

Standard Validation Process

1. Introduction

- 1.1 All new course proposals are required to go through the validation process. Validation ensures that a newly developed course meets threshold standards, meets the London Met strategic plan and ensures a positive student experience and outcomes. It is a peer review process involving a panel of internal staff, external advisors, students, academics, industry experts and students.

2. Stage 1 - approval of business cases

- 2.1 The Academic Portfolio Committee (APC) is responsible under delegated authority from the Academic Board for the development and oversight of the University's internal and collaborative portfolio. The Committee considers business cases for new course development against criteria such as market demand, unique selling points and contribution to the University's mission.
- 2.2 The APC will also examine the nature and likelihood of any risks that may be posed by the proposed development of a new course. Depending on the level of risk, either a full business case or a fast track business case may be used. Only when the business case approval has been granted can a proposal move on to be considered for validation.
- 2.3 All business cases for courses that do not meet the fast track requirements must be submitted and approved by the **December Academic Portfolio Committee (APC) at the latest**. For **January/February starts**, business case forms must be submitted and approved by **APC in May**. After that point, no further validations will be added to the validation schedule, unless exceptionally approved by the Chair of APC.
- 2.4 Course teams should complete the relevant business case template ([AQD001](#) or [AQD016](#)) and submit to AQD, before the required deadline. Where a course is being developed for delivery at a collaborative academic partner institution, the collaborative business case template should be completed ([AQDC005](#)). The template must include the financial analysis and evidence of engagement and discussion with the Head of School, relevant professional service Heads and employers where appropriate.

3. Stage 2 - The validation event

- 3.1 Once the business case is approved by APC, the relevant AQD business partner will liaise with and confirm an event date and schedule with course teams. In the case of existing collaborative partners, the Quality Manager (Partnerships) will liaise with and confirm an event date and schedule with course teams. The event date will be confirmed by AQD within one week of APC approval. An indicative schedule can be found in document AQD003. For collaborative partners that will be also undergoing

institutional approval, a validation date will be agreed with the Quality Manager (Partnerships) in line with this process.

- 3.2 Heads of Subject are required to submit the validation paperwork to AQD by the agreed deadlines. The Head of Subject or nominated member of the Course Team must upload the validation paperwork by the agreed date to BOX
- 3.3 Validation and Periodic Review timelines can be found in the appendix at the end of this chapter.

4. Appointment of external advisors

- 4.1 Heads of Subject are required to nominate suitably experienced External Advisor(s) to their AQD business partner. For collaborative academic courses, the Head of School will nominate the External Advisor to the Quality Manager (Partnerships). AQD will liaise with the External Advisor to confirm approval of the nomination, complete the Right to Work Check and engagement with the validation event. See External Advisor appointment form ([AQD013](#)) for further guidance.

5. Purpose of the validation panel

- 5.1 The validation panel will act as a critical friend to promote best practice, help to enhance the new course and the student experience, and ensure the course meets threshold standards before the course commences. The panel will focus on;
 - the design principles underpinning the course(s)
 - the definition and appropriateness of standards in accordance with the level and title of the award
 - anticipated demand for the course(s)
 - the resources necessary to support the course(s)
 - the nature of the learning opportunities offered by the course(s)
 - the relationship between the course's curriculum and current research in the same area
 - Articulation with QAA UK Quality Code (FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements), PSRB requirements – if appropriate
 - Articulation with relevant internal frameworks
 - Course specific regulations (where appropriate)
 - The contents of the course and module specifications
 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy
 - Employer/PSRB involvement in course design
 - Student input into course design
 - Future developments/enhancement strategy



6. Paperwork required for a standard validation

- 6.1 When completing the following paperwork, Course Teams should refer to the Standard Validation Timeline for deadlines and submit to Box:
- Validation overview document ([AQD004](#)) which includes the rationale, demand, LTA strategy, support and resource statement, employability details, details of PSRB accreditation if applicable.
 - Evidence of employer and student engagement
 - Course Specification ([AQD006](#))
 - Module Specifications ([AQD007](#))
 - Assessment map ([AQD008](#))
 - Staff CVs ([AQD009](#))
 - QAA Subject Benchmark mapping ([AQD015](#))
 - Inclusive Curriculum Checklists – Course and module Design / Delivery ([AQD011a](#) & [AQD011b](#))
 - Digital Literacy Checklist ([AQD010](#))

