

Programme Accreditation and Review Policy and Procedure

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Version History

VERSION	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR	APPROVAL	EFFECTIVE DATE
1	Initial consolidated version replacing and incorporating P034 Initiation of New Programmes and P051 Study Programme Review and incorporating the governance requirements for the development, approval, review and amendment of programmes and study units.	James Mula	2026	2026

Related Policies

P008 E-Learning Policy and Procedure
P037 Programme Viability Assessment
P035 Programme Advisory Board and Committees
P062 Quality Management Policy and Procedure
P089 Peer Review Panel
Standard Operating Procedure – Programme Accreditation and Approval Timeline
Standard Operating Procedure – Programme Review Cycle
Terms of Reference – Programme Advisory Committees

External References

European Higher Education Area, 1999. The Bologna Declaration.

Institute of Tourism Studies Act, 2021, Cap. 566

Institute of Tourism Studies Strategy 2026-2030

Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA), 2015. *The National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education*.

Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA), 2025. *Programme Accreditation Standards for Higher Education*.

Definitions

Accreditation Reference Number	A unique administrative process-tracking reference assigned to each matter processed under this Policy for the purposes of correspondence, retrieval, audit trail, and record management. The Accreditation Reference Number is separate from, and does not replace or amend, any official programme code, study-unit/module code or other academic identifier assigned by the Institute.
Board of Governors	The Institute's governing body responsible for exercising final institutional approval under this Policy and for granting in-principle approval for the development of new programmes in accordance with the Institute's governance framework. The Board of Governors approves curricula and syllabi submitted by the Board of Studies and may, where it considers this necessary, revert them to the Board of Studies together with its advice on proposed amendments.
Board of Studies	The academic body responsible for the formal academic consideration and approval of programmes, study units, and amendments in accordance with the Institute's academic governance framework, and for undertaking final academic consideration of PQVB determinations and any findings, recommendations and follow-up arising under the approved PRP governance framework before recommending onward approval to the Board of Governors.
Curriculum Design	The process of defining the structure, content, learning outcomes, workload, teaching and learning methods and assessment arrangements of a programme of study.
Major Amendment	A proposed amendment to an approved study unit or programme that materially affects its academic integrity, design, delivery, assessment, intended learning outcomes, level, or relationship with the approved programme.

Minor Amendment	A proposed amendment that does not materially alter the approved objectives, academic integrity, programme structure, intended learning outcomes, MQF Level, mode of delivery, total learning hours, ECTS credit allocation or assessment strategy of the approved provision.
Peer Review Panel	An external multi-stakeholder panel established in accordance with the applicable Peer Review Panel governance framework to undertake independent external review of self-accredited academic programmes and programme-level amendments, where the programme or amendment falls within the scope of that framework, following academic approval by the Board of Studies and final validation and approval by the Programme Quality Validation Board. The Peer Review Panel considers the programme from industry, student and external academic or professional perspectives and produces findings and recommendations for consideration and follow-up within the Institute's academic governance processes. Any PRP report, findings, recommendations or follow-up requirements arising under the approved PRP governance framework shall be submitted to the COO – Academia or their delegate for onward submission to the Board of Studies for final consideration. The Peer Review Panel operates as a review and advisory mechanism and does not exercise formal academic, validation or institutional approval authority under this Policy. For the avoidance of doubt, the PRP governance framework shall not apply to an individual new study-unit proposal or to an individual study-unit amendment, unless the substance of the proposed change requires it to be treated as a programme amendment under this Policy.

Programme Advisory Committees	The multi-stakeholder academic advisory committees established in accordance with P035 Programme Advisory Board and Committees and their respective Terms of Reference, responsible for supporting programme development and review; considering programme and study-unit proposals and amendments; providing evidence-based advice, feedback and recommendations; supporting structured engagement with students, industry, alumni and other relevant stakeholders; and contributing to programme enhancement and continuous improvement within the Institute's academic governance framework. Programme Advisory Committees operate in an advisory capacity and do not exercise formal academic approval authority under this Policy. Participation by a Programme Advisory Committee in the initiation, development or review of a proposal shall not constitute academic approval of that proposal and shall not preclude the Committee from formulating its advisory findings and recommendations for onward academic consideration.
Programme Diet	The formally approved structure and sequence of study units forming a programme of study for a specified period of delivery.
Programme of Study	A structured and approved set of study units leading to a qualification or award offered by the Institute.
Programme Quality Validation Board	The body responsible for the validation and quality assurance of new and revised programmes and study units, and proposed amendments thereto, and for exercising the functions assigned to it under the applicable regulations.
Programme Specification	The formal document describing the aims, intended learning outcomes, structure, delivery arrangements, assessment approach, and credit allocation of a programme.

Proposer	Any individual or body initiating a proposal for a new programme, new study unit or amendment to an existing programme or study unit.
Senior Academic Manager	The manager responsible for the relevant academic area and for the onward submission to the Board of Studies of programme and study-unit proposals, amendments, Programme Review Reports and the relevant Programme Advisory Committee's findings and recommendations, together with the applicable supporting documentation, in accordance with this Policy. The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall also be responsible for coordinating, through the relevant Programme Advisory Committee, any action, revision, or further development referred by the Board of Studies under this Policy and for resubmitting the resulting documentation for further academic consideration as required. For the purposes of this Policy, references to the relevant Senior Academic Manager concern responsibility for the relevant academic area and are distinct from the overall procedural oversight exercised by the Senior Academic Manager – Academic Strategy/Curriculum.
Senior Academic Manager – Academic Strategy/Curriculum	The manager responsible for the overall coordination, oversight, and monitoring of the implementation of this Policy and Procedure, including promoting consistency in the application of the prescribed processes, documentation and governance requirements and liaising with the academic and administrative areas involved in the relevant processes and with the applicable governance bodies, as necessary.

Study Unit/Module	A discrete unit of learning forming part of a programme of study or offered as standalone provision, with defined learning outcomes, learning hours, assessment arrangements and, where applicable, ECTS credit allocation. For the purposes of this Policy, the terms study unit and module may be used interchangeably where reflected in approved Institute documentation and templates.
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Abbreviations

BoG	Board of Governors
BoS	Board of Studies
COO - Academia	Chief Operating Officer – Academia
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ITS	Institute of Tourism Studies
MFHEA	Malta Further and Higher Education Authority
MQF	Malta Qualifications Framework
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
PQVB	Programme Quality Validation Board
PRP	Peer Review Panel

Contents

A. POLICY.....	10
B. PROCEDURE.....	14
PART I – COMMON PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS.....	14
PART II – NEW PROGRAMMES.....	24
PART III – NEW STUDY UNITS	33
PART IV – MONITORING AND PERIODIC PROGRAMME REVIEW	38
PART V – AMENDMENTS ARISING FROM PERIODIC PROGRAMME REVIEW	46
PART VI – INDEPENDENT PROGRAMME AND STUDY-UNIT AMENDMENTS.....	48
Part VII – Common Approval Route for Programme and Study-Unit Amendments	50
C. DOCUMENT RETENTION	55
D. REVIEW	55
E. DOCUMENT CONTROL.....	56
F. APPENDIX I – PROGRAMME LIFECYCLE AND APPROVAL FLOW	57
G. APPENDIX II – PRESCRIBED TEMPLATES AND FORMS	58

A. POLICY

It is the policy of the BoG to ensure that programmes of study are initiated, developed, approved, accredited, implemented, monitored, and periodically reviewed through a structured, evidence-based, and quality-assured process.

New programmes shall be developed where appropriate in accordance with the strategy and academic direction of the Institute and in response to identified educational, industry and societal needs. Existing programmes shall be subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic holistic review to ensure their continued effectiveness, academic and vocational relevance, sustainability, and alignment with applicable quality assurance requirements.

Programme development and review shall involve appropriate internal and external stakeholders and shall be supported by relevant academic, operational, student, industry, and benchmarking evidence.

Scope

This policy applies to:

1. the initiation, development, approval, accreditation, and implementation of all new programmes of study proposed by the Institute;
2. the proposal, development, approval, and implementation of new study units, whether intended for inclusion within an existing programme or for delivery as standalone provision;
3. the ongoing monitoring and periodic review of all approved programmes of study;
4. amendments to approved programmes and study units, whether arising from periodic programme review or independently in response to an identified need; and

5. the approval and validation of programmes, study units and amendments; the application of the approved PRP governance framework to new programmes and programme-level amendments where applicable; and the recording, implementation and version control of programmes, study units and amendments in accordance with the Institute's academic governance and quality assurance framework.

