

# LSHTM Academic Manual 2024-25

## Chapter 3: Programme & Module Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

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### Annual Review of the Academic Manual

The LSHTM Academic Manual was introduced in 2019-20 bringing together all the academic regulations and procedures which constitute LSHTM's framework for quality and standards for credit-bearing taught provision, research degrees and special programmes. The Academic Manual consists of 11 Chapters all of which are reviewed annually and published as separate documents on LSHTM website together with a summary of amendments. With the exception of most minor editorial changes (e.g. typos, formatting and spelling or grammatical corrections), all revisions and amendments are noted and approved by Senate before the start of each academic year.

### 3.1 Programme and Module Documentation

- 3.1.1 Programme and module documentation will inform students on their journey from application through to graduation. It is therefore important that these documents reflect accurate information, which has been approved by means of validation, review and amendment procedures.
- 3.1.2 To satisfy the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)'s obligations to its prospective and current students, amendments to programme and module documentation must be made in an appropriate and timely manner. Programme and module documentation that is published on the LSHTM website forms a contractual obligation, concerning current students and applicants, under the jurisdiction of the [Competition and Markets Authority \(CMA\)](#).
- 3.1.3 The quality assurance processes outlined in this Chapter are applied to the following academic provision offered by LSHTM.
- **Award-bearing programmes (credit-bearing and research degrees)**
    - LSHTM offers award-bearing programmes at Level 7 and 8 as described by the UK FHEQ. These are credit-bearing taught masters, a professional doctorate and research degrees.
  - **Professional Diplomas (non-credit-bearing)**
    - Professional Diplomas at LSHTM are non-credit-bearing courses that hold a recognised status in the Health Care sector. They are aimed at students who hold higher education qualifications and want to develop knowledge and skill in a specialised field.
  - **Credit-Bearing Short Courses**
    - A credit-bearing short course at LSHTM is defined as a course at level 7 being equivalent in size to no more than 30 credits of learning.
  - **Modules**
    - Award-bearing programmes are comprised of multiple credit-bearing modules. The aims and intended learning outcomes (ILOs) attached to each module are linked to the award aims and ILOs. The module assessment will be designed to measure achievement of the module ILOs.

### **Programme Specification**

- 3.1.4 A programme specification is a concise description of the programme of study that is published externally on LSHTM's webpages as part of the programme information. The programme specification will include: programme aims, objectives and intended learning outcomes; intended audience and entrance requirements; structure and curriculum; mode(s) of study, learning time and how teaching operates; assessment requirements; and credit.
- 3.1.5 The document differs from marketing material in that it must also meet external benchmarks and internal expectation and is thus subject to formal approval. LSHTM's standard format takes into account guidance from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and is available for download [here](#).
- 3.1.6 The primary users of the programme specification will be applicants, current students, External Examiners, professional bodies, potential employers of graduates and placement students, professional, commercial and industrial advisory groups. Internally the document will also be used to ensure accuracy of information on the Student Record System for external reporting, informing the programme details on the web and prospectuses.
- 3.1.7 A programme specification is required for the purpose of validation and periodic review, as well as any proposed changes to the programme structure (including module title changes) made as part of the programme amendment procedure.

### **Module Specification**

- 3.1.8 The module specification provides a concise description of the module. All modules specifications are published to current students at the start of the academic year to inform them on the module content; they also act as a guide to indicative programme content for prospective students. The module specification must articulate the module accurately as approved by validation, review or as part of the amendment procedure. Internally the document will also be used to ensure accuracy of information on the Student Record System.
- 3.1.9 A module specification is required for the purpose of validation and review, as well as any proposed changes made as part of the module amendment procedure.

### **Credit-Bearing Short Course Specification**

- 3.1.10 A credit-bearing Short Course specification contains elements of both programme and module specifications to reflect its hybrid nature as a course without sub elements.