7. Internal review

- 7.1 Before a course proceeds to validation, the Course Team must submit all validation paperwork to an internal review panel. The panel, drawn from colleagues within AQD and the School, will scrutinise the paperwork before it is sent to the external advisors. This process allows for any issues to be considered internally before the formal validation panel meets.
- 7.2 The Internal Review panel will be formed of senior academics and AQD staff. Key members of the Course Team responsible for writing the paperwork must be present. It is expected the Internal Review would only last 1-2 hours. The AQD staff present will record a short summary of changes recommended to the paperwork before the course can proceed to full validation.
- 7.3 The Internal Review panel can agree for the course to proceed to full validation; it can recommend changes to the paperwork be completed before the date of the validation event or if serious concerns are raised, the panel can recommend that the Course Team delays the validation if significant changes are required.

8. Standard validation event agenda

- 8.1 The Standard Validation Event Agenda Template [AQD012] outlines an indicative agenda for validation events, panel members and course team members involved and the suggested duration of each event.

9. Validation panel role descriptor

9.1 Typically, each validation or review panel should include the following personnel, and their roles are to function as below. All types of validation and Periodic Review events must include input from External and Student Panel Members.

NB: for collaborative events, the Student Panel Member role will be discussed on a case-by-case basis with AQD.

Panel Member	Role in the Standard Validation Process
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide the discussion during the event • Assign areas of questions to panel members • Agree the event outcomes and provide a summary conclusion • Ensure the course team are clear on any further actions required as a condition of the course(s) being approved • Work with the Officer to confirm the event outcomes report • Receive revised validation paperwork and sign off once all conditions have been met by the course team
External Advisor (Academic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an independent external view of the course(s) • Advise the panel on any necessary revisions to course content, module content and assessments • Contribute to the summarising of the debate
External Advisor (Industry)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an independent external view of the course(s) • Advise the panel on any necessary revisions to course content, module content and assessments • Contribute to the summarising of the debate
Internal (Academic staff member from a different School) NB: This may be an AQD representative in exceptional circumstances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow line of questioning agreed with Chair and plays an active part in discussions with the course team • Ensure compliance of the courses being validated or reviewed with relevant internal and external academic regulations and frameworks • Ensure quality assurance processes have been embedded in the course by the course team



Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a student's view on the content of the course(s) being validated or reviewed• Share relevant experience as a student within the institution• Advise the panel and course team on issues such as resourcing, assessment methods and chosen mode(s) of delivery• Explore issues of further study/employability connected to the course(s) being validated or reviewed
Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrange the event, liaises with course team(s), the panel and other members of professional staff• Ensure the validation process is followed before, during and after the meeting• Work closely with the Chair of the panel to make sure thorough questioning of the course team takes place and that the meeting(s) keep to the agenda and to time• Ensure an accurate record of commendations, conditions and recommendations is made by the end of the meeting• Produce an outcomes report and circulates to the course team within one week of the validation event taking place• Produce a full report on the validation/review event and circulates to the course team within three weeks of the event taking place• Work with the course team to ensure they submit revised course documentation by the due date, that this documentation and attached commentary on any changes is sent to the Chair and that the Chair• Feeds back via the Officer in a timely fashion.

10. Standard validation outcomes

10.1 The validation panel are responsible for making a decision on behalf of Academic Board on the approval of the course(s). The panel can commend the course team(s) for any areas of good practice which stand out in either the course documentation or as a result of the discussion on the day, and can also set conditions and recommendations of the validation Courses are usually approved for a period of 5 years.

10.2 Possible standard validation outcomes are as follows:

- Approved
- Approved with conditions (and recommendations)
- Not Approved / Referred back to the course team for further consideration.

10.3 The course team(s) must revise the course documentation in light of any conditions set by the panel and resubmit, along with a supporting summary explaining the changes, by the deadline agreed by the panel. The panel Chair must check the revised documentation and put in writing that the course can be signed off and officially validated before the course can be delivered to students.

10.4 The course team(s) must consider any recommendations the panel make and address those through course and module action plans. Resolution of any validation recommendations must be discussed at School-level committee and via normal continuous monitoring processes.

