

Fast Track Validation Process

1. Introduction

- 1.1 All new course proposals that meet the fast track requirements are required to go through the fast track validation process. Validation ensures that a newly developed course meets threshold standards, London Met's strategies and ensures positive outcomes and the experience of students before the course can be delivered. It is a peer review process involving a panel of internal staff, external advisors, students, employers and representatives from Academic Quality and Development. For a course to qualify for the Fast Track validation process, it must be within an existing subject area and contain **no more** than two new modules. This does not include integrated Masters courses.

2. Stage 1 - Approval of fast track 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. If the new proposal comprises a maximum of two new modules, with the majority already validated and running Course Teams should complete a Fast Track Business Case ([AQD016](#)) for APC approval.
- 2.3 For a fast track validation event to take place that academic year for **September starts**, a business case must go to Academic Portfolio Committee (APC) and be approved by the **January meeting at the latest**. For **January starts**, the fast track business case must be approved by APC at the **July meeting**. After that point, no further validations will be added to the validation schedule, managed by AQD unless approved under exceptional circumstances by the APC Chair.

3. Stage 2 - The fast track validation event

- 3.1 Once the business case is approved by APC, the relevant AQD business partner or 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 [AQD003b](#).
- 3.2 Course Leaders are required to submit the validation paperwork to AQD by the agreed deadlines. The Course Leader 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 panel members

- 4.1 Heads of Subject are required to nominate suitably experienced External Panel Members to their AQD business partner. AQD will liaise with the External Panel Member to confirm approval, complete the Right to Work Check and engagement with the validation event. Please see the External Advisor Appointment Form for further guidance ([AQD013](#)).

5. Purpose of the fast track validation panel

- 5.1 The validation panel will act as a critical friend to promote best practice and help to enhance the new course and the student experience, ensuring 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

6. Paperwork required for a fast track validation

- 6.1 Course Teams should refer to the Fast Track Validation Timeline for deadlines and submit to Box:
- Fast Track Validation overview document ([AQD005](#)) 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](#))
- All new module specifications ([AQD007](#))
- Assessment map ([AQD008](#))
- Staff CVs for new staff only ([AQD009](#))
- QAA mapping ([AQD015](#))

7. Indicative fast track validation agenda

7.1 The Fast Track Validation Event Agenda Template ([AQD012b](#)) outlines an indicative agenda for fast track validation events, panel members and course team members involved and the suggested duration of each event.

8. Validation panel role descriptor

8.1 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 role of the Student Panel Members will be confirm on a case by case basis by AQD.

Panel Member	Role in the Fast Track 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 Panel Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an independent external view of the course(s)

<p>(Academic) <i>Submits comments for Fast Track but does not attend the event</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise the panel on any necessary revisions to course content, module content and assessments
<p>External Panel Member (Industry) <i>Submits comments for Fast Track but does not attend the event</i></p>	<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
<p>Academic Quality and Development Internal Representative</p>	<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 with relevant internal and external academic regulations and frameworks • Ensure quality assurance processes have been embedded in the course by the course team
<p>Student</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a student's view on the content of the course(s) being validated • 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
<p>Officer</p>	<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

	<p>course team within one week of the validation event taking place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
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9. Fast track validation outcomes

- 9.1 The Fast Track validation panel may choose to commend the course team for any areas of good practice which stand out in either the course documentation or as a result of the discussion on the day.
- 9.2 Possible fast track validation outcomes are as follows:
- Approved
 - Approved with conditions (and recommendations)
 - Not Approved
 - Referred back to the course team for further consideration.
- 9.3 The course team 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 a 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.
- 9.4 The course team must consider any recommendations the panel make and address those through action plans arising through the course action plan. Resolution of any validation recommendations must be discussed at School-level committee and via normal continuous monitoring processes.
- 9.5 The course team 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. The fast track validation report

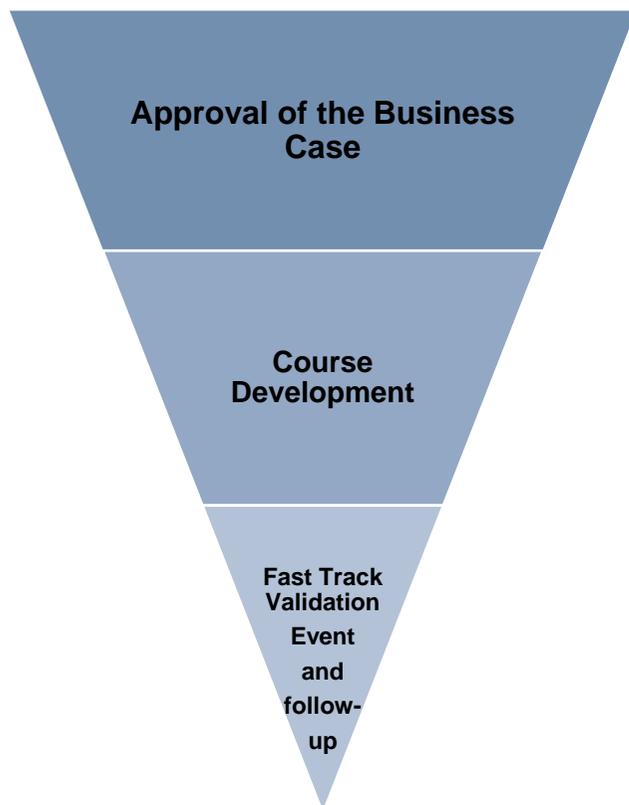
- 10.1 The Officer is responsible for preparing the validation reports, in agreement with the Chair. For the Fast Track process, only the Outcomes Report is provided after the meeting.

10.2 The **Outcomes Report**, detailing commendations, conditions and recommendations must be sent to the Course Team **within one week** of the validation event. Course Teams usually have **two weeks** to formally respond to conditions.

11. Next steps in the process

11.1 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.

Fast track validation event timeline



Time	Action/Detail
-20 weeks	Fast Track Business Case Development
-10-20 weeks	Fast Track Business Case to be considered by School Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (LTQC)
-8 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.
-6-8 weeks	Course Team to develop the course(s)
-4 weeks	Course team to send documentation to AQD and to External Panel Member to provide commentary
-2 weeks	Documentation sent to the Panel
-1 week	Course Teams to formally respond to External Panel Member commentary
Week 0	Desk based event to take place before 30 April
+1 week	Outcomes Report distributed
+2 weeks	Course Team to formally respond to conditions and send updated course documents to AQD
+3 weeks	Panel to review post-validation course documents and sign off the course
+4 weeks	AQD to inform relevant professional service departments of the validation