The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Electronic meeting 1-12 June 2026

Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy and Boards of Studies Terms of Reference

An electronic meeting of Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC**)** was held via email correspondence between **Monday 1st June and Friday 12th June** to approve the attached Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy (PCAM) and Board of Studies Terms of Reference (ToR).

At its meeting in April, SQAC approved the proposed amendments to the PCAM policy and recommended changes to the Board of Studies ToR, subject to the agreed amendments listed below. These have now been reflected in the policy documents attached. The requests for the Committee are:

i) To approve the wording of the amendments to the PCAM policy agreed at the April meeting of SQAC

ii) To endorse the wording of the amendments to the Board of Studies Terms of Reference, for Court to approve via a Court Resolution

Please note that, as agreed at the meeting of SQAC, the Board of Studies information will remain in the PCAM policy until the amendments to the ToR are approved by a Court Resolution, which is expected for later in 2026. If and when these are approved, the updated Board of Studies information would be moved into the Board of Studies ToR in order to avoid duplication.

Main amendments

PCAM Policy:

2.2 and 3.17-3.21 – SQAC agreed to consult the Centre for Open Learning (COL) regarding the sections on approval of non-credit bearing courses. COL have provided helpful input, now reflected in the amendments, highlighting that:

- the proposed definition of non-credit bearing courses includes the courses provided by COL as they are listed on the Short Courses Platform (so no amendment needed)
- non-credit bearing courses do not necessarily align with the SCQF (but sometimes will do)
- the online course production service is a paid service, and not necessary for course development, so this has been removed
- a few other minor updates (e.g. documentation provided for approval)

2.15 – section updated to better reflect active student participation in consultation processes

3.11 – amendments to criteria for major changes to programmes:

- the structure of a programme: formatting fixed, and added lower credit threshold for major changes to postgraduate programmes, to reflect the smaller credit volume of PGT programmes
- the introduction of an in-person exam to any course

3.12 – major changes to courses to include changes to course pre-requisites or co-requisites

Board of Studies Terms of Reference

Section 8 – section amended retain text in previous version of PCAM policy: “There is no formal quorum for the Board of Studies, but the minimum composition of Board of Studies meetings needs to provide effective academic oversight of the decisions made by the Board and therefore some roles may have to be represented for the Board to be considered robust.”

Other minor agreed amendments / updated links in 2.3, 2.4, 2.10, 5.2 and 5.10.

Action requested:

We ask all members to respond with their explicit agreement or disagreement by stating ‘Approve’ or ‘Not approve’. This will be used to determine majority view of the Committee. Please submit your response via this email by 12pm on Friday 12th June.

Author

Academic Quality and Standards

Programme and Course Approval and Management

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Purpose of Policy

This Policy outlines for staff and students the University's approach to programme and course approval and management (including design, development, approval, changes, and closure).

Scope: Mandatory Policy

Applies to staff and students who are involved in programme and course design, development, approval, changes and closure and to both taught and research programmes and all Boards of Studies and the staff and student members in every School. This Policy covers all credit-bearing provision, non-credit bearing courses available to learners outside of the University, and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses, including postgraduate research as well as taught courses and programmes, and online learning as well as on-campus provision.

Contact	Academic Quality and Standards	academic.quality@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	**Version Approved**: 23.04.2026	**Effective Date:** 01.08.2026	**Equality impact assessment:** 06.04.2026	**Last Reviewed:** 2025/26	**Next Review:** 2029/30

Approving authority	Senatus Quality Assurance Committee and University Court for the associated resolution
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Framework for Curricula Models for Degree Types Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study Board of Studies Terms of Reference Assessment and Feedback Policy [add link once approved]

Programme and Course Approval and Management

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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1. Overview

1.1 The University is required to have strategic oversight of, and to consistently apply, effective processes for the design, development, approval, changes and closure of programmes and courses. Programmes and courses are defined in the University's Glossary of Terms.
Glossary of Terms

1.2 This Policy constitutes the University's approach to the approval and management of programmes and courses, along with the Framework for Curricula, the Models for Degree Types and the Degree Regulations.
Framework for Curricula
Models for Degree Types
Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study

1.3 Supplementary College-level guidance provides additional information to support effective implementation of this Policy, such as timescales, specific roles and responsibilities, and templates.