Principles

1. New programmes shall be based on demonstrated demand and shall align with the Institute's strategy, academic portfolio and relevant industry and societal needs.
2. No new programme shall proceed to detailed development without the required in-principle approval to proceed.
3. Programme design, development, and review shall comply with applicable national and European quality assurance requirements and shall include clearly defined learning outcomes, appropriate workload and credit allocation, suitable teaching and learning methods and valid assessment arrangements.
4. Programme development and review shall be evidence-based and shall include appropriate engagement with students, academic staff, industry, and other relevant stakeholders.
5. PACs shall operate in an advisory capacity within the Institute's academic governance framework. Their role under this Policy shall be to support programme and study-unit development and review, consider proposals and amendments, provide advice and stakeholder input, and formulate findings and recommendations. A PAC may itself initiate or coordinate the development of a proposal where appropriate; however, its participation in development shall not constitute academic approval. Formal academic approval of new programmes, new study units and amendments shall be exercised by the BoS.
6. Following academic approval by the BoS, new programmes, new study units and proposed amendments shall proceed to the PQVB for validation and determination. The PQVB determination shall in all cases be considered by the BoS at final consideration.

Following final PQVB approval, the requirements of the approved PRP governance framework shall apply only to new programmes and programme-level amendments falling within the scope of that framework. The PRP governance framework shall not apply to an individual new study unit or an individual study-unit amendment, except where a proposed study-unit change is required under this Policy to be treated as a programme amendment.

Where PRP review is required, any PRP report, findings, recommendations or follow-up requirements arising under the approved framework shall be submitted to the COO – Academia or their delegate for onward submission to the BoS for final consideration.

Where PRP review is not applicable, the matter shall proceed directly to BoS final consideration following final PQVB approval.

No matter shall proceed to final institutional approval by the BoG unless final PQVB approval has been obtained and, in the case of a programme or programme-level amendment falling within the scope of the approved PRP governance framework, any applicable PRP requirements have been satisfactorily completed.

7. Programme review shall be an ongoing process. In addition, each programme shall undergo a holistic review at least once every five years, or earlier where circumstances warrant.
8. Proposed programme and study-unit amendments shall be classified as Major or Minor in accordance with this Policy and shall be subject to the prescribed academic, quality assurance and institutional approval process.
9. Decisions, recommendations, conditions, actions, submissions and material correspondence arising from programme development, approval, review, and amendment shall be documented and retained to provide a complete audit trail. Each proposal processed under this Policy shall be assigned a unique Accreditation Reference Number, which shall be used consistently in formal correspondence and documentation throughout the lifecycle of the matter.

10. All proposals submitted under this Policy shall be supported by the documentation, evidence, and prescribed Institute templates applicable to the nature of the proposal.
11. New or revised programmes and study units involving online or blended delivery shall additionally comply with P008 E-Learning Policy and Procedure, including its prescribed e-learning quality assurance and verification requirements and the applicable E-Learning Guidelines.
12. Persons participating in programme development, review, validation or approval shall declare and appropriately manage any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest in accordance with the applicable PAC Terms of Reference, Standard Operating Procedure – Programme Review Cycle, institutional governance requirements, and applicable law.

Without prejudice to the foregoing, any person to whom Article 22 of the Institute of Tourism Studies Act applies shall disclose the nature of any relevant interest in accordance with that Article and shall take no part in, or seek to influence, the consideration or determination of the matter concerned.

Where such a person is a member of a governing body of the Institute, they shall withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the consideration of that matter and shall not vote or otherwise act in that capacity in relation to the matter.

Any disclosure required under Article 22 shall be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting.

13. Overall oversight and coordination of the implementation of this Policy and Procedure shall be exercised by the Senior Academic Manager – Academic Strategy/Curriculum. This oversight shall not displace or alter the decision-making, approval, validation, or advisory responsibilities assigned under this Policy to the Board of Governors, Board of Studies, PQVB, PACs, PRP or other responsible functions.

B. PROCEDURE

PART I – COMMON PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Required documentation and prescribed templates

All proposals and amendments submitted under this Policy shall be supported by the prescribed Institute documentation, templates, and supporting evidence applicable to the nature of the proposal. Current approved versions of the prescribed templates and forms shall be used in all cases.

The documentation specified in this section constitutes the minimum documentation required for the relevant proposal or amendment. Additional documentation or supporting evidence may be required where necessary having regard to the nature, scope or academic, regulatory, resource or quality assurance implications of the proposal.

The prescribed documentation shall provide the formal record of the proposal submitted for consideration and shall be maintained throughout the applicable approval process. Any revisions arising during consideration or approval shall be clearly identified and incorporated into the final approved documentation.

The prescribed Curriculum and Accreditation Department templates and forms applicable under this Policy are identified in Appendix II – Prescribed Templates and Forms. The current approved version of each template or form, maintained in accordance with the Institute's document-control arrangements, shall be used.

Inclusion of a template or form in Appendix II identifies it as prescribed documentation for the purposes of this Policy but shall not require the full operational content of that template or form to be reproduced within this Policy. Templates and forms may be revised through the applicable document-control arrangements, provided that any revision remains consistent with this Policy and does not alter the governance, approval or validation authority prescribed herein.

New programmes

A proposal for a new programme shall, at the appropriate stage of development, include:

- a. the completed Programme Accreditation Template for New Programmes, setting out the programme proposal and its academic design;
- b. the proposed programme structure or programme diet;
- c. a completed Module Descriptor Template for every study unit forming part of the proposed programme, setting out the proposed academic specifications of the study unit;
- d. a completed 'New Module' Template for New Study-Unit Proposals for each newly proposed study unit to be included within the programme, providing the supporting proposal and academic development information for the new study unit;
- e. evidence relating to resources, financial implications, benchmarking, or other matters required under the applicable development and viability processes; and
- f. where online or blended delivery is proposed, the applicable E-Learning Compliance Verification Rubric, evidencing compliance with the applicable e-learning requirements.

The detailed accreditation documentation shall be developed following in-principle approval granted in accordance with this Policy. Documentation required for the initial request to the BoG shall be limited to that necessary to establish the programme intent, rationale, demand, strategic alignment, and initial resource implications.

New study units

A proposal for a new study unit shall include:

- a. the completed Module Descriptor Template, setting out the proposed academic specifications of the study unit;
- b. the completed 'New Module' Template for New Study-Unit Proposals, providing the supporting proposal and academic development information for the proposed study unit;

- c. any additional supporting documentation required according to the nature of the proposal; and
- d. where online or blended delivery is proposed, the applicable E-Learning Compliance Verification Rubric.

Amendments to existing programmes

A proposal to amend an approved programme shall be supported by documentation appropriate to the nature and extent of the proposed change. The submission shall include, as applicable:

- a. the completed Programme Amendment Form, setting out the proposed amendment, rationale for the change, source or basis of the amendment, relevant supporting evidence and assessment of its academic, structural, regulatory, resource and implementation implications;
- b. the revised programme specification and Programme Structure / Programme Diet, with the proposed changes clearly identified;
- c. revised Module Descriptor Templates, with proposed changes clearly indicated through tracked changes, for any study units affected by the proposed amendment;
- d. any additional supporting documentation or evidence required according to the nature of the proposed amendment; and
- e. where the proposed amendment involves or affects online or blended delivery, the applicable E-Learning Compliance Verification Rubric.

Programme-level amendments shall be classified and processed in accordance with the Major and Minor Amendment provisions of this Policy.

Amendments to existing study units

A proposal to amend an existing study unit shall include:

- a. the current approved Module Descriptor, with all proposed amendments clearly indicated through tracked changes;
- b. the completed Module Changes Form or, where a change in MQF Level is proposed, the Module Reclassification Form, as applicable;

- c. any additional supporting documentation required according to the nature of the proposed amendment; and
- d. where the proposed amendment involves online or blended delivery, the applicable E-Learning Compliance Verification Rubric.

For the purposes of the procedures set out below, a proposal shall be considered complete or fully documented where the documentation applicable to that proposal under this section has been completed, together with any additional supporting evidence required through the relevant development, review, or approval process.

2. Cross-cutting requirements for online and blended delivery

Any proposal for a new programme, new study unit or amendment to an existing programme or study unit involving online or blended delivery shall additionally comply with P008 E-Learning Policy and Procedure, the applicable ITS E-Learning Guidelines and the prescribed E-Learning Compliance Verification Rubric.

The applicable e-learning verification requirements, including completion of the prescribed documentation and review or verification by the E-Learning Board in accordance with the applicable e-learning governance framework, shall be completed before the proposal proceeds for final academic and quality assurance approval.

Any requirements or conditions identified through the e-learning verification process shall be satisfactorily addressed in accordance with the applicable requirements.

Any proposed amendment affecting online or blended delivery shall be assessed and classified as Major or Minor in accordance with the common amendment requirements set out in section 4 of this Part.

No programme or study unit proposed for online or blended delivery shall be implemented until the applicable e-learning verification and academic approval requirements have been satisfactorily completed.

3. Procedural oversight and coordination

The Senior Academic Manager – Academic Strategy/Curriculum shall have overall oversight of the implementation and operation of the procedures established under this Policy.

In exercising this role, the Senior Academic Manager – Academic Strategy/Curriculum shall support the consistent application of the prescribed procedures, documentation, and governance requirements; facilitate coordination between the academic and administrative areas involved in each process; and support the monitoring of the progression and completion of matters processed under this Policy.

