where applicable, evidence that the Compliance team has been consulted around additional costs to students and/or implications for UKVI / Tier 4 visas should be included within the submission. Similarly where a proposed programme amendment will affect student tuition fees, evidence that the Senior Fees Administrator (Student Fees and Credit Control) has been consulted should be included within the submission. Evidence of these consultations is usually submitted in the form of an email from the relevant team.

4.3 Common issues with the Module Amendment Form:

1. If module credits are increased/decreased, the assessment load must be amended accordingly.

4.4 Common issues with the Module Proposal Form:

1. The module workload (Section 13) not adding up to the correct credit value (e.g. 15 credits = 150 notional learning hours).
2. Where a number of new modules are being proposed for a programme amendment, there should be parity between the assessment loads and weightings for modules of the same credit load, (i.e. a 2,000 word essay should not be worth 75% of the final mark in one module and 25% in another).
3. Where new modules are being proposed with an exam-based assessment at any period other than the main summer period (EXAM), the expectation is that the examinations will be administered locally. If that is not the case, Joanne Moles should be consulted.
4. Learning resources not being discussed with the library.
5. Bibliography not being included within the submission.

4.5 Common issues with the Programme Summary:

1. A revised Programme Summary must be submitted which reflects the changes being requested through the proposed programme amendment. It should be clear on the Programme Summary which areas have been revised (e.g. by highlighting the relevant areas).

2. Various sections of the Programme Summary are sometimes overlooked and do not reflect the changes that are being requested through the proposed programme amendment, especially Sections 5 and 6.
3. Proposed interim PGT qualifications need their own set of learning outcomes in the overarching Programme Summary if the award is to be classified and/or advertised as a registerable qualification.
4. The modules listed within the programme diet not adding up to the required credit for the award or year of the award. Modules should be listed with their credit value within the programme summary.
5. Discrepancies between module titles within the documentation (i.e. modules having different titles on the PAF and Programme Summary).
6. Programme diets should specify optional and elective modules. The use of 'Any UCL module' is not acceptable. Where there is free choice, it needs to be clear in the diet and to the students that the Programme Leader/Director must approve the students' module choices. Optional modules should be specified within the programme diet and elective modules should be presented as broad collections of modules which are thematically grouped. For further guidance, please see the [Academic Manual, Chapter 2, Section 3.9.7](#).
7. All dissertations / research projects should be non-condonable as per the [Academic Manual, Chapter 2, Section 3.9.7](#).

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September 2020