10.5 The course team(s) will also be provided with a specific list of minor changes required in course and module specifications which should also be completed by the deadline set and reviewed by the panel Chair.

10.6 Where the panel considers there to be serious concerns with quality or viability of a course or courses the panel will not recommend the course(s) for approval. At this stage the business case will need to be redeveloped and submitted to APC for approval.

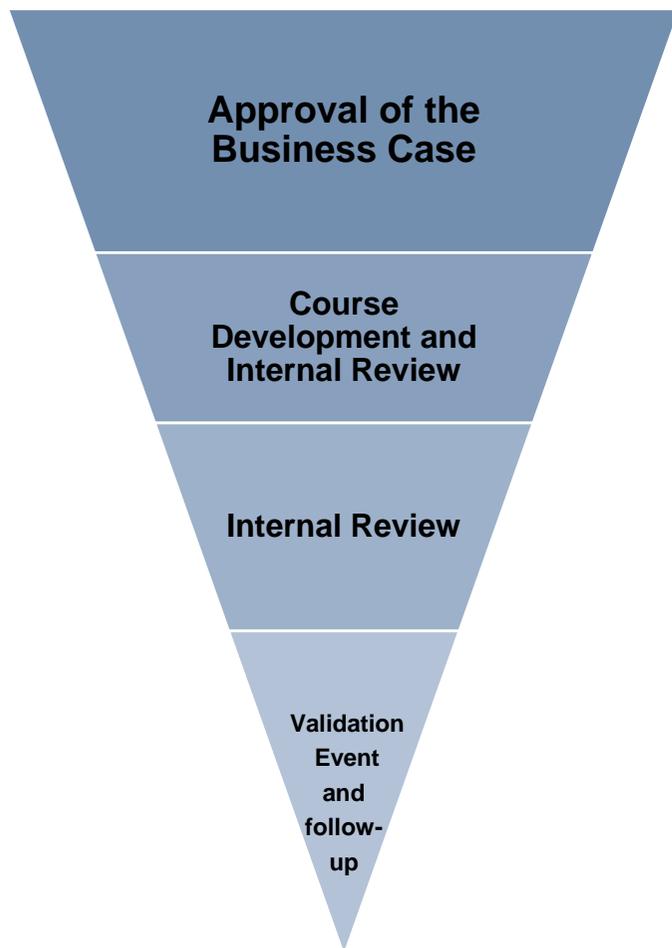
11. The standard validation report

11.1 The Panel Officer is responsible for preparing the validation report, in agreement with the Chair. The validation reports provide detail on the outcome of the meeting and any further work required by the course team. The **Outcomes Report**, detailing commendations, conditions and recommendations must be sent to the Course Team **within one week** of the validation event. The **Full Report** will be sent to the Course Team **within three weeks** of the validation event. Course Teams usually have **six weeks** to formally respond to conditions.

12. Next steps in the process

12.1 Once validated, the course enters into the standard University quality monitoring processes. Course Teams will have the opportunity to make amendments to the course until the course is due to be periodically reviewed. The course will then be subject to a Periodic Review within five years of the date of final approval or three years for collaborative provision.

Standard validation event timeline



Time	Action/Detail
-26-53 weeks	Business Case development
-26 weeks	Business Case to be considered by School Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (LTQC)
-20 weeks	Business Case to be submitted to Academic Portfolio Committee (APC) – December at latest. For January starts, the Business Case must be submitted and approved by APC by May.
-8-20 weeks	Course Team to develop the course(s) External Advisor nominations to be sent to AQD External Advisor Right to Work Check to be completed AQD to confirm External Advisor appointment(s)
-8 weeks	Course team to send documentation to AQD
-6 weeks	Internal Panel Review Meeting – AQD Officer to inform the Course Team if course documents are needed to be revised
-5 weeks	Course Team to update documentation and return to AQD
-4 weeks	Final set of documentation sent to the Panel and to External Advisors for comment
-2 week	External Advisor reports shared with the Course Team
Week 0	Event to take place before 30 April
+1 week	Outcomes Report distributed
+3 weeks	Full report distributed
+6 weeks	Course Team to formally respond to conditions and send updated course documents to AQD
+7 weeks	Panel to review post-validation course documents and sign off the course
+8 weeks	AQD to inform relevant professional service departments of the validation