Procedural oversight by the Senior Academic Manager – Academic Strategy/Curriculum shall not constitute academic approval, validation or institutional approval and shall not replace the responsibilities assigned to the relevant Senior Academic Manager, PAC, Board of Studies, PQVB, PRP, Board of Governors or any other body or function under this Policy.

Operational timelines, submission cut-off dates and target turnaround periods for matters processed under this Policy shall be governed by the Standard Operating Procedure – Programme Accreditation and Approval Timeline.

The Standard Operating Procedure shall establish the applicable submission and processing timetable by reference to the approved meeting schedules of the relevant academic and governance bodies and may prescribe administrative deadlines for completeness checks, circulation, submission, resubmission and communication of outcomes.

The Standard Operating Procedure shall operate within, and shall not alter, the sequence of consideration, academic approval, validation, review or institutional approval prescribed by this Policy.

4. Common requirements for programme and study-unit amendments

Assessment and classification as Major or Minor

The proposed amendment shall be classified as Major or Minor in accordance with the criteria prescribed under this Policy.

The classification shall be based on the substance and potential academic or structural impact of the proposed amendment rather than solely on the number or extent of textual changes made.

In determining whether an amendment is Major or Minor, consideration shall be given to its potential impact on one or more of the following:

- a. the original objective and rationale of the study unit or programme;
- b. the intended learning outcomes;
- c. alignment between the study-unit learning outcomes and the programme intended learning outcomes;
- d. entry requirements;
- e. the assessment strategy;
- f. ECTS credit allocation;
- g. the distribution of learning hours, including contact hours, self-study, supervised practice, placement, and assessment hours;
- h. the approved mode of delivery;
- i. teaching and learning methods;
- j. tutor or lecturer eligibility criteria;
- k. MQF Level alignment;
- l. the target student group;
- m. student participation or engagement;
- n. the structure and academic coherence of the programme; and
- o. any other material academic, regulatory, or structural component of the approved provision.

A change initially considered Minor shall be reclassified as Major where its cumulative, consequential, or indirect impact materially alters the approved design, academic integrity, learning outcomes or nature of the study unit or programme.

Major amendments

A Major Amendment is a proposed change to an approved study unit or programme that materially affects its academic integrity, design, delivery, assessment, intended learning outcomes, level, or relationship with the approved programme.

Major amendments include, but are not limited to:

- a. changes that alter the original intent or substantive content of intended learning outcomes;
- b. a change to the MQF Level of a study unit or programme;
- c. the addition or removal of core study units where this affects the programme structure or programme intended learning outcomes;
- d. a change to ECTS credit allocation or to the distribution of learning hours that materially affects the approved volume or nature of learning;
- e. substantive changes to the assessment strategy or assessment methods that alter the purpose, nature, or balance of assessment;
- f. changes to entry requirements;
- g. changes to delivery methods or target groups that affect the learning outcomes or academic design of the provision;
- h. a change to the approved mode of delivery, including a change from face-to-face provision to online or blended provision, or vice versa;
- i. changes to tutor or lecturer eligibility criteria where these affect the academic requirements for delivery;
- j. changes that materially affect the alignment of a study unit with the programme intended learning outcomes; or
- k. any combination of amendments whose cumulative effect materially alters the originally approved academic design or integrity of the study unit or programme.

A proposed amendment to a study unit which, in substance, results in a material change to the programme as a whole shall be treated as a programme amendment and shall follow the applicable programme approval and validation process.

Minor amendments

A Minor Amendment is a proposed change that does not materially alter the approved objectives, academic integrity, programme structure, intended learning outcomes, MQF Level, mode of delivery, total learning hours, ECTS credit allocation or assessment strategy of the approved provision.

Minor amendments include, but are not limited to:

- a. refinements to learning outcomes for clarity, precision, or terminology, where the original intent and level of the learning outcomes remain unchanged;
- b. clarification or enhancement of assessment criteria or instructions without changing the purpose, weighting, or substantive nature of the assessment;
- c. changes to the sequencing or timing of learning activities within a study unit or semester that do not affect total learning hours or ECTS credit allocation;
- d. updates to indicative content, reading material or references that maintain the approved aims and learning outcomes;
- e. administrative, scheduling, or operational adjustments that do not affect the accredited nature, objectives, or academic integrity of the study unit;
- f. minor amendments to teaching and learning activities that do not alter the approved mode of delivery, learning outcomes or total learning hours; and
- g. changes between synchronous and asynchronous online learning contact hours where these remain compatible with the approved delivery mode, teaching method, learning outcomes, and total learning hours.

Amendments following initial accreditation

Substantive amendments to a newly approved programme or study unit shall not normally be introduced before completion of the first full cycle of delivery to an enrolled cohort.

An earlier amendment may be considered where required for regulatory, professional, academic quality, student protection, health and safety or risk-mitigation purposes, or where other exceptional circumstances justify immediate action.

Any request for such an amendment shall include documented justification and supporting evidence and shall proceed through the applicable approval process under this Policy.

5. Central accreditation correspondence and reference control

The shared mailbox **accreditation@its.edu.mt** shall serve as the central correspondence and record point for formal matters processed under this Policy. Formal submissions, resubmissions, decisions, conditions, requests for further action, validation outcomes, PRP outputs where applicable, approvals and other material correspondence shall be sent to, or copied to, this address as applicable.

At the commencement of each matter, the **Curriculum and Accreditation Department** shall assign and record a unique Accreditation Reference Number in the Central Accreditation Register.

The Accreditation Reference Number is an administrative process-tracking reference and is separate from any official programme code, study-unit/module code or other academic identifier.

Accreditation Reference Numbers shall follow the format:

ACC-[Matter Type]-[Year]-[Sequential Number]

The following matter-type identifiers shall apply: **NP – New Programme; NSU – New Study Unit; PPR – Periodic Programme Review; PAM – Programme Amendment; SUAM – Study-Unit Amendment.**

The assigned Accreditation Reference Number shall remain associated with the matter throughout its lifecycle and shall be included in the subject line of all related formal email correspondence and, where applicable, on associated submission, approval and supporting documentation. Subject lines shall follow the general format:

[Accreditation Reference Number] – [Programme or Study-Unit Title] – [Stage or Action]

An official programme or study-unit/module code may additionally be included for identification purposes but shall remain separate from the Accreditation Reference Number.

Where a programme or study-unit amendment arises from a Periodic Programme Review, the amendment shall be assigned its own PAM or SUAM Accreditation Reference Number and shall cross-reference the originating PPR Accreditation Reference Number.

The same Accreditation Reference Number shall be retained for all revisions, resubmissions, conditions, decisions and follow-up relating to the same matter. A new Accreditation Reference Number shall be assigned only where a separate new programme, new study unit, periodic programme review or amendment is initiated.

Once an Accreditation Reference Number has been assigned, formal correspondence and submissions relating to that matter shall not proceed through the applicable approval process without the reference being clearly identified.

6. Board of Governors referral to the Board of Studies

Where, following submission for final institutional approval, the Board of Governors reverts a curriculum or syllabus to the Board of Studies together with its advice on proposed amendments in accordance with Article 10(2) of the Institute of Tourism Studies Act, the Board of Studies shall consider the advice and determine the action required.

Where the Board of Studies determines that further action, revision or development is required, the matter shall be referred to the relevant Senior Academic Manager, who shall coordinate the necessary action through the relevant PAC.

Following PAC consideration, the revised proposal, supporting documentation and PAC findings and recommendations shall be resubmitted to the Board of Studies for further academic consideration.

Where the resulting revision affects documentation previously validated or approved by the PQVB, or gives rise to requirements under the approved PRP governance framework, the revised proposal shall proceed through the applicable validation and review stages under this Policy before being returned to the Board of Studies for final consideration and onward resubmission to the Board of Governors.

Where the Board of Studies determines that no further academic revision is required in response to the advice of the Board of Governors, it shall formally record its consideration and may resubmit the matter to the Board of Governors together with its response.

No programme, study unit or amendment reverted by the Board of Governors shall be implemented until the matter has subsequently received final institutional approval from the Board of Governors.

PART II – NEW PROGRAMMES

Stage 1 – Initiation and assessment of need

The demand for the proposed programme is identified and evaluated, including its structure and the needs it is intended to meet.

The academic intent and rationale of the proposed programme are defined.

Stage 2 – In-principle approval to develop

Following the identification of demand and definition of the programme intent, the COO – Academia or their delegate shall submit the request for the initiation of the proposed programme to the BoG for in-principle approval to proceed with its development.

Programme development shall not proceed unless in-principle approval has been granted by the BoG.

In-principle approval shall constitute authorisation to proceed with the development of the proposed programme and shall not constitute programme validation or final approval, which shall remain subject to the subsequent academic and quality assurance approval process prescribed under this Policy.

Stage 3 – Programme development planning

Following in-principle approval granted in accordance with this Policy, the COO – Academia or their delegate shall notify the proposer accordingly. The approved programme intent shall be referred to the relevant PAC for programme development planning.