2. Programme and Course Design and Development

2.1 Programme and course design and development is carried out at the School or subject area level. Proposals for the development of new credit-bearing programmes (taught and research), must be endorsed by the relevant School Board of Studies prior to review and approval by the relevant College Curriculum Approval Board, or equivalent College committee.

2.2 Non-credit bearing courses which are available to learners outside of the University, and are available as part of the University's Short Courses catalogue, must be approved by a relevant Board of Studies, but do not need approval at the College level. ~~Schools should consult the Online Course Production Service regarding course design and development.~~
Short Courses

~~Online Course Production~~

Development of new programmes

2.3 Proposals for new programmes are usually developed in two stages: a first stage in which the strategic aims, fit with the School and College portfolio, and business case are ~~scrutinised~~reviewed; and a second stage in which the programme curriculum and the approach to learning and teaching are scrutinised.

2.4 For the first stage, new programme proposals must include the following information, along with any other requirements specified by the College:

- the rationale and purpose of the new programme, including how it fits with the School and College portfolio and strategy
- a business case, including evidence of market demand to support target student intakes, efficient portfolio management~~, and evidence that the resource requirements can be accommodated~~
- a supporting statement from the Head of School, School Management Committee or equivalent

2.5 Colleges may provide additional guidance and advice regarding the development, timescales and academic approval processes for new programmes.

2.6 Only once a proposal has been endorsed by the School Board of Studies and approved by the College, should Schools proceed to the second stage of new programme development. Documentation for the second stage of new programme proposals must include the following, along with any other requirements specified by the College:

- the academic rationale and features of the programme, including programme learning outcomes
- a detailed business case, including marketing and recruitment strategy
- the admissions criteria and minimum entry requirements
- the programme structure and Degree Programme Table, including completed a course descriptor for each new course
- the assessment and feedback methods and approaches, and any competence standards, where applicable
- evidence of how the Skills for Success Framework is embedded into the programme
- where other Schools are involved in the development or delivery of the programme, proposals must include evidence of consultation and support for the proposal from all collaborating Schools
- information regarding any non-standard elements of the programme, e.g. student placements, study abroad options

2.7 New programme and course proposals must be developed in alignment with the following frameworks and policies:

University (internal) frameworks and policies

- Degree and Assessment Regulations
- Curriculum Framework and Models for Degree Types
- Learning and Teaching Strategy 2030
- Assessment and Feedback Policy (add link once available)
- Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
- Skills for Success Framework and the Edinburgh Student Vision

- Work-based and Placement Learning Policy (as appropriate)

External frameworks and requirements

- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements
- Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)
- Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements (as appropriate)
- Employer and industry requirements

Collaborative programmes and partnerships

2.8 Additional information is required for new collaborative programmes with external institutions or partners, including jointly awarded taught and research degrees, and those involving supervision provided by an Associated Institution. Guidance for developing and approving programmes with collaborative agreements and arrangements is available:
Academic Collaborative Agreements

Remote Delivery

2.9 New programme proposals must pay due regard to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements around remote delivery.

2.10 Guidance is available on what Schools can consider when developing proposals for Distance / Flexible PhDs. ~~is available at Distance Learning and Flexible PhD Programmes - School Checklist~~
Distance Learning and Flexible PhD Programmes - School Checklist

Development of new courses

2.11 Proposals for the development of new courses, both credit-bearing and non-credit bearing, must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Studies of the School which owns the course. Non-credit bearing courses which are taught by staff outwith a School must agree which School Board of Studies will review and approve the course.

2.12 New course proposals must include the following information in the course descriptors:

- number of credits and credit level, aligned to SCQF credit levels
- course learning outcomes
- number and type of assessments, including which course learning outcome(s) each assessment is demonstrating
- the relationship of the course to the programme and, where applicable, how the course delivers and assesses the programme learning outcomes

2.13 Course descriptors must also include any further information specified by Student Records. Course creation, approval and maintenance information (EUCLID)

Equity and accessibility

2.14 Programmes and courses must be designed to be equitable and accessible to all students, and to avoid any unnecessary barriers to students with disabilities, or other protected characteristics, under the Equality Act 2010.

