

**VALIDATION CHECKLIST**

**Introduction**

Panellists are asked to complete this checklist independently in advance of the validation event. The checklist includes the key areas of which Panels, on behalf of the University Senate, need to be satisfied before approval can be granted.

**Individual checklists**

Individual submissions should be returned to the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement (GQE) no later than seven working days before the validation event. This timescale allows the Convener and Secretary to prepare thoroughly for the event, and in particular to prepare the draft agenda for discussion with the Programme Team.

Individual completion of the checklist serves the following purposes:

* It encourages focus on the topics that form the usual agenda for discussion with the Team.
* It supports the University’s enhancement agenda by providing a structured opportunity for each Panellist to identify innovative practice, as well as ways in which this might be extended further.
* It means that each Panellist has a separate record of areas that they would wish to pursue that can be used as a reference during the event.

Panellists are asked to note that there is no expectation to write in each of the boxes in the right hand column. However, it is essential to provide a summary of priority areas on the final page. It is helpful if this can make explicit which areas you consider essential for discussion with the Team, as well as any which may be less important but of interest, should time permit.

In some cases, individual feedback that is not explicitly discussed at the event may be fed back to the Team in writing, either before or after the event, and sometimes to help address conditions. Typically, this applies where Panellists identify very specific points in the documentation, or multiple examples illustrate one point, but only one example is discussed with the Team at the event.

**The consolidated checklist and preparing for the validation**

On receipt of the individual checklists, GQE will summarise feedback into a consolidated version. The consolidated checklist will be agreed with the Convener no later than five working days before the validation. This will be provided to the Team no later than three working days in advance of the validation. The consolidated checklist serves the following purposes:

* It provides an overview of themes to the Team that allows for more focused preparation in advance of their discussion with the Panel.
* It helps the Convener and Secretary set the draft agenda for the discussion with the Team.
* It serves as a reference point for all parties during the event.
* It forms part of the formal record of the event for future reference and audit purposes.

Within the consolidated checklist, the priority areas will be highlighted to the Team with a clear explanation for this ‘priority’ status. The Team will be asked to note that, whilst the consolidated checklist provides a good indication of the agenda for the event, the final order of business will be confirmed only in the first private meeting of the Panel on the day of the validation. Further, it is open to Panellists to raise additional issues at that meeting, or throughout the discussion with the Team.

**During the validation**

Validation events provide opportunities to engage in philosophical, academic and professional debate about all aspects of the Programme under consideration. The consolidated checklist should support rather than inhibit this debate. It is, therefore, not intended that Panels will work through the checklist from start to finish. Instead, key themes will be identified, and the Convener, with support from the Panel and Secretary, will manage the agenda in such a way that discussion can flow with priority to substantive issues, in particular related to the student experience and learning, teaching and assessment.

**Training**

It is recognised that Conveners and Panels may welcome training on how best to use the checklist, and GQE staff can discuss individual needs.

**Further information**

If you would like further information about completing this checklist or about any aspect of the validation process please contact:

[Dawn Martin, Assistant Secretary, Governance and Quality Enhancement](mailto:dmartin1@qmu.ac.uk)

Thank you for your participation in this event.

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| **PROGRAMME TITLE** |  |
| **DATE OF VALIDATION EVENT** |  |
| **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF COMPLETED CHECKLIST** |  |
| **COMPLETED BY (NAME)** |  |
| **NOTES** | |

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| **1** | **Programme title, overall aims and objectives** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments / Commendations / Issues for discussion with the Programme Team** |
| 1a | Does the proposed title adequately reflect the content of the Programme and its overall aims and objectives? |  |  |  |
| 1b | Are the overall Programme aims and objectives clearly articulated, professionally and academically relevant and appropriate to the specified level? |  |  |  |
| 1c | Is the level of the Programme appropriate and consistent with the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](https://scqf.org.uk/)? |  |  |  |
| 1d | Is the Programme consistent with external reference points? Please consider subject benchmark statements and requirements of professional and statutory bodies. |  |  |  |
| 1e | Does the Programme meet the needs of the proposed student target group? |  |  |  |
| 1f | Are the overall aims and objectives of the Programme consistent with the University’s [purpose, values and strategic goals](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/our-strategic-plan/)?  (*QMU internal Panellists only*) |  |  |  |
| 1g | Does the Programme satisfy the requirements of the [University’s generic graduate attributes](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/graduate-attributes/)?  *(QMU internal Panellists only)* |  |  |  |
| 1h | Does the Programme adequately reflect the principles and actions within the [University’s Student Experience Strategy (2021-2026)](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/quality-enhancement-and-external-context/quality-enhancement/#:~:text=QMU%20Student%20Experience%20Strategy%202021,experience%2C%20as%20set%20out%20below.)?  (*QMU internal Panellists only*) |  |  |  |