The proposer, which may include the relevant PAC where appropriate, shall coordinate the preparation of an action plan for the development of the proposed programme. The PAC shall support and advise on the development process in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

The action plan shall identify the principal development activities, responsibilities, supporting evidence required and anticipated resource implications.

Stage 4 – Viability assessment

Before detailed programme development proceeds, the PAC shall assess the viability of the proposed programme in accordance with P037 Programme Viability Assessment.

The viability assessment shall consider the sustainability of the proposed programme and the extent to which the identified demand, intended target group, resource requirements and other relevant considerations support its development.

The outcome of the viability assessment shall be formally recorded. Where the outcome does not support further development, the proposal shall not proceed unless the matters identified have been satisfactorily addressed.

Stage 5 – Programme design and development

Following a positive viability assessment, the proposed programme shall undergo detailed design and development under the coordination of the proposer, supported by the appropriate academic staff and with the PAC supporting the process in accordance with its Terms of Reference. Where the PAC is itself the proposer, it may coordinate the development of the programme.

The detailed programme design and development shall address, as applicable:

- a. the programme aims and intended learning outcomes;
- b. the proposed MQF Level and ECTS credit allocation;
- c. the programme structure, curriculum, and progression arrangements;
- d. the study units comprising the programme and their contribution to the programme intended learning outcomes;
- e. teaching and learning methods and the proposed mode of delivery;

- f. assessment strategy and methods;
- g. learning hours and student workload;
- h. entry requirements and intended target group;
- i. academic, human, physical and technological resources required for delivery;
- j. relevant academic, professional and industry requirements; and
- k. any other academic or quality assurance considerations relevant to the proposed programme.

Participation by the PAC in the initiation or development of a proposal shall not constitute academic approval of that proposal.

Stage 6 – Evidence and stakeholder engagement

Programme development shall be evidence-based and shall take account of appropriate internal and external input.

Evidence shall include, as applicable:

- a. identified educational, industry and societal demand;
- b. academic, professional and industry benchmarking;
- c. labour-market or sector information;
- d. relevant regulatory or professional requirements;
- e. stakeholder input, including academic, industry and other relevant external perspectives;
- f. resource and financial considerations; and
- g. any other evidence relevant to the academic quality, viability, and sustainability of the proposed programme.

Stage 7 – Programme proposal and development output

On completion of the development process, the completed programme proposal shall be fully documented through the Programme Accreditation Template, programme structure, study-unit documentation and other prescribed supporting documentation specified under this Policy. Responsibility for ensuring completion of the documentation shall rest with the proposer, supported by the appropriate academic staff and the PAC as appropriate.

The completed programme proposal shall demonstrate the rationale for the programme, the evidence supporting its development, the coherence of its academic design, the adequacy of the proposed resources and its alignment with the Institute's strategy and applicable academic and quality assurance requirements.

Where online or blended delivery is proposed, the applicable e-learning requirements shall also be completed before the proposal proceeds for approval.

Stage 8 – PAC consideration and recommendation

The PAC shall formally consider the completed programme proposal and formulate its findings and recommendation for onward academic consideration in accordance with its Terms of Reference and applicable Standard Operating Procedure. Where the PAC has participated in or coordinated the development of the proposal, its consideration at this stage shall constitute the formal recording of its advisory findings and recommendation and shall not constitute academic approval.

In formulating its findings and recommendations, the PAC shall confirm that:

- a. the programme responds to an identified and evidenced need;
- b. the programme is academically coherent and appropriately structured;
- c. the programme and study-unit learning outcomes are appropriately aligned;
- d. the teaching, learning and assessment arrangements are suitable;
- e. appropriate academic and industry benchmarking has been undertaken;
- f. the necessary resources have been identified, and any required institutional commitments have been addressed;

- g. the prescribed programme and study-unit documentation has been completed;
and
- h. any applicable quality assurance or e-learning requirements have been addressed.

Following its consideration, the PAC shall formulate its findings and recommendations. The PAC may recommend that the proposal proceed to formal academic consideration, recommend that specified matters be addressed, or recommend further development of the proposal.

The PAC's findings, rationale, recommendations, and any matters identified for further action shall be formally recorded.

Following completion of PAC consideration, the PAC shall submit the complete programme proposal, supporting documentation and its findings and recommendations to the relevant Senior Academic Manager, who shall forward them to the BoS for academic consideration and approval.

Stage 9 – BoS academic consideration and approval

Following consideration by the relevant PAC and submission by the relevant Senior Academic Manager, the proposed programme, together with the PAC's findings and recommendations and the applicable supporting documentation, shall be considered by the BoS for academic consideration and approval.

The BoS may:

- a. approve the proposed programme for onward submission to the PQVB;
- b. approve the proposed programme subject to conditions; or
- c. not approve the proposed programme and require further development.

The decision of the BoS, including any conditions, requirements or recommendations, shall be formally recorded.

Where the BoS approves the proposal subject to conditions or does not approve it, the BoS shall refer its decision and the matters requiring action to the relevant Senior Academic Manager.

The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall coordinate the necessary action through the relevant PAC. Following PAC consideration, the revised proposal, supporting documentation and the PAC's findings and recommendations shall be resubmitted by the relevant Senior Academic Manager to the BoS for further academic consideration.

The proposed programme shall proceed to the PQVB only once the BoS has granted academic approval for onward submission.

Stage 10 – PQVB validation and determination

Following academic approval by the BoS for onward submission, the proposed programme shall be submitted to the PQVB for validation in accordance with the applicable regulatory and institutional quality assurance requirements.

Following its consideration, the PQVB may:

- a. validate and approve the proposed programme;
- b. approve the proposed programme subject to conditions; or
- c. not approve the proposed programme.

The PQVB's determination, including any conditions and recommendations, shall be formally recorded using the approved PQVB determination documentation and shall in all cases form part of the documentation submitted to the BoS for final consideration.

Where the PQVB grants final validation and approval, the requirements of the approved PRP governance framework shall be applied where the proposed programme falls within the scope of that framework. Where PRP review is not required under the approved governance framework, the proposed programme shall proceed directly to the BoS for final consideration.

Where the PQVB approves the programme subject to conditions or does not approve it, the PQVB determination shall proceed directly to the BoS for final consideration and determination of the action required.

Stage 11 – PRP governance requirements

Where the proposed programme falls within the scope of the approved PRP governance framework, the programme shall proceed through that framework following final validation and approval by the PQVB.

The PRP shall undertake its review in accordance with the applicable governance framework and shall consider, as appropriate, the relevance, content, and quality of the programme, including curriculum relevance, practical skills, employability, innovation, industry requirements, and student needs.

The PRP shall prepare a report setting out its findings and recommendations.

The PRP report, together with any findings, recommendations and follow-up requirements arising from the review, shall be submitted to the COO – Academia or their delegate.

The COO – Academia or their delegate shall forward the PRP report and associated documentation to the BoS for final consideration.

The findings and recommendations of the PRP shall not in themselves constitute approval of the programme or of any proposed revision to it.

Any applicable transparency, public disclosure and ongoing stakeholder communication requirements arising from PRP review shall be fulfilled in accordance with the approved PRP governance framework.

Stage 12 – BoS final consideration

The BoS shall undertake final consideration of the proposed programme:

- a. following receipt of the PQVB determination where the PQVB has approved the programme subject to conditions or has not approved the programme; or
- b. following final PQVB validation and approval and, where applicable, completion of the requirements prescribed under the approved PRP governance framework, including receipt of any PRP report and associated documentation forwarded by the COO – Academia or their delegate.

In undertaking final consideration, the BoS shall consider:

- a. its earlier academic decision;
- b. the PQVB determination, including any conditions and recommendations;
- c. any PRP findings, recommendations and follow-up requirements arising under the approved PRP governance framework; and

- d. any revised or additional documentation submitted in response to those matters.

Where the PQVB has approved the programme subject to conditions or has not approved it, or where the PRP has made recommendations or identified matters requiring action, the BoS shall determine whether its earlier academic approval may be confirmed or whether further action, revision or development is required.

Where the BoS determines that no further revision to the academic proposal is required, it may confirm its earlier academic approval and shall formally record that determination. Confirmation by the BoS shall not remove or override any outstanding PQVB condition or determination. Any outstanding PQVB requirements shall be addressed, and the programme shall be returned to the PQVB for further consideration and final approval as required.

Where further action, revision or development is required, the BoS shall refer the matter to the relevant Senior Academic Manager. The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall coordinate the necessary action through the relevant PAC. Following PAC consideration, the revised proposal, supporting documentation and the PAC's findings and recommendations shall be resubmitted to the BoS and, where required having regard to the nature of the revisions, to the PQVB.

Where action arising from PRP findings or recommendations requires revision of documentation previously approved by the BoS or validated by the PQVB, the revised documentation shall follow the applicable academic approval and validation stages before the matter returns to BoS final consideration.

Where the BoS is satisfied that final PQVB validation and approval has been obtained and that all applicable PRP requirements, findings, recommendations, and follow-up actions have been satisfactorily completed or addressed, the BoS shall confirm its final academic position and recommend the proposed programme to the BoG for final institutional approval.

No proposed programme shall proceed to the BoG unless final PQVB validation and approval has been obtained and any applicable requirements prescribed under the approved PRP governance framework have been satisfactorily completed.

Stage 13 – BoG final institutional consideration and approval

Following recommendation by the BoS at final consideration, and provided that final PQVB validation and approval has been obtained and any applicable requirements prescribed under the approved PRP governance framework have been satisfactorily completed, the proposed programme shall be submitted to the BoG for final institutional approval.

Approval by the BoG at this stage shall constitute authorisation for the Institute to proceed with the implementation and offering of the programme, subject to any applicable external regulatory or accreditation requirements.

Where the Board of Governors reverts the curriculum or syllabus to the Board of Studies together with its advice on proposed amendments, the matter shall proceed in accordance with section 6 of Part I of this Procedure.

Stage 14 – Implementation, records, and version control

The final approved version of the programme documentation shall be clearly identified and retained, together with the PAC findings and recommendations, the decisions and records of approval and validation of the BoS, PQVB and BoG, and any PRP report and associated follow-up documentation arising under the approved PRP governance framework.

Any conditions, recommendations or actions arising during the academic approval, validation or external peer review process shall be recorded and tracked to completion. Evidence that all requirements to be satisfied prior to implementation have been satisfactorily addressed shall be retained with the programme approval record.

The relevant PQVB validation report shall be finalised and shall accurately reflect the final validation decision, any conditions or recommendations imposed and their status. Any PRP report, resulting action plan and evidence of follow-up arising under the approved PRP governance framework shall also form part of the formal programme record.

The final programme record shall include, as applicable, the approved programme specification, curriculum structure, study-unit documentation, credit allocation, assessment arrangements, approved resource requirements, and any other documentation forming part of the approved programme.

Following final institutional approval, the Senior Academic Manager – Academic Strategy/Curriculum shall notify the proposer in writing of the final approval outcome, copying the relevant Programme Coordinator, the relevant Senior Academic Manager, and the COO – Academia.

The Curriculum and Accreditation Department shall ensure that the final approved Module Descriptors are recorded in the controlled Curriculum SharePoint repository for the applicable academic year in accordance with the approved Programme Diet and that the programme information and corresponding Module Descriptors published on the Institute website are updated to reflect the final approved version.

No version of the programme other than the version formally approved through this procedure shall be treated as the authorised programme for implementation.

The approved programme and study-unit documentation shall include a clear record of the prescribed templates and supporting documentation forming part of the approval record, including any applicable e-learning verification documentation.

PART III – NEW STUDY UNITS

Stage 1 – Proposal and assessment of need

A new study unit may be proposed independently of the development or periodic review of a programme where an academic, industry, regulatory, professional, operational, or other identified need exists.

The rationale and intended purpose of the proposed study unit shall be identified, including its intended relationship with any existing programme or programmes in which it is proposed to be included, or its intended purpose where proposed as standalone provision.

Stage 2 – Study-unit design and documentation

The proposer shall develop the proposed study unit using the prescribed 'New Module' Template and Module Descriptor, together with any other supporting documentation required under this Policy.

The proposed study unit shall address, as applicable:

- a. its rationale and intended learning outcomes;
- b. the proposed MQF Level and ECTS credit allocation;
- c. its relationship and contribution to the intended learning outcomes and structure of any programme in which it is proposed to be included;
- d. learning hours and student workload;
- e. teaching and learning methods;
- f. assessment strategy and methods;
- g. mode of delivery;
- h. intended target group and any applicable entry requirements;
- i. academic, human, physical and technological resource requirements; and
- j. any other academic, professional, industry, or quality assurance considerations relevant to the proposal.

Where online or blended delivery is proposed, the applicable e-learning requirements shall also be completed in accordance with this Policy.

Stage 3 – PAC consideration and recommendation

The completed proposal shall be submitted to the relevant PAC for formal consideration in accordance with its Terms of Reference and applicable Standard Operating Procedure.

In formulating its findings and recommendations, the PAC shall confirm that:

- a. the proposed study unit responds to an identified and justified need;
- b. its academic design, intended learning outcomes, level and credit allocation are appropriate;
- c. where it is intended to form part of an existing programme, it is academically coherent with and appropriately contributes to that programme;
- d. the teaching, learning and assessment arrangements are suitable;

- e. the relevant resource implications have been identified and addressed;
- f. the prescribed documentation has been completed; and
- g. any applicable quality assurance or e-learning requirements have been addressed.

Following its consideration, the PAC shall formulate its findings and recommendations. The PAC may recommend that the proposal proceed to formal academic consideration, recommend that specified matters be addressed, or recommend further development of the proposal.

The PAC's findings, rationale, recommendations, and any matters identified for further action shall be formally recorded.

Where the PAC has initiated or participated in the development of the proposed study unit, its consideration at this stage shall remain advisory and shall not constitute academic approval.

Following completion of PAC consideration, the PAC shall submit the complete proposal, supporting documentation and its findings and recommendations to the relevant Senior Academic Manager, who shall forward them to the BoS for academic consideration and approval.

Stage 4 – BoS academic consideration and approval

The BoS shall consider the academic merits, design, and standards of the proposed study unit together with the PAC's findings and recommendations.

The BoS may:

- a. approve the proposed study unit for onward submission to the PQVB;
- b. approve the proposed study unit subject to conditions; or
- c. not approve the proposed study unit and require further development.

The decision of the BoS, including any conditions, requirements or recommendations, shall be formally recorded.

Where the BoS approves the proposal subject to conditions or does not approve it, the BoS shall refer its decision and the matters requiring action to the relevant Senior Academic Manager.

The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall coordinate the necessary action through the relevant PAC. Following PAC consideration, the revised proposal, supporting documentation and the PAC's findings and recommendations shall be resubmitted by the relevant Senior Academic Manager to the BoS for further academic consideration.

The proposed study unit shall proceed to the PQVB only once the BoS has granted academic approval for onward submission.

Stage 5 – PQVB validation and determination

Following academic approval by the BoS for onward submission, the proposed study unit shall be submitted to the PQVB for validation and determination in accordance with the applicable academic governance and quality assurance requirements.

Following its consideration, the PQVB may:

- a. approve the proposed study unit;
- b. approve the proposed study unit subject to conditions; or
- c. not approve the proposed study unit.

The PQVB's determination, including any conditions and recommendations, shall be formally recorded using the approved PQVB determination documentation and shall in all cases form part of the documentation submitted to the BoS for final consideration.

Where the PQVB grants final approval, the proposed study unit shall proceed directly to the BoS for final consideration.

The PRP governance framework shall not apply to an individual new study-unit proposal.

Where the PQVB approves the proposed study unit subject to conditions or does not approve it, the PQVB determination shall proceed directly to the BoS for final consideration and determination of the action required.

Stage 6 – BoS final consideration

The BoS shall undertake final consideration of the proposed study unit following receipt of the PQVB determination.

In undertaking final consideration, the BoS shall consider its earlier academic decision, the PQVB determination, including any conditions and recommendations, and any revised or additional documentation submitted in response.

Where the PQVB has approved the proposed study unit subject to conditions or has not approved it, the BoS shall determine whether its earlier academic approval may be confirmed or whether further action, revision or development is required.

Where the BoS determines that no further academic revision is required, it may confirm its earlier academic approval. Such confirmation shall not override any outstanding PQVB determination or condition, which shall be addressed and returned to the PQVB for final determination as required.

Where further action, revision or development is required, the BoS shall refer the matter to the relevant Senior Academic Manager, who shall coordinate the necessary action through the relevant PAC. The revised proposal and PAC findings and recommendations shall thereafter be resubmitted through the applicable academic approval and validation stages as required.

Where the BoS is satisfied that final PQVB approval has been obtained, the BoS shall confirm its final academic position and recommend the proposed study unit to the BoG for final institutional approval.

No proposed study unit shall proceed to the BoG unless final PQVB approval has been obtained.

Stage 7 – BoG final institutional consideration and approval

Following recommendation by the BoS at final consideration, and provided that final PQVB approval has been obtained, the proposed study unit shall be submitted to the BoG for final institutional approval.

Approval by the BoG shall constitute authorisation for the Institute to proceed with implementation of the study unit, subject to any applicable external regulatory or accreditation requirements.

No new study unit shall be implemented or incorporated into an approved programme until the applicable approval process has been completed and formal notification of approval has been issued.

Where the Board of Governors reverts the curriculum or syllabus to the Board of Studies together with its advice on proposed amendments, the matter shall proceed in accordance with section 6 of Part I of this Procedure.

Stage 8 – Implementation and records

Following final approval, the approved Module Descriptor and associated approval documentation shall constitute the authorised record of the study unit for implementation and delivery.