Student involvement

2.15 Students must be proactively involved at the earliest practicable point in programme and course design, development, approval, changes and closure processes. Student members of Committees responsible for programme and course approval and management should be actively encouraged to represent the student voice and contribute to the discussions and decisions of these Committees. Committee Conveners are responsible for ensuring that students receive training and information to adequately fulfil this role. Schools should consider further opportunities for consultation with students who are academically closest to the proposed changes, and include ~~The opportunity to be involved must allow for~~ representation of students with a range of backgrounds and characteristics~~. Consultation~~ should involve ~~students academically closest to the proposed changes.~~ Their involvement should be proportional to the activity taking place. ~~and~~ Schools may also consider ~~could include~~ student feedback from the routine quality assurance processes (e.g., course evaluations, student surveys, ~~Staff~~ Student-Staff Liaison Committee minutes). ~~The opportunity to be involved must allow for representation of students with a range of backgrounds and characteristics. Consultation should involve students academically closest to the proposed changes.~~

3. Programme and course approval

3.1. The University programme and course approval, changes and closure processes ensure institutional oversight of standards and quality. Authority is delegated by the University, via the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), to Colleges and, where appropriate, to School Boards of Studies. Colleges may elect to wholly delegate the authority to approve all major changes to existing credit-bearing courses, proposals for new courses, and closure of courses to Schools but must retain a method of oversight, particularly to ensure that decisions are taken independently of the home subject area of the course. Colleges must retain authority to approve major changes to existing programmes and new programmes, and the closure of programmes.

3.2. The review and approval of programme and course proposals must ensure a transparent and auditable ‘paper-trail’ providing a rationale for decisions. All programmes and courses must be reviewed regularly by Colleges and Schools as part of the regular review of their portfolios.

Key committees responsible for programme and course approval, changes and closure (credit-bearing courses)

School Boards of Studies

3.3. The Board of Studies Terms of Reference include information regarding the governance, remit and composition of Boards of Studies.
Board of Studies Terms of Reference

College Curriculum Approval Boards (or equivalent Committee)

3.4. Each College must produce a clear Terms of Reference setting out the remit, membership and operation of their Committee(s) responsible for programme and course approval and management.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

3.5. The membership, remit and operation of APRC are detailed in the Committee's Terms of Reference.
APRC Terms of Reference

Approval of credit-bearing programmes and courses

3.6. The levels of approval required for new credit-bearing programmes and courses, and changes and closures to existing programmes and courses, are (also illustrated in Table 1):

- School Boards of Studies approve proposals (where they comply with the Curriculum Framework and the academic year structure and there are no implications beyond the School) relating to:
    - minor changes to existing programmes (as defined in 3.11)
    - major changes to existing courses (as defined in 3.12)
    - new courses
    - closure of courses