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| **Student Experience Strategy (2021-2026) principles**   * All QMU students experience a transformative journey through outstanding learning and teaching and co- and extra-curricular opportunities that enable them to achieve their individual goals and enhance their well-being. * We share individual and collective responsibility for enhancing and placing the student experience at the heart of our thinking and practice. * We establish, maintain and contribute to communities and a learning environment that supports our students to flourish and succeed and actively influences wider society. |

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| **2** | **Demand for the Programme, recruitment and admissions** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments / Commendations / Issues for discussion with the Programme Team** |
| 2a | Are the anticipated student numbers clearly stated and realistic? Is there a maximum number of students that can be supported in any one cohort? |  |  |  |
| 2b | Is there sufficient evidence of demand for the Programme? Please consider evidence of consultation with prospective students, the Careers and Employability Service, employers or other evidence as appropriate. |  |  |  |
| 2c | Does the validation documentation include details of comparable awards locally and nationally (or overseas, if applicable), and is it reasonable to assume the Programme can compete with these awards? |  |  |  |
| 2d | Are the proposed marketing strategies clearly stated and appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 2e | Are the criteria for admission transparent and appropriate? Please consider whether the criteria are consistent with QMU regulations and requirements of any relevant professional and statutory bodies. |  |  |  |
| 2f | Are the criteria for admission consistent with criteria for other programmes at a similar level with similar content and learning outcomes? |  |  |  |
| 2g | Are appropriate mechanisms in place to support Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)? |  |  |  |
| 2h | Is there sufficient evidence that the Programme will contribute to widening access and engaging students from non-traditional backgrounds and under-represented groups? |  |  |  |

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| **3** | **Structure and content** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments / Commendations / Issues for discussion with the Programme Team** |
| 3a | Are the Programme structure, entry and exit points and routes for progression clearly presented and appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 3b | Is the rationale for choice of core and elective modules clear and have these been included in the documentation submitted to the Panel? |  |  |  |
| 3c | Does the Programme structure promote flexibility in attendance? Consider, for example, whether the programme is accessible for full- and part-time learners. |  |  |  |
| 3d | Is there alignment between the Programme aims and learning outcomes and are the learning outcomes realistic and measurable? |  |  |  |
| 3e | Does the curriculum ensure the student’s experience has a logic and integrity clearly linked to the purpose of the Programme? |  |  |  |
| 3f | Is there an appropriate balance within the curriculum in relation to academic and practical elements, personal development, transferable skills, breadth and depth? |  |  |  |
| 3g | Does the curriculum promote progression so that the demands on the learner increase? |  |  |  |
| 3h | Is there evidence that the curricular content is informed by current research and scholarship? |  |  |  |
| **Please refer to the Validation and Review toolkit for EDI, Decolonising and Sustainability (available from GQE) when considering the following two questions.** | | | | |
| 3i | Does the Programme offer opportunities to:   1. examine and explore global perspectives, which might include the impact of colonialism; 2. work in partnership with students to embed global (including non-Western) histories, perspectives, and practices? |  |  |  |
| 3j | Does the Programme develop a wide range of sustainability practices, theories, and opportunities (with a focus on Sustainable Development Goals) in the programme and module materials, assignment briefs, learning outcomes, curriculum content and assessment design? |  |  |  |
| **New from January 2025: please refer to the Validation and Review toolkit for Employability, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship (available from GQE) when considering the following two questions.** | | | | |
| 3k | Does the Programme prioritise employability across programme and module materials, learning outcomes, curriculum content and assessment design? |  |  |  |
| 3l | Does the Programme prioritise enterprise and entrepreneurship across programme and module materials, learning outcomes, curriculum content and assessment design? |  |  |  |