Where the study unit is approved for inclusion within an existing programme, the relevant programme records and Programme Diet shall be updated accordingly by the Curriculum and Accreditation Department.

PART IV – MONITORING AND PERIODIC PROGRAMME REVIEW

Stage 1 – Ongoing programme monitoring

All approved programmes shall be subject to ongoing monitoring to assess their effectiveness, currency, relevance, academic standards, student experience, resource requirements and alignment with the needs of industry and other relevant stakeholders.

Ongoing programme monitoring shall draw, as applicable, on the programme-related quality assurance and monitoring mechanisms established under the Institute's applicable quality management framework, including module and programme self-review outputs, student feedback, programme audit findings, relevant annual and departmental reporting, stakeholder feedback, Board and Committee records and other appropriate academic and quality assurance evidence.

Outputs arising from ongoing monitoring shall be considered by the responsible academic and quality assurance functions in accordance with the applicable institutional arrangements and shall inform programme enhancement, corrective action and the evidence base for subsequent periodic programme review.

Where ongoing monitoring identifies an action that would alter approved programme or study-unit provision, the matter shall constitute a proposed amendment and shall be processed in accordance with the applicable programme and study-unit amendment provisions of this Policy.

Information arising from ongoing monitoring may also trigger an earlier holistic programme review where material concerns, significant changes or opportunities for programme enhancement are identified.

Ongoing monitoring and any annual quality assurance or reporting processes applicable to the programme shall not replace the holistic periodic programme review required under Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Periodic programme review

Each programme shall undergo a holistic programme review at least once every five years.

The review shall be undertaken by the relevant PAC in accordance with its Terms of Reference and the applicable Standard Operating Procedure.

The purpose of the programme review shall be to:

- a. evaluate the effectiveness and educational sustainability of the programme;
- b. assess whether the programme and study-unit learning outcomes remain appropriate and are being achieved;
- c. ensure that the programme remains academically current and relevant to developments in the discipline, professional practice, and industry;
- d. evaluate the programme structure, curriculum, mode of delivery, teaching and learning methods and assessment arrangements;
- e. consider the adequacy and effective utilisation of academic and other learning resources;
- f. identify opportunities for programme enhancement and areas requiring corrective action;

- g. consider the views of students, academic staff, industry, and other relevant stakeholders; and
- h. ensure the continued quality, standards, and relevance of the programme.

Stage 3 – Evidence for programme review

The PAC shall undertake the programme review on the basis of appropriate quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Evidence shall include, as applicable:

- a. programme and study-unit learning outcomes;
- b. programme structure, curriculum, and progression arrangements;
- c. teaching and learning methods and modes of delivery;
- d. assessment methods and student performance;
- e. student progression, completion, and achievement data;
- f. admissions, applications, enrolment, and other relevant student data;
- g. student feedback;
- h. academic staff feedback and study-unit self-review;
- i. external examiner, evaluator, or other external reviewer reports;
- j. relevant BoS decisions and recommendations;
- k. industry and employer feedback;
- l. graduate and employability information, where available;
- m. academic, professional and industry benchmarking;
- n. resource availability and utilisation;
- o. relevant regulatory or professional requirements; and
- p. any other evidence considered relevant to the effectiveness, quality, sustainability, or continued relevance of the programme.

Stage 4 – Programme evaluation

In conducting the periodic programme review, the PAC shall evaluate the programme as a whole and determine whether its aims, learning outcomes, curriculum, assessment arrangements, resources, and mode of delivery remain appropriate, current, and coherent.

The review shall consider the effectiveness and continued relevance of the programme and its constituent study units, including whether changes are required to learning outcomes, learning hours, assessment arrangements, teaching and learning methods, delivery methodology, credit allocation, programme structure, or other academic elements.

The PAC shall identify strengths, areas for enhancement, risks, resource implications, and any action necessary to maintain or improve programme quality.

Stage 5 – Programme Review Report

Following completion of the review, the PAC shall prepare a formal Programme Review Report setting out the evidence considered, evaluation undertaken, conclusions reached and recommendations made.

The Programme Review Report shall include, as applicable:

- a. the programme's aims and overarching objectives;
- b. an evaluation of programme and study-unit learning outcomes;
- c. an evaluation of the curriculum and programme structure;
- d. an evaluation of teaching, learning, and assessment arrangements;
- e. an evaluation of progression and achievement;
- f. an evaluation of learning resources and their utilisation;
- g. stakeholder feedback and relevant benchmarking;
- h. identified strengths and areas for improvement;
- i. proposed programme or study-unit amendments;
- j. resource implications;

- k. an action plan identifying responsible persons and target dates; and
- l. supporting evidence.

Stage 6 – PAC consideration and recommendations

The PAC shall formally consider the completed Programme Review Report and the findings and recommendations arising from the review in accordance with its Terms of Reference and applicable Standard Operating Procedure.

In formulating its findings and recommendations, the PAC shall confirm that:

- a. the review has been undertaken on the basis of appropriate quantitative and qualitative evidence and relevant stakeholder input;
- b. the findings and recommendations are supported by the evidence considered during the review;
- c. the continued academic coherence, quality, currency, and relevance of the programme have been appropriately evaluated;
- d. any identified need for programme or study-unit amendment is justified and its academic, resource and implementation implications have been appropriately considered;
- e. identified areas for enhancement or corrective action are supported by an appropriate action plan, including responsible persons and target dates, where applicable; and
- f. the Programme Review Report and supporting documentation are sufficiently complete to support the conclusions and recommendations made.

Following its consideration, the PAC shall formally record its findings and recommendations, including whether:

- a. no change to any approved programme or study-unit provision is recommended;
- b. one or more changes to approved programme or study-unit provision are recommended and should be developed as proposed amendments; or

- c. further information, evaluation, development, or evidence is required before the PAC's recommendations can be finalised.

The PAC's findings, rationale, recommendations, proposed actions, and any matters requiring further attention shall be formally recorded.

A PAC recommendation that an amendment should be developed shall not constitute approval of the amendment.

Stage 7 – Submission through the Senior Academic Manager

Following PAC consideration, the PAC shall submit the Programme Review Report, its findings and recommendations, the proposed action plan, and the relevant supporting documentation to the relevant Senior Academic Manager.

The Senior Academic Manager shall forward the Programme Review Report, PAC feedback and recommendations and the supporting documentation to the BoS for consideration and action within the Institute's established academic governance processes.

Stage 8 – BoS consideration and determination

The BoS shall consider the Programme Review Report together with the PAC's findings and recommendations and shall determine the action to be taken.

Following its consideration, the BoS may:

- a. determine that no change to an approved programme or study-unit provision is to be pursued and that the relevant non-amendment actions arising from the review may proceed;
- b. determine that one or more proposed programme or study-unit amendments should be developed and processed in accordance with the programme and study-unit amendments provisions of this Policy; or
- c. refer particular matters for further evaluation, development, or evidence before determining the action to be taken.

The outcome of the BoS's consideration, including any actions, recommendations or matters requiring further attention, shall be formally recorded.

Consideration of the Programme Review Report and its recommendations by the BoS, including a determination that an amendment should be developed, shall not in itself constitute formal approval of the amendment.

Stage 9 – Review outcome and action

Where the BoS determines that no change to an approved programme or study-unit provision is to be pursued, any improvement, enhancement or corrective actions identified through the review may be implemented through the Senior Academic Manager by the responsible academic or administrative functions in accordance with the resulting action plan, provided that such actions do not alter any approved programme or study-unit provision.

Where an action would result in a change to an approved programme or study unit, it shall constitute a proposed amendment and shall be processed in accordance with the programme and study-unit amendments provisions of this Policy.

Where the BoS determines that a programme or study-unit amendment should be developed, the detailed amendment shall be developed separately using the prescribed documentation applicable to the nature of the proposed change and shall be processed in accordance with Part V – Amendments Arising from Periodic Programme Review of this Policy.

Any detailed programme or study-unit amendment arising from the review shall be developed and submitted through the prescribed amendment approval route within two months from the BoS's determination that the amendment should be developed unless a different timeframe is formally established for justified reasons.

No amendment arising from programme review shall be implemented until the applicable approval process has been completed and formal notification of approval has been issued.

Stage 10 – Implementation and action monitoring

Actions arising from programme review that do not alter the approved programme or study-unit provision shall be implemented by the Senior Academic Manager through the responsible academic and administrative functions within the timescales established in the action plan arising from the review and BoS consideration.

Any action that would alter an approved programme or study unit shall be treated as a proposed amendment and shall not be implemented until the full approval process prescribed under Part V – Amendments Arising from Periodic Programme Review has been completed and formal notification of approval has been issued.

The PAC shall monitor progress against the action plan and shall support the follow-up, completion and recording of actions arising from programme review.

Stage 11 – Programme records and version control

The Programme Review Report, supporting evidence, PAC findings and recommendations, the record of BoS consideration and action, and the resulting action plan shall form part of the formal programme review record.

