



# Queen Margaret University

EDINBURGH

## MAKING CHANGES TO MODULES

Making changes to modules, even small adjustments, can have implications beyond that module. For this reason, module co-ordinators may not make changes without consultation. In particular, no change may be made without informing and consulting the Collaborative Academic Lead.

### Franchised programmes

If your module is a copy of a module which also runs at QMU, you cannot change it on your own. You will need to talk to your Collaborative Academic Lead and the module co-ordinator at QMU. If they agree that your proposed change is a good idea they can take it to the appropriate committees. All versions of the module, wherever they are run in the world, should be the same.

Some franchised programmes run individual modules which are approved only for that partner. In this case, you can change the module, but you must follow the process for individual programmes below.

### Validated programmes

If your programme was designed specifically for your organisation, the modules will not be direct copies of existing QMU modules. Your module descriptors are approved as part of the validation event. The panel will have checked them to make sure that:

- The content is appropriate for the programme
- The learning outcomes are at the right academic level
- The balance of teaching approaches is appropriate
- The assessment is a valid measure of whether the students have met the learning outcomes

Care must be taken when changing a module to make sure that all the above statements remain true. It is also important to consider the effect of the change in the context of the programme as a whole. For instance, you might want to change your assessment to a multiple choice exam. But if all the other modules have a multiple choice exam, adding another will disturb the balance of assessments across the year.

It is also essential that students know what to expect. You can only change a module **before** students have started classes, and only if students have been consulted on the changes in advance.

Because of this, module co-ordinators are not allowed to change a module without checking with colleagues and (usually) seeking formal committee approval.

## **Minor changes**

The following changes can be made in discussion with the Collaborative Academic Lead and other colleagues at your institution:

- Changing the module co-ordinator
- Changing the semester in which the module is taught
- Changing the main texts
- Small changes to the balance of learning hours
- Small changes to word limit (eg from 2000 to 2500)
- Small adjustments to exams (eg from MCQ to MCQ plus short answers)

Minor changes must be approved by the programme committee and reported to the Joint Board of Studies. An updated module descriptor must be supplied to the Secretary of the Joint Board of Studies, who will forward it to relevant departments in QMU for their records.

If in doubt as to the significance of the proposed change, the Joint Board of Studies will refer it to the School Academic Board for approval.

## **Major changes**

The following changes need formal committee approval from QMU:

- Changing the learning outcomes
- Changing the content
- Changing the type of assessment (eg from exam to assignment, major change to the number of words in a written assignment, length of exam, % weightings of different components).
- Changing from a percentage mark to a pass/fail mark.
- Making a significant change to the learning methods, eg from classroom to work-based learning; from 24 hours of lectures to only 6.

The route for formal approval is as set out overleaf.

## Committee route

### **Programme committee / programme team meetings**

Discuss the changes with the rest of your team and seek their approval. Make sure you discuss the proposals with students as well.



### **External examiner**

For modules that are overseen by the external examiner (usually Level 3 and 4 of a four-year degree, all Masters level modules), check what they think of the proposed change.



### **Joint Board of Studies**

This meeting brings together staff from the partner and QMU to take an overview of the partnership as a whole. Present the proposed change along with the evidence of feedback from the programme committee, students and the external examiner. If the Joint Board of Studies is happy with the change, it can be formally submitted to the School Academic Board.



### **School Academic Board.**

The Joint Board of Studies reports into the School Academic Board which has overall responsibility for conduct of academic programmes within the School. Present the proposed change along with the evidence of feedback from the programme committee, students and the external examiner. Only the School Academic Board has the authority to approve the change for implementation the next time the module runs.

You will see that this process might take some time. If you want to change a semester 1 module you must start the process in semester 2. If you want to change a semester 2 module you must start the process at the very beginning of semester 1.

## **Paperwork required**

You will need to supply:

- Copy of the original module descriptor
- Copy of the new module descriptor
- Module change form explaining the rationale for the change

All forms can be found here:

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/forms-and-guidance/forms-for-programme-design/>