### **Programme Handbook**

- 3.1.11 The programme handbook is the main reference for students in navigating the overview of their programme and overall experience at LSHTM. It is expected that this document is reviewed annually to ensure that the information remains accurate and up to date. Annual operational updates may be made to the programme handbook; however, changes to programme structures, modules, and academic regulations will be expected to have followed the appropriate procedure for approval. Most programmes handbooks will refer to the LSHTM academic regulations as set out in this Academic Manual. Where there are approved programme-specific academic regulations, it will be clearly indicated within the programme handbook.
- 3.1.12 For groups of awards forming a cognate group of programmes, it may be judged more appropriate to produce the programme handbooks collectively in a single document to avoid duplication.

## **3.2 Programme Approval, Amendments, Suspension and Discontinuation**

- 3.2.1 The following procedures have been set out to ensure that programmes and modules are designed and approved through validation in accordance with LSHTM policies and procedures, and that existing programmes and modules retain currency in curriculum through an appropriate amendment procedure. Programme and module validation, review and amendment are under the delegated authority of LSHTM's Senate sub-Committees; however, financial approval of new provision is under the auspices of the School Executive Team.
- 3.2.2 Through programme and module design, development and amendment LSHTM is committed to engaging with external expertise and students as co-creators.

- 3.2.3 The following procedures apply to proposals and approvals of new award-bearing programmes, credit-bearing modules, credit-bearing short courses, credit-bearing Continuing Professional Development, and Special Programmes. Programme proposals, design and development with external collaborative partners will follow a similar procedure for validation but will require additional stages as set out in [Chapter 6, Collaborative Provision of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).

### 3.3 Programme development, design and approval

The procedure to develop, design, approve and launch a new [award-bearing programme](#) (e.g. MSc, PGDip or research degree) and [Professional Diploma \(non-credit-bearing\)](#) is divided in to five stages with final approval resting with Senate Education Committee:

- [Stage 1: Strategic, Financial Planning Approval \(Business Case\)](#)
- [Stage 2: Academic Development Proposal](#)
- [Stage 3: Programme and Module Specification and Curriculum Design](#)
- [Stage 4: Validation Panel meeting for Programmes](#)
- [Stage 5: Final Approval for new Programmes](#)

#### 3.3.1 Stage 1: Strategic, Financial Planning Approval (Business Case)

- i. Proposals for new programmes and any new modules should be considered at faculty level via the Faculty's Annual Budgetary round and approved by the relevant Faculty Postgraduate Taught Committee for submission to the Executive Team via Quality and Academic Standards (QAS) Team.
- ii. To develop a new programme proposal relevant LSHTM stakeholders must be consulted (e.g. faculty leadership, marketing, recruitment, finance, Registry, Quality & Academic Standards, University of London Worldwide). It is key that proposing teams are aware of LSHTM and UoLW Committee timelines for approval for intensive and Distance Learning programmes. There are distinct approval steps and timeframes for these modes. Please refer to QAS for guidance.

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- iii. A business case for new programmes with any new modules should be drafted and approved by the Faculty Management Group.
- iv. The business case plan for a new programme must be endorsed by LSHTM's [Executive Team](#) before proceeding to academic development and approval.
- v. To be approved the business case will be expected to include:
  - An outline of the new provision;
  - A detailed breakdown of costs, income and resource implications with confirmation of the financial approval;
  - Recruitment expectations and opportunities, including a forecast of student demand;
  - Market comparison to major competitor programmes.
- vi. Once the business case is approved, the Dean of the parent Faculty will appoint a lead academic to coordinate the development, design of the provision and lead on working with QAS and the School Committees to ensure usage of the correct approval procedure. The lead academic is expected to form a Development Team and ensure there is a holistic approach to the curriculum design.