Where the programme review results in an approved programme or study-unit amendment, the relevant programme and study-unit records shall be updated in the Institute's programme database and other relevant academic and quality assurance systems following completion of the applicable approval process.

The Institute shall retain, as applicable:

- a. the Programme Review Report and supporting evidence;
- b. PAC minutes, findings, and recommendations;
- c. the record of BoS consideration, decisions and actions arising from the programme review;
- d. the resulting action plan and evidence of completion;
- e. records of the approval and validation of any programme or study-unit amendments arising from the review, including decisions of the BoS, PQVB and BoG and any PRP documentation arising under the approved PRP governance framework;
- f. the final approved programme and study-unit documentation arising from any amendment; and
- g. a record of the effective date of any revised programme or study unit.

Where the review does not result in an approved amendment, the existing formally approved version of the programme and its study units shall remain the authorised version for implementation and delivery.

PART V – AMENDMENTS ARISING FROM PERIODIC PROGRAMME REVIEW

Stage 1 – Initiation following programme review

Where the BoS determines under Part IV that one or more changes to approved programme or study-unit provision should be pursued, the BoS shall refer the matter to the relevant Senior Academic Manager for development of the required amendment.

The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall coordinate the development of the amendment through the relevant PAC.

At this stage, the PAC shall not reconsider whether an amendment is required. The purpose of its involvement shall be to translate the BoS determination into a specific and fully documented amendment proposal.

In doing so, the PAC shall coordinate, as appropriate:

- a. the definition of the precise change proposed;
- b. preparation of the prescribed amendment documentation;
- c. assessment of the academic, structural, resource and implementation implications of the proposed change;
- d. classification of the amendment as Major or Minor in accordance with this Policy;
- e. preparation or revision of the relevant programme or study-unit documentation;
and
- f. collection of any supporting evidence required for formal consideration of the amendment.

The BoS determination that an amendment should be developed shall not constitute approval of the resulting amendment.

Stage 2 – Preparation of amendment documentation

The proposed amendment shall be developed using the prescribed documentation applicable to the nature of the proposed change.

The relevant form shall provide the rationale for the proposed change and the information and supporting evidence required for its consideration.

Proposed amendments shall be assessed in relation to their impact on the study unit and on the programme as a whole.

Stage 3 – Assessment and classification

The proposed amendment shall be assessed and classified as Major or Minor in accordance with the common amendment requirements set out in Part I of this Procedure.

The classification shall be confirmed as part of the PAC's formal consideration of the detailed amendment proposal.

Stage 4 – PAC consideration of the detailed amendment proposal

Following completion of the detailed amendment documentation, the PAC shall formally consider the proposed amendment in its developed form.

This consideration shall concern the academic appropriateness, impact, classification, and completeness of the specific amendment proposed and shall be distinct from the PAC's earlier recommendation during programme review that an amendment should be developed.

The PAC shall:

- a. consider whether the proposed amendment appropriately addresses the matter identified through programme review and the subsequent BoS determination;
- b. assess the academic rationale and supporting evidence;
- c. confirm or determine the classification of the amendment as Major or Minor;
- d. consider its impact on the study unit and programme as a whole;

- e. consider any academic, regulatory, resource or implementation implications; and
- f. formulate its recommendation on whether the detailed amendment should proceed to formal academic consideration by the BoS.

The PAC's findings, classification, rationale, and recommendation shall be formally recorded.

Following PAC consideration, the PAC shall submit the completed amendment proposal, supporting documentation, classification and its findings and recommendation to the relevant Senior Academic Manager.

The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall forward the complete submission to the BoS, and the proposed amendment shall thereafter proceed in accordance with Part VII – Common Approval Route for Programme and Study-Unit Amendments.

PART VI – INDEPENDENT PROGRAMME AND STUDY-UNIT AMENDMENTS

Stage 1 – Identification and initiation of an independent amendment

A need to amend an approved programme or study unit may be identified independently of the periodic programme review process.

Such a need may arise from academic developments, student or lecturer feedback, external examiner recommendations, industry or professional requirements, audit findings, benchmarking, operational considerations, changes in teaching or assessment practice, regulatory requirements, or other quality assurance findings.

Individual study units may therefore be reviewed and amended independently of a holistic programme review where such a need is identified.

A proposed independent amendment may be initiated by an individual or body with a legitimate academic or operational interest in the approved provision and shall be developed and documented in accordance with the requirements prescribed under this Part before being submitted to the relevant PAC for formal consideration.

Identification of a need for change shall not in itself constitute approval of the resulting amendment.

Stage 2 – Preparation of amendment documentation

The proposed amendment shall be developed using the prescribed documentation applicable to the nature of the proposed change.

The documentation shall clearly identify:

- a. the change proposed;
- b. the rationale and evidence supporting the need for the change;
- c. the approved programme or study-unit provision affected;
- d. the academic, structural, regulatory, resource and implementation implications of the proposed change, as applicable; and
- e. any revised programme or study-unit documentation required to give effect to the proposed amendment.

The amendment shall be documented in accordance with the requirements prescribed under Part I of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Assessment and classification

The proposed amendment shall be assessed and classified as Major or Minor in accordance with the common amendment requirements set out in Part I of this Procedure.

The proposed classification shall be confirmed as part of the PAC's formal consideration of the amendment.

Stage 4 – PAC consideration, classification, and recommendation

Following completion of the required amendment documentation, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to the relevant PAC for formal consideration.

The PAC shall:

- a. consider the academic rationale and supporting evidence for the proposed amendment;
- b. assess the amendment in the context of the study unit and programme as a whole;

- c. confirm or determine its classification as Major or Minor in accordance with this Policy;
- d. consider any academic, regulatory, resource or implementation implications;
- e. determine whether the proposed documentation is sufficiently complete to support formal academic consideration; and
- f. formulate its recommendation on whether the proposed amendment should proceed to the BoS for formal academic consideration and approval.

The PAC's classification, findings, rationale, recommendations, and any matters requiring further action shall be formally recorded.

Where the PAC has initiated or participated in the development of the proposed amendment, its consideration and recommendation at this stage shall remain advisory and shall not constitute academic approval of the amendment.

Following PAC consideration, the PAC shall submit the completed amendment proposal, supporting documentation, classification and its findings and recommendations to the relevant Senior Academic Manager.

The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall forward the complete submission to the BoS, and the proposed amendment shall thereafter proceed in accordance with Part VII – Common Approval Route for Programme and Study-Unit Amendments.

Part VII – Common Approval Route for Programme and Study-Unit Amendments

The approval route prescribed in this Part applies to all programme and study-unit amendments, whether arising from periodic programme review under Part V or initiated independently under Part VI.

Stage 1 – BoS academic consideration and approval

The BoS shall consider the academic merits of the proposed amendment together with the PAC's classification, findings, and recommendations.

The BoS may:

- a. approve the proposed amendment for onward submission to the PQVB;
- b. approve the proposed amendment subject to conditions; or
- c. not approve the proposed amendment and require further development.

The decision of the BoS, including any conditions, requirements or recommendations, shall be formally recorded.

Where the BoS approves the amendment subject to conditions or does not approve it, the BoS shall refer its decision and the matters requiring action to the relevant Senior Academic Manager.

The relevant Senior Academic Manager shall coordinate the necessary action through the relevant PAC. Following PAC consideration, the revised amendment documentation, supporting evidence, classification and PAC findings and recommendations shall be resubmitted by the relevant Senior Academic Manager to the BoS for further academic consideration.

The proposed amendment shall proceed to the PQVB only once the BoS has granted academic approval for onward submission.

Following BoS approval for onward submission, both Major and Minor amendments shall be submitted to the PQVB for consideration and determination.

Stage 2 – PQVB consideration and determination

Following its consideration, the PQVB may:

- a. approve the proposed amendment;
- b. approve the proposed amendment subject to conditions; or
- c. not approve the proposed amendment.

The PQVB's determination, including any conditions and recommendations, shall be formally recorded using the approved PQVB determination documentation and shall in all cases form part of the documentation submitted to the BoS for final consideration.

Where the PQVB grants final approval:

- a. an individual study-unit amendment shall proceed directly to the BoS for final consideration; and
- b. a programme amendment shall proceed through the approved PRP governance framework where the amendment falls within the scope of that framework and shall otherwise proceed directly to the BoS for final consideration.

Where the PQVB approves the proposed amendment subject to conditions or does not approve it, the PQVB determination shall proceed directly to the BoS for final consideration and determination of the action required.

Stage 3 – PRP governance requirements for programme amendments

Where a programme amendment falls within the scope of the approved PRP governance framework, the requirements of that framework shall be applied following final PQVB approval.

Any PRP report, findings, recommendations or follow-up requirements arising under that framework shall be submitted to the COO – Academia or their delegate, who shall forward the PRP outcome and associated documentation to the BoS for final consideration.

Any PRP findings or recommendations shall remain advisory and shall not constitute academic, validation or institutional approval.