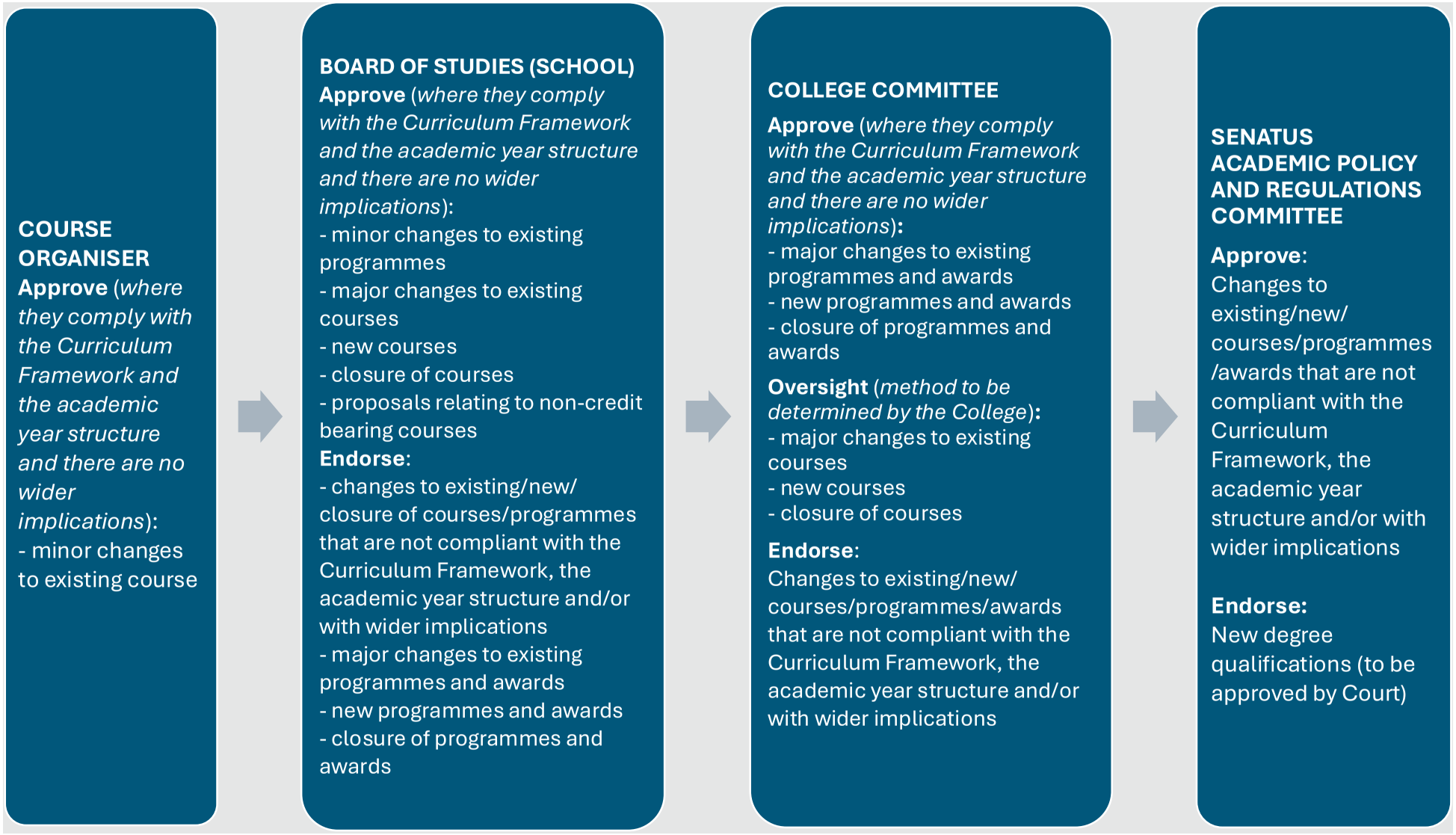
- College Committees approve proposals (where they comply with the Curriculum Framework and the academic year structure and there are no implications beyond the College) relating to:
    - major changes to existing programmes (as defined in 3.11)
    - new programmes
    - closure of programmes

- The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) approves proposals for new programmes or courses, or changes to existing programmes or courses which do not conform to the Curriculum Framework or the academic year structure. New degree qualifications, with degree titles not already used by the University, also need to be

endorsed by APRC, and approved by Court, on the basis of a proposal from the relevant College committee. APRC asks the University Court for any necessary degree Resolution and adds the degree qualification title to the list of degrees in the annual Court Resolution on undergraduate or postgraduate degree regulations. The Resolution to create the degree qualification needs to come into effect before the University opens the programme for applications. The Secretary to APRC can advise on whether a degree needs a Court Resolution. For example, an MA or BSc for a new discipline does not need a Resolution. Colleges report the closure of degree qualifications to APRC for approval and reporting to the University Court, for the annual degree regulations Resolution.

3.7. Proposals relating to non-credit bearing courses need to be approved by Boards of Studies, but do not need to be approved by College or APRC. The approval process for non-credit bearing courses is detailed in 3.17-3.