**3.3.2 Stage 2: Academic Development Proposal**

- i. Once strategic approval has been granted a comprehensive programme proposal should be considered and approved by the FPGTC.
- ii. For final approval new programmes, the faculty will then need to seek academic approval at LSHTM level from the delegated Senate sub-Committee. For research provision, Senate Research Degrees Committee (SRDC) will approve the proposal for development. For taught provision, the Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC) will make a recommendation for development approval to the Senate Education Committee (SEC). In addition, distance learning (DL) programme and module proposals must receive approval through the University of London Worldwide (UoLW) governance structures at set out in the member institution [Quality Assurance Schedule](#). These approval decisions will be based on the outcomes,

conditions and recommendations for the scheduled validation event.

- iii. All proposals will be expected to include:
- An outline of the new provision (from the business case);
  - A detailed breakdown of costs, income and resource implications with confirmation of the financial approval (from the business case);
  - Recruitment expectations and opportunities, including forecast student demand (from the business case);
  - Market comparison to major competitor programmes (from the business case);
  - Distinctive features of the programme/module;
  - The intended learning outcomes;
  - The programme structure (credit framework and mapping to modules) or;
  - The new module rationale (mapping to existing programmes);
  - A teaching, learning and assessment strategy;
  - Details of staff allocated to deliver the programme and an outline of their subject specialism and likely contribution to the programme.
- iv. Guidance should be sought from colleagues who have specific expertise or responsibilities in these areas.

*N.B. If circumstances change in a way that will substantively affect the development or launch of the programme it may be necessary to suspend or extend the approval procedure.*

### **3.3.3 Stage 3: Programme and Module Specification and Curriculum Design**

- i. Once development approval has been granted by PMRC the programme and module specifications and content can be designed.
- ii. Within the new programme and new module approval process at least six months is set aside for curriculum design and development. The process requires a new programme specification and/or new module specification(s) to be produced, along with an overview of

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the curriculum. The programme/module aims, learning outcomes and the assessment strategy and methods should be mapped and documented.

- iii. Engagement with external expertise, quality assurance and students as co-creators is a core expectation of the curriculum design process. Feedback, advice and guidance from academic, sector and industry peers must also be documented for review at the Validation Panel. There should be academic engagement and scrutiny from:
  - an independent internal academic peer (member of PMRC);
  - an external academic subject expert, or an external examiner;
  - the Quality and Academic Standards team; and
  - current students, typically through a programme committee in the case of an existing programme, or student-staff fora for new developments.
- iv. Academic Leads and development teams designing MSc and research degree programmes are expected to refer to the [QAA supporting resources on degree characteristics](#) and the [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-awarding Bodies](#) (FHEQ) as well as the relevant [Conditions of Registration](#) as determined by the OfS, which include, but are not limited to conditions B1- B5
- v. Where available the national [Subject Benchmark Statements](#) should be referenced.
- vi. Programme and Module Specifications and curriculum design should go through a robust consultation process within the parent faculty. If content or delivery is shared with another faculty the consultation process should be extended across faculties.
- vii. The proposed programme's FPGTC should approve the documentation and once approved, the Academic Lead should submit the required paperwork to the Validation Panel via the Quality and Academic Standards office (see 3.3.4 below).
- viii. Academic Leads seek advice, guidance and support from the Quality and Academic Standards office throughout the process at [qualityteam@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:qualityteam@lshtm.ac.uk)



### 3.3.4 Stage 4: Validation Panel meeting for new programmes

- i. The Quality and Academic Standards office will coordinate with Academic Leads in arrangements of Validation Panel meetings [qualityteams@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:qualityteams@lshtm.ac.uk).
- ii. A Validation Panel shall meet to scrutinise the new programme and module documentation and will determine a recommendation for approval. Members are expected to consider the documentation objectively and impartially with respect to the LSHTM [Strategy](#). They will be expected to ensure that:
  - the programme/module aims are addressed through the subject specific content within the curriculum design.
  - the structure, curriculum and content meet the academic standard for the proposed level as set out in FHEQ and OfS' