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# 1 Approval of New Programmes and Modules

1. All new course units/ modules and degree programmes proposed by Departments/Divisions and recommended by the Faculty must be submitted for formal approval by UCL.
2. All new degree programmes must be scrutinised by a suitably qualified person external to UCL.
3. UCL approval is granted for new course units/ modules and degree programmes, and amendments to existing course units/ modules and programmes, when the rationale provided

## 2 Design and Structure of Programmes and Programme Components

### **Programme design and approval**

1. The Quality Assurance Agency [QAA] has published a suite of documents, which together form a Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. One of the documents concerns programme design approval, monitoring and review and includes the following precept: Institutions should publish guidance, for use within the institution, on principles to be considered when programmes are designed.

[QAA Code of Practice, Section 7, Precept 5]

2. This Section provides such guidance and takes into account the development of programme specification, now included in the Programme Institution Questionnaire (PIQ) [see para. 5 below].
3. Prior to completing an on-line PIQ members of staff initiating new programmes should consult colleagues in the Centre for the Advancement of Learning for advice on programme design and colleagues in the eLearning Environments for advice on e-learning.

- ii) the viability of offering the proposed programme based on projected student numbers and the resources available, taking into account the extent to which comparable provision in the subject area already exists and the anticipated student demand. In addition, consideration should be given to how the proposed programme complements the Departmental and UCL goals and mission;
- iii) the curriculum structure and the proposed length of the programme, as applicable to both full and part-time students, and the modes and criteria of assessment for each component of the programme and how these fit with UCL regulations;
- iv)

Honours degree, Departments must make clear what type and level of experience is acceptable, and the minimum length of acceptable experience.

### **Definition of unacceptable entrance requirements for taught Master's degree programmes**

14. Unacceptable qualifications in this context are those degree qualifications, which, although they might fulfil the general requirement for entry to a taught Masters degree programme, cannot be allowed for the programme in question. They would include such things as a qualification in Computer Science for a programme designed to introduce the subject to those new to it, or an MEng degree from UCL which was composed of a high proportion of courses also taught in the Master's programme applied for.
15. Criteria for defining unacceptable qualifications are consideration of factors such as the purpose of the degree and the principle that a student should not receive two awards for the same (or substantially the same) work.

### **Definition of programme component**

16. Each component should have a clearly defined syllabus and assessment methodology. All components should normally present an equal workload to the student, and the value of a component should be related to the proposed workload. The notional teaching time allocated to each element of the component should also be defined (number of lectures, number of field course hours, etc.).
17. In general, Departments designing new taught Masters programmes should observe the rule that Masters programmes should have not more than one third of their components (i.e. one third of their taught components, excluding the dissertation) in common with undergraduate programmes.
18. Where the aims and learning objectives for the programme require a greater proportion of components in common with undergraduate programmes, the justification for the requirement must be clearly stated at the time that the programme proposal is submitted.

### **Illustration of how components link to provide the complete degree**

19. For each programme it should be made clear which components are regarded as the mandatory core, the pathways that are permissible through the optional courses on offer, and what pathways are prohibited in order to maintain the overall coherence of the programme. The progression requirements, and consequences of failure in any component, should also be considered.

### **Assessment**

20. Detail should be provided on the PIQ of the weighting and form of assessment for each programme component and when the assessment will take place in the structure of the programme.
21. Programme components should include a component of continuous assessment either as homework problems, essays, associated practicals, or fieldwork, and this should be included as part of the final assessment of performance in the unit. In general, a course unit should not be assessed only on the results of unseen examinations.

22. Discussion sessions, problem-solving classes, oral presentation of work, teamwork, source material searches, etc., are all examples of active learning strategies, which should be included in programme design where appropriate.
23. Any strategy, which involves students furthering their own education by discovery of new facts, methods or skills, should be included as an integral part of the programme where possible.

### **Scheme of Award**

24. There must be a published Scheme of Award for every programme, which must conform to UCL regulations.
25. In the case of undergraduate programmes the UCL Harmonised Scheme of Award should be applied.
26. On Masters programmes, the pass mark at Masters level must be 50% in each element (with the possibility of up to 25% of the taught elements as a condoned pass between 40%-49%) and the dissertation must be passed at 50% in order for a degree to be awarded. A distinction may be awarded with at least an average of 70% overall and at least 70% in the dissertation.





## 4 Annual Academic Review Cycle

The approval of new modules and programmes is managed by Academic Services, Student and Registry Services and directed by the Programme and Module Approval Panel, PMAP (previously known as PMASG). PMAP reports to the Education Committee and to the Research Degrees Committee. The deadlines for the annual academic review in 2016-2017 for the 2017-2018 academic year are available on the [Annual Academic Review 2016-2017 document](#).