Table 1. Levels of Approval (all stages prior to where a decision is approved should be completed)



Key issues to consider when scrutinising proposals for courses and programmes

3.8. When reviewing proposals for credit-bearing courses and programmes, Boards of Studies and College Committees must consider whether:

- the proposals adequately address the key issues (set out in 2.4-2.15)
- the proposals are academically rigorous and would lead to a high-quality student experience
- the proposals fit with the School / College portfolio and strategy
- the business case is robust (note that in some cases Schools / Colleges will consider the business case via a separate route to the Board of Studies / Committee)
- the resource implications have been adequately addressed and are practicable
- the volume of remote delivery within the programme is within the requirements for UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)
- the documentation is complete

3.9. When reviewing proposals for non-credit bearing courses and programmes, Boards of Studies must consider whether:

- the proposals have adequate learning outcomes and course aims
- the proposals fit with the School / College portfolio and strategy, and whether there are any reputational risks
- the resource implications have been adequately addressed and are practicable
- the documentation is complete

Evidence of expertise from outside the programme

3.10. In programme design and approval, the involvement of an individual(s) external to the University is required to offer independence and objectivity to the decisions taken. For example, this could be an individual with relevant disciplinary expertise from another institution who provides comments on a programme proposal during its development stage. Alternatively, this could be a member of a College Curriculum Approval Board (or equivalent) who is external to the University.

Minor and Major Changes to Existing Programmes

3.11 Changes to any of the following are **major changes to programmes** and require College approval:

- **The name of the programme:** any change made to the name of a programme, other than to correct spelling or syntax, is considered a major change and requires a new programme to be proposed and approved.
- **The overall content of the programme:** a major change to the content of a programme is defined as the addition or closure of courses, or major changes to a significant proportion of the existing courses listed on the Degree Programme Table (as defined below ‘Minor and Major Changes to Existing Courses’). A significant proportion of courses, for this purpose, is defined as:

  - For undergraduate programmes, 60 credits or more in any single year of the programme, or 120 or more of the total credits in the programme
  - For postgraduate taught programmes, 40 credits or more of the programme.
- **The structure of a programme:** a major change to the structure of a programme is defined as a change in the types of credits between different components of the programme which affect 60 credits or more of the programme for undergraduate programmes, or 40 credits or more for postgraduate programmes (e.g. changing compulsory courses to be core or elective courses, changing elective courses to compulsory courses) or changes to the volume of dissertation vs taught credits.
- **The overall approach to assessment for the programme**, including:
  - the introduction, amendment or removal of competence standards
  - the introduction ~~to the programme~~ of an in-person exam~~s~~ to any course
  - changes to the programme learning outcomes
  - approaches to assessment where the Board of Studies would like to seek College approval
- **The mode of study** options, i.e., part-time, full-time or part-time intermittent
- **The place of study**, e.g., a change from on-campus to hybrid or online distance learning, or a change from one campus to a different campus location
- **The prescribed period of study**
- **Proposing a new collaboration agreement** for a programme, or a change of partner for an existing collaborative programme
- **The home School or College**

All other categories are regarded as **minor changes to programmes** and are therefore to be approved by the School Board of Studies.

Minor and Major Changes to Existing Courses

3.12 Changes to tThe categories outlined below are regarded as **major changes to courses** and require approval by the School Board of Studies:

- Name of the course*
- Level of the course*
- Credit value*
- Learning outcomes (including changes to learning outcomes and/or assessment as a result of the incorporation of the Skills for Success Framework)
- Balance of assessment types and their weightings (components of assessment)
- Pre-requisites or co-requisites
- Home subject area*

* Will result in a new course being created

3.13 Changes to all other categories, which generally cover course content and administrative aspects, (e.g. course descriptions, reading lists/learning resources, Course Organiser and Secretary, and delivery information) are regarded as **minor changes**. As a minimum, Course Organisers can approve these changes (with the exception of changes to the Course Organiser and Course Secretary) although Schools may choose to add an additional level of approval for these changes, for example, to ensure programme

coherence. Decisions regarding changes of Course Organiser and Course Secretary are management decisions made by the School in line with normal practices.

Timescales for approval of proposals (credit-bearing courses and programmes)

3.15 Accurate information regarding programmes and courses must be available to prospective students throughout the admissions process. Accurate course information must also be available to current students in advance of the academic session, in order to enable students to make informed course choices and to prepare for their studies. Schools and Colleges should therefore normally approve proposals and publish new or amended information prior to the annual Degree Regulation and Programmes of Study (DRPS) publication date. Schools or Colleges which do not meet the publication date must undertake additional communications with current and prospective students in order to remain compliant with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). In addition to the DRPS publication, Schools and Colleges are responsible for publishing accurate and up to date information on approved courses and programmes on their websites and on the University degree finder prior to the start of the annual recruitment cycle.

3.16 Schools should consult further guidance on the timescales for the development of new programmes and courses, or amendments to programmes and courses, from their Colleges.

Approval of non-credit bearing courses

3.17 Boards of Studies are responsible for approving all new or amended non-credit bearing courses which are available to learners outside of the University and are available as part of the University's Short Courses catalogue. Non-credit bearing courses do not necessarily align with the SCQF as they do not carry credits, but should align with the University's Skills for Success Framework. These courses can be for purposes, such as, but not exclusively, continuing professional development, executive education, lifelong learning and skills development. Approval processes are different to those for credit-bearing provision and are detailed below.

3.18 Course proposers must refer to the Learning Platform Strategy to ensure courses are hosted on the platform most suitable for the intended audience and to comply with licencing and compliance requirements. The Online Course Production Service ~~should be consulted to discuss the overall process, including course approval, design and delivery.~~ may be used for the development of online short courses, but it is not part of the formal approval process.
Learning Platform Strategy
Online Course Production Service

3.19 Course proposers must complete comprehensive documentation which includes the course description and learning outcomes, course aims, purpose, and ~~estimates of~~ teaching and administrative support required for each course instance. Proposals should clearly link to the University Strategy 2030.

3.20 For all short courses, course approval documentation should demonstrate that adequate resources are in place for the creation and delivery of the course, that adequate risk analysis has been carried out and that the relevant statutory requirements are met, including requirements regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and accessibility.

3.21 ~~New course proposals and amendments must be approved by the relevant School Board of Studies.~~ Courses hosted on a Massive Open Online Course (MOOCS) Platform ~~also~~ require a letter of support from the Head of School and approval by the Short Courses Strategy Group, in addition to approval by the relevant School Board of Studies.

4 School Boards of Studies

4.1 The ~~constitution~~remit, composition, and number of Boards of Studies are defined in the Boards of Studies Terms of Reference.

[The text for the Boards of Studies Terms of Reference (ToRs) will be retained within this policy until the Court Resolution is approved to amend the existing ToRs; once the text is incorporated into the ToRs it will be removed from this policy in order to avoid duplication]

Governance and remit

Each School (or equivalent) must have at least one Board of Studies or a body that fulfils the role of a Board of Studies.

4.2 Boards of Studies must review and approve new courses and programmes, and amendments to existing courses and programmes, including credit-bearing and non-credit bearing courses. New programmes and major changes to programmes (as defined in the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy) must also be approved by the relevant College Committee.

4.3 Board of Studies are responsible for:

- ensuring that proposals are academically appropriate, and are supported by the necessary documentation
- ensuring that proposals comply with the University's regulations and policies
- assessing whether the proposals will contribute to a good student experience
- oversight of programme and course handbooks, although the approval can be delegated to members of staff within a School

4.4 Boards of Studies are also responsible for keeping the teaching, learning and assessment methodologies under review, and for offering advice on the School's portfolio of programmes.

4.5 Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) (or any successor committee to whom Senate delegates its responsibility in relation to curriculum approval) will determine further requirements for the criteria and reference points that Boards should take account of when considering proposals.

4.6 Boards of Studies must meet at least once per academic year, and must report direct to the relevant College committee(s) as necessary.

