

Section 6: Course Documentation

- 6.1 The course documentation that applicants access help inform students on their journey through the course cycle from why they should come to the University of Westminster, through to graduation. It is therefore important that through the course validation, cyclical review and modifications processes that these documents reflect accurate information, which is then considered for approval. Documentation published to applicants and students should meet digital accessibility requirements. Course documentation will also inform published information and external government returns.

Programme Specification

- 6.2 A Programme Specification is a concise description of the course. They should be written for prospective and current students and are published externally on the University webpages as part of the course information. The document differs from marketing material in that it must also meet external benchmarks and internal expectation and is subject to formal approval. The University's standard format considers external guidance on the setting of appropriate outputs for students at the course level. Programme specifications can include several linked differing awards, this is encouraged to show applicants the differences between similar cognate groups of courses and to avoid duplication.
- 6.3 The primary users of the Programme Specification will be applicants, current students, external examiners, professional bodies, potential employers of graduates and external auditors. The document is also published in E Vision for students and all staff and will also be used to ensure accuracy of information on the Student Record System for external reporting, informing the course details on the web and prospectuses e.g. duration of the course, September start, mode of study and approved course structure.
- 6.4 A Programme Specification is required for the purpose of validation and ongoing re-approval processes; including course level modifications (including module title changes) made as part of the course modifications process.

Course Handbook

- 6.5 The Course Handbook is the main reference for students in navigating the overview of their course and overall university experience. It is expected that this document is reviewed annually to ensure that the information remains accurate and up to date. Any changes to course structures, modules, and academic regulations will be expected to have followed the appropriate process, annual operational updates are expected. Courses are encouraged to include relevant course specific information which will help students navigate their course. A template is available from the Quality and Standards Office.
- 6.6 Where a group of awards form a cognate group of courses, it may be judged more appropriate to produce the Course Handbooks collectively in a single document to avoid duplication. Colleges may also choose to provide common student support information in a College handbook or School handbook.

Module Proforma/Descriptor

- 6.7 The Quality and Standards Office publishes a template for all modules known as the module proforma. All module syllabuses must be published in the agreed template and published to students. The module proforma must articulate the module accurately and be published as approved by a validation, cyclical review or as part of a modification. The information in the approved module proforma is added to the Student Records System, which is published to students online, the information is also used to inform external returns to the Office for Students. A guide to completing the module proforma is available from Quality and Standards.
- 6.8 Where a group of courses with several named award pathways is to be considered, it may be judged more appropriate to present the module syllabuses in a separate Module Handbook, giving an overview of all modules.
- 6.9 In addition to the Module Proforma/Descriptor module leaders are expected to make available to students a module handbook with more localised practical information such as assessment questions, deadlines etc.

Reflective statement (for Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh Events)

- 6.10 In the case of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh events required by the Portfolio Planning Committee Portfolio Sub Committee, reflection of the data and curriculum is required.

6.11 Opening statement (indicative 1000 words)

This statement should provide a holistic overview of the School or Cognate Subject area being considered.

The opening statement should be an open and honest narrative of what is working and what is not, including a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision since the validation/revalidation or last holistic modification. The opening statement should act as an executive summary for the suite of courses being considered and for the rest of the document.

6.12 Course reflections (indicative 1000 words per course)

Course teams should consider what is the School or subject area matrix of data, particularly the areas of risk raised by the PPC Portfolio Sub Committee. How does it compare with the sector benchmarks? What actions have been taken in recent years following the Continuous Improvement processes? What risks have been identified through and what associated actions are you taking to improve?

It is equally important that Course teams consider what is working well. Where data is above the sector benchmark What are the key strengths of the provision? What has worked well? What is considered good practice in the way the provision is delivered? Are there employer or international links?

Reflection should provide an overview of how each course has operated, what are the student outcomes, their satisfaction and their employment outcomes. What changes are happening within the subject area? What new skills will your graduates need and how have modifications been used to ensure the curriculum has been kept up to date?

What is being fed back through various student consultation (Student Module Evaluations (SME), course and School reps, NSS/PTES survey results). Course teams should ensure that students are involved in any proposed course level changes.

How does the provision consider the student experience and academic support for students?

How is the provision taking due regard of inclusive curriculum initiatives? Have the course team completed the [Being Westminster: Inclusive Course Design checklist and reflected the results in the curriculum?](#) In addition, workshops are required as part of the validation and cyclical review processes.

There should be an outline of the changes that are being made to the provision as part of the process, and reasons given for these changes (student feedback, External Examiner comments, changes to the market, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements, and changes to staffing, resources and the discipline). There should also be a reflection on what is staying in the provision and why it is being retained?

If the course is linked to collaborative arrangements, then you could also review how the changes may affect collaborative links e.g. franchise partners, progression agreements.

6.13 **Documentation for other cyclical review processes**

In the case of Curriculum and Assessment Check-in no additional 'new' documentation is normally anticipated from the course team, it is the current curriculum that is being reviewed.

In the case of the Internal Scrutiny Panel additional documentation is anticipated as deemed appropriate. This may include:

- PSRB mapping
- Mapping to apprenticeship standards (apprenticeships)
- Employer engagement (apprenticeships)
- End point assessment Plan (apprenticeships)

Communication of Changes

6.14 The communication of changes clearly articulates to the panel the planned changes for Learning, Teaching and Assessment Refresh Events, as well as serving as the final drafts to be communicated to applicants and students. It is important for example if a mode of study is being withdrawn this is clearly articulated so the necessary action can be taken to ensure accurate published information and communication to applicants and current students, likewise, changes of module titles, new modules, modules being replaced will be communicated to applicants and registry in order to make changes in the system. The accuracy of these documents is therefore crucial. This document is required as advised by Quality and Standards

and will depend on the scale of the changes being proposed through cyclical events or modifications.