The PRP governance framework shall not apply to an individual study-unit amendment. Where, however, a proposed study-unit amendment is required under Part I of this Policy to be treated as a programme amendment because of its material effect on the programme as a whole, it shall be treated as a programme-level amendment for the purposes of this Stage.

Stage 4 – BoS final consideration

The BoS shall undertake final consideration of the proposed amendment:

- a. following receipt of the PQVB determination where the PQVB has approved the amendment subject to conditions or has not approved it;
- b. following final PQVB approval in the case of an individual study-unit amendment;
or
- c. in the case of a programme amendment, following final PQVB approval and, where applicable, completion of the requirements prescribed under the approved PRP governance framework, including receipt of any PRP report and associated documentation forwarded by the COO – Academia or their delegate.

The BoS shall consider its earlier academic decision, the PQVB determination, any applicable PRP findings, recommendations or follow-up requirements in the case of a programme amendment, and any revised or additional documentation submitted in response.

Where the PQVB has approved the amendment subject to conditions or has not approved it, or where PRP findings or recommendations require action, the BoS shall determine whether its earlier academic approval may be confirmed or whether further action, revision or development is required.

Where the BoS determines that no further academic revision is required, it may confirm its earlier academic approval. Such confirmation shall not override any outstanding PQVB determination or condition, which shall be addressed and returned to the PQVB for final determination as required.

Where further action, revision or development is required, the BoS shall refer the matter to the relevant Senior Academic Manager, who shall coordinate the necessary action through the relevant PAC. The revised amendment and PAC findings and recommendations shall thereafter be resubmitted through the applicable academic approval and validation stages as required.

Where action arising from PRP findings or recommendations affects documentation previously approved by the BoS or validated by the PQVB, the revised documentation shall follow the applicable academic approval and validation stages before the matter returns to BoS final consideration.

Where the BoS is satisfied that final PQVB approval has been obtained and, in the case of a programme amendment falling within the scope of the approved PRP governance framework, that the applicable PRP requirements and resulting follow-up have been satisfactorily completed, the BoS shall confirm its final academic position and recommend the proposed amendment to the BoG for final institutional approval.

No amendment shall proceed to the BoG unless final PQVB approval has been obtained. In the case of a programme amendment falling within the scope of the approved PRP governance framework, any applicable PRP requirements shall also have been satisfactorily completed.

Stage 5 – BoG final institutional consideration and approval

Following recommendation by the BoS at final consideration, and provided that final PQVB approval has been obtained and, in the case of a programme amendment falling within the scope of the approved PRP governance framework, any applicable PRP requirements have been satisfactorily completed, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to the BoG for final institutional approval.

Approval by the BoG shall constitute authorisation for implementation of the amendment, subject to any applicable external regulatory or accreditation requirements.

Where the Board of Governors reverts the curriculum or syllabus to the Board of Studies together with its advice on proposed amendments, the matter shall proceed in accordance with section 6 of Part I of this Procedure.

Stage 6 – Implementation and version control

No study-unit or programme amendment shall be implemented, communicated as effective, incorporated into the programme diet, or reflected in delivery until the applicable approval process has been completed and formal notification of approval has been issued.

The final approved study-unit descriptor, programme specification or other relevant documentation shall be recorded as the authorised version and retained within the Institute's academic and quality assurance records.

Any conditions attached to an approval shall be recorded and satisfactorily addressed before implementation unless the approving body expressly determines otherwise.

C. DOCUMENT RETENTION

Category	Retention Period
Programme initiation, development, approval, and validation records	5 years
New study-unit proposal and approval records	5 years
Programme review records	5 years
Programme and study-unit amendment records	5 years
Supporting academic, quality assurance and validation documentation	5 years
PRP reports, action plans, and follow-up records	5 years
Accreditation correspondence and Central Accreditation Register	5 years

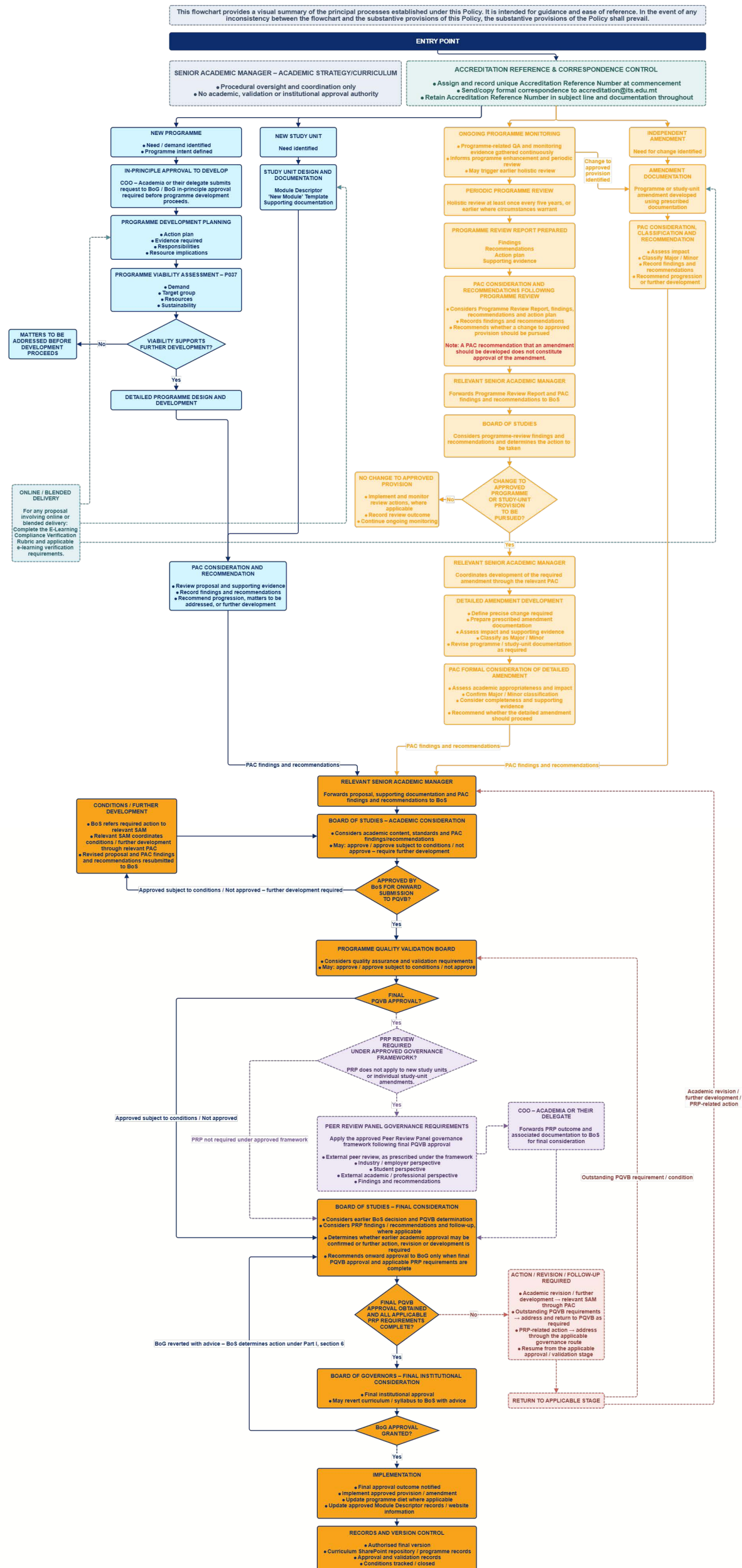
D. REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed every five years, or earlier if required due to regulatory or institutional changes.

E. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Purpose of Review/ Changes	Date Published	Date of Next Review
1	Initial consolidated version replacing and incorporating P034 Initiation of New Programmes and P051 Study Programme Review and establishing a unified framework for programme and study-unit development, approval, monitoring, review, and amendment.	2026	2031

F. APPENDIX I – PROGRAMME LIFECYCLE AND APPROVAL FLOW



G. APPENDIX II – PRESCRIBED TEMPLATES AND FORMS

The following constitute the prescribed Curriculum and Accreditation Department templates and forms under this Policy.

New Programmes and Study Units:

 PAT NP	 MDT	 NMT NSU
Programme Accreditation Template for New Programmes	Module Descriptor Template	'New Module' Template for New Study-Unit Proposals

Revisions to Programmes and Study Units:

 PAF	 MCF	 MRF
Programme Amendment Form	Module Changes Form	Module Reclassification Form

The E-Learning Compliance Verification Rubric, where applicable, constitutes prescribed supporting documentation under P008 E-Learning Policy and Procedure and the applicable e-learning governance arrangements and is not a Curriculum and Accreditation Department template.

The current approved version of each prescribed template or form shall be used. The standalone operational Scheme of Work, Learning Outcomes Matrix, Grading Rubric Sheet and Practical Assessment Sheet issued to academic staff for semester delivery are not prescribed forms under this Policy and are therefore not included in this Appendix.