Composition

4.7 The Convener of a Board of Studies, and the Deputy Convener, are academic members of staff appointed by the Head of School.

4.8 The membership of each Board includes: the Head of School and the Director of Teaching (or equivalent); all staff involved in the teaching of a degree programme which the Board is responsible for; one student member from within the School; and one external member from another Board of Studies within the University. The Head of College has the right to appoint an ex officio College member to every Board of Studies in the College. Boards of Studies can include members from other areas of the University, for example from other Schools or from relevant support services. There is no formal quorum for the Board of Studies, but the minimum composition of Board of Studies meetings needs to provide effective academic oversight of the decisions made by the Board and therefore some roles may have to be represented for the Board to be considered robust.

4.9 SQAC (or its successor committee) will determine the requirements for the operation of Boards of Studies, and may add additional requirements for Boards of Studies.

4.10 While normal practice is for Boards of Studies to operate within individual Schools, bodies may be established at College or University level to fulfil the functions of Boards of Studies, with the approval of SQAC (or its successor committee) on the recommendation of the Head of College.

5 Management and review of programmes and courses

Programme and course management

5.1 The Head of College is formally responsible for degree programmes. Within this overall responsibility each programme, and course within it, is owned by a particular School which ensures its management. The Head of School or Director of Teaching delegates responsibility for the management of a degree programme to a Programme Co-ordinator or Director (or equivalent).

5.2 Course Organisers are responsible for individual courses within a School. The Head of School or ~~Director of Teaching~~their delegate appoints Course Organisers to take responsibility for individual courses. Course Organisers are responsible for monitoring and reviewing their courses, including monitoring student performance and responding to feedback from students, Boards of Examiners, Quality Committees, Internal Period Reviews or other relevant feedback mechanisms. Where appropriate, Course Organisers should propose minor or major changes to courses to the School Board of Studies for approval.

Programme and Course Approval and Management

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Course Organiser: Outline of Role

Programme and course review

5.3 Colleges are responsible for ensuring that their teaching portfolio is aligned with their academic mission and University strategic plans. Colleges and Schools are responsible for regularly reviewing their portfolio of programmes and courses to ensure that they are adequately resourced and financially sustainable. Quality must be monitored and reviewed via School Annual Monitoring reports, Internal Periodic Reviews and the relevant School and College Committees responsible for quality assurance and enhancement.

5.4 Colleges must ensure that they have adequate governance and mechanisms in place at School and College level to regularly review their portfolio, and that updates are reported to the College Education Committee.

Responsibilities to current and prospective students

5.5 If, after starting to accept applications for a programme of study, a School or College approves any changes to the programme or to courses within it which lead to a divergence from that described in the published information regarding the programme or courses, the School owning the programme is responsible for amending the published information at the earliest possible opportunity. This applies irrespective of the School which owns the individual courses that are changing.

5.6 Current and prospective students must be informed about the changes at the earliest possible opportunity. Schools are responsible for communicating changes to current students, and Colleges are responsible for communicating changes to prospective students, liaising with the School as necessary.

5.7 Changes to a programme of study which must be communicated to students include:

- 'Major' changes to the programme (in the terms set out in section 3.11)
- Any removal from the programme of courses that published information had indicated would definitely be available, and any introduction of new mandatory courses which reduces a student's choice
- Changes to competence standards for the programme, including the introduction, amendment or removal of competence standards
- Changes to the professional accreditation / recognition status of the programme changes
- Changes to the campus at which the programme is taught (for example, the location of the owning School changes from one campus to another)

5.8 If any programme is identified for closure as part of a regular portfolio review, the University must first consider its obligations to current and prospective students to the

programme. The University will aim to minimise the disruption to the continuity of study for any affected students, and any changes will be communicated to current and prospective students as early as possible, with clear information and options. In the event of closure of a programme, Schools must ensure appropriate management and resourcing of the final student cohorts, in line with the University's Student Terms and Conditions. Collaborative partners and any other stakeholders (e.g. study abroad partners, accrediting bodies, etc) must also be informed in a timely manner.
Student Terms and Conditions

5.9 Where current or prospective students request this, following the communication of changes or closure of a programme, the University must offer a suitable replacement programme within the University, or, if the University is unable to offer a suitable replacement programme, students and prospective students must be referred to a comparable Higher Education Institution offering a suitable replacement programme.