**Please note that this information is correct at the point of publication but could be subject to change.**

# 5 New Taught Programmes

New programme proposals must be submitted using the Programme Institution Questionnaire (PIQ). From January 2011 new programmes should be submitted using an on-line form accessed via [Portico](#). The form is housed in the Programme Rules and Review container, accessed via the 'Curricular Management' link on the Portico staff screen. Programme initiators should also discuss learning resource requirements with the library prior to submitting a PIQ for Departmental/Divisional approval.

**NB.** Prior to completing a PIQ members of staff should consult the Academic Manual for curricular design advice, and also the [Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching](#), [E-Learning Environments](#) and [UCL Careers](#).

## 5.1 Online PIQ Form

The Online PIQ form should be used when:

1. proposing a new programme;
2. introducing a new route or version of an existing programme (e.g. the programme or introducing a distance learning or year abroad version).

**NB.** When proposing a new programme involves the need for new modules to be set up, please go to the [New Module Proposals](#) section, as a [UPC/GPC](#) form is also needed. A [New Module Outline Form](#) can be submitted if detailed module contents are not fully known at the point of submission for approval.

## 5.2 Procedures

1. Departmental/Divisional and Faculty Approval and External Scrutineer Review: The proposal for a new programme must be approved at Departmental and Faculty level and by an External Scrutineer, before being put forward for UCL-level approval and the on-line PIQ facilitates this process.
2. New programme initiators must get the business case signed off by the relevant School Finance Director before submitting the PIQ for Departmental/Divisional approval.
3. New programme initiators are advised to consult teaching and learning resources such as the Library, [CALT](#) and [ELE](#) before submitting a PIQ for Departmental/Division approval.
4. New programme initiators are advised to consult [UCL Careers](#) if there is a placement or internship element within the proposal before submitting a PIQ for Departmental/Division approval. UCL Careers can advise what resources may be required and can advise on what you need to consider with regard to

has been reviewed by them. A PIQ will not be granted Faculty approval unless external scrutiny has been confirmed.

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## 6 New Doctoral Programmes

1. Please complete the New Doctoral Programme [PIQ](#)

# 7 Withdrawing Programmes (PWQ)

Programmes that will not be offered to students from a known date should be formally withdrawn using an on-line Programme Withdrawal Questionnaire (PWQ) form accessed via Portico.

## **Procedures**

1. The proposal to withdraw a programme must be approved by the relevant Department/Divisions and Faculty before being put forward for UCL-level approval and the on-line PWQ facilitates this process. Access to the PWQ is granted by a Head of Department/Division and up to two people can have access to it at any one time.

## **Submission**

1. When a proposal to withdraw a programme has been approved by the Department/Division and Faculty the on-line PWQ will be submitted automatically to the Secretary of PMAP (previously known as PMASG).

## **Deadline**

1. In order for a programme to be withdrawn or suspended from the appropriate UCAS handbook and undergraduate/graduate prospectus in time, notice will be given to the Admissions Office and UCL Publications, via the on-line PWQ process.



## 9 Module Proposals, Amendments and Withdrawals (UPC/GPC)

### 9.1 New Module Proposals

1. [UPC/GPC](#) forms should be used when introducing a new module.
2. If the new module is mandatory/core to the programme or changes the published regulations for a programme, please see Programme Amendments as a [PAQ](#) form is also needed.

#### **Submission**

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## Submission

# 10 Overlap and Common Examining of Undergraduate and Taught Masters Programmes

## Permissible Degree of Overlap

1. The purpose of each taught Masters degree programme, existing or proposed, must be clearly defined. The definition should make clear such points as the distinction in purpose between degrees entirely for non-specialists and those primarily for applicants with a measure of expertise in the subject, and between four-year undergraduate degrees (MEng and MSci) and Masters programmes in the same subject.
2. The entrance requirements for each taught Masters degree must be clearly specified and must be related to its defined purpose. They should be framed in terms of both acceptable entrance qualifications (including acceptable professional experience/qualifications alternative to the usual second class Honours degree) and of unacceptable entrance qualifications and should be

10. In the exceptional cases where the degree of overlap is more than one third of the taught components, excluding the dissertation, the undergraduate degree with which components are shared may not be accepted as an entrance qualification for the Masters. The entrance requirements must make this clear.
11. For existing taught Masters degree programmes with a degree of overlap with undergraduate degree programmes at variance with their defined purpose, steps should be taken to reduce the number of components common with undergraduate degree programmes at the next due date of review or within three years, whichever is the sooner.

### **Examining of Common Components**

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