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| **4** | **Learning, teaching and assessment** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments / Commendations / Issues for discussion with the Programme Team** |
| 4a | Are the methods of learning and teaching clearly identified and appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 4b | Do learning, teaching and assessment methods promote student achievement and enable students to meet the intended learning outcomes? |  |  |  |
| 4c | Are notional hours of student effort clearly stated, appropriate and consistent across modules? |  |  |  |
| **The following question (4d) is new from September 2025. It is not expected that Panels will count the hours of learning experiences. Instead, there is an expectation that the Validation Document includes a clear statement confirming compliance.**  **Note that this question applies only to undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes that recruit international students on the student visa route and are delivered at the Musselburgh campus. The event secretary will be able to advise on applicability.** | | | | |
| 4d | Does the programme comply with UKVI Remote Delivery Policy/QMU’s requirement for a maximum of 20% of taught learning experiences to be delivered remotely? |  |  |  |
| 4e | Is the volume and nature of assessment appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 4f | Is the volume and nature of assessment consistent across modules? |  |  |  |
| 4g | Does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities? |  |  |  |
| 4h | Do students have opportunities to engage in authentic assessment? |  |  |  |
| 4i | Do you have any comments on individual modules?  **It is important for Panels to consider the detail of all modules, drawing on** [**QMU guidance for completion**](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/resources-for-programme-leaders/) |  |  |  |
| **Please refer to the Validation and Review toolkit for EDI, Decolonising and Sustainability (available from GQE) when considering the following question.** | | | | |
| 4j | Does the Programme centre Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity with an intersectional lens across programme and module materials, learning outcomes, curriculum content and assessment design?  QMU’s [Inclusive Learning and Teaching Policy](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/inclusive-learning-and-teaching/) will be a helpful reference point. |  |  |  |

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| **5** | **Programme management, quality assurance and enhancement** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments / Commendations / Issues for discussion with the Programme Team** |
| 5a | Are arrangements for programme management and quality assurance consistent with University policy and relevant best practice?  *(QMU internal Panellists only)* |  |  |  |
| 5b | Are the arrangements for work-based learning clearly articulated and appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 5c | Are arrangements for work-based learning consistent with the [Quality Assurance Agency’s (QAA) Advice and Guidance on Work-based Learning](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/work-based-learning)? The [AGCAS Work Experience Standard](https://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas-work-experience-standard) may be another useful reference point. |  |  |  |
| 5d | Are the programme regulations consistent with University regulations and any relevant professional or statutory body requirements? |  |  |  |
| 5e | Are programme specific regulations clearly articulated and appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 5f | For collaborative programmes only: are arrangements for programme management **equivalent to** arrangements for QMU in house programmes?  *(QMU internal Panellists only)* |  |  |  |

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| **6** | **The student experience** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments / Commendations / Issues for discussion with the Programme Team** |
| 6a | Are arrangements for student support, including support for international students and disabled students clearly explained and adequate? |  |  |  |
| 6b | Do students receive clear information on the Programme? This can be provided either in a single source Handbook or on CANVAS. If the information is primarily on CANVAS, the Panel will be provided with a link and clear guidance on how to navigate the materials. |  |  |  |
| 6c | Do applicants and students know what is expected of them? |  |  |  |
| 6d | Are arrangements for Personal Development Planning and/or Career Development Planning clearly articulated and appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 6e | Are arrangements for student representation and opportunities for students to provide feedback clearly articulated and appropriate? |  |  |  |
| 6f | Are appropriate support systems in place to ensure the quality of experience and high retention rates of students from diverse backgrounds? This includes consideration through Student-Staff Consultative Committee meetings and other mechanisms. |  |  |  |

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| **7** | **Staff experience** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments / Commendations / Issues for discussion with the Programme Team** |
| 7a | Is the collective experience of the Programme Team suitable for the effective delivery of the curriculum and for the overall learning, teaching and assessment strategy? |  |  |  |
| 7b | Are appropriate staff development opportunities specified? |  |  |  |
| 7c | Is there evidence that staff are supported to enhance the quality of their provision? This may include engaging with the UKPSF, QMU CPD Scheme, in scholarship of learning and teaching, developing good practice, or meeting the needs of specific groups of students? |  |  |  |
| 7d | Is an appropriate induction programme in place for new members of staff? |  |  |  |
| 7e | Is appropriate technical and administrative support available? |  |  |  |

**Summary**

Please identify in the space below the key issues that you wish to raise with the Programme Team. It would be appreciated if you could list these in order of priority to help the Convener and Secretary prepare the agenda.

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| **Issues for discussion with the Programme Team:** |

**Enhancement**

One of the overarching aims of our validation and review process is the enhancement of the student learning experience. This happens on two levels:

1. Through development of the individual Programme that is under consideration
2. Thorough sharing best practice arising from all validation events across QMU – this is achieved in many different ways, including: through our committee structure; via newsletters; and incorporation of examples of practice in staff development

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| **Are there any aspects of the Programme presented for validation that you would especially like to commend? In particular, we would be interested in examples of innovative learning, teaching and assessment practice that contribute directly to the quality of the student learning experience.** |

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| **Would you like to make any specific suggestions for enhancement based on your own experience as an academic staff member or student, either related to, or separate from, the points listed above?** |