5.10 In the event that current or prospective students choose to withdraw as a result of significant changes to a programme, or in the event of the closure of a programme, the University will, where appropriate, consider are fund tuition fees and deposits paid prior to notification of the change in line with the Tuition Fees policiesy.
~~ADD LINK to Tuition Fees policy (once updated)~~
Undergraduate_Tuition_Fee_Policy
Taught_Postgraduate_Tuition_Fee_Policy

Board of Studies Terms of Reference

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Summary

To outline how Boards of Studies are governed and operate in the University. These terms of reference set out the high-level Board of Studies matters as outlined in the 1966 Higher Education Act and delegate responsibility for the regulation of other more operational matters to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (or any successor committee to whom Senate delegates its responsibility in relation to curriculum approval).

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy applies to all Boards of Studies in every School in the University, and the staff and student members of Boards of Studies.

Contact	Academic Quality and Standards	academicpolicy@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	**Version approved**: XXXXXX	**Effective date:** XXXXXX	**Equality impact assessment:** 15.04.2026	**Last Reviewed:** 2025/26	**Next Review:** 2030/31

Approving authority	University Court for the associated resolution; Senate Quality Assurance Committee
Related policies,	Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy Court resolution 05/2019 Models for Degree Types Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study Assessment and Feedback Policy [add link once approved] Course Descriptor Guidance
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email academicpolicy@ed.ac.uk
Keywords	Board of Studies, course approval, programme approval, curriculum management

Board of Studies Terms of Reference

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Governance and remit

1. Each School (or equivalent) must have at least one Board of Studies or a body that fulfils the role of a Board of Studies.

2. Boards of Studies must review and approve new courses and programmes, and amendments to existing courses and programmes, including credit-bearing and non-credit bearing courses. New programmes and major changes to programmes (as defined in the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy) must also be approved by the relevant College Committee.

3. Board of Studies are responsible for:
    - ensuring that proposals are academically appropriate, and are supported by the necessary documentation
    - ensuring that proposals comply with the University's regulations and policies
    - assessing whether the proposals will contribute to a good student experience
    - oversight of programme and course handbooks, although the approval can be delegated to members of staff within a School

4. Boards of Studies are also responsible for keeping the teaching, learning and assessment methodologies under review, and for offering advice on the School's portfolio of programmes.

5. Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) (or any successor committee to whom Senate delegates its responsibility in relation to curriculum approval) will determine further requirements for the criteria and reference points that Boards should take account of when considering proposals.

6. Boards of Studies must meet at least once per academic year, and must report direct to the relevant College committee(s) as necessary.

Composition

7. The Convener of a Board of Studies, and the Deputy Convener, are academic members of staff appointed by the Head of School.

8. The membership of each Board includes: the Head of School and the Director of Teaching (or equivalent); all staff involved in the teaching of a degree programme which the Board is responsible for; one student member from within the School; and one external member from another Board of Studies within the University. The Head of College has the right to appoint an ex officio College member to every Board of Studies

in the College. Boards of Studies can include members from other areas of the University, for example from other Schools or from relevant support services. There is no formal quorum for the Board of Studies, but the minimum composition of Board of Studies meetings needs to provide effective academic oversight of the decisions made by the Board and therefore some roles may have to be represented for the Board to be considered robust.

9. SQAC (or its successor committee) will determine the requirements for the operation of Boards of Studies, and may add additional requirements for Boards of Studies.

10. While normal practice is for Boards of Studies to operate within individual Schools, bodies may be established at College or University level to fulfil the functions of Boards of Studies, with the approval of SQAC (or its successor committee) on the recommendation of the Head of College.

11. On the date on which this Resolution comes into force Resolution 05/2019 shall be repealed.

12. This Resolution shall come into force with effect from [date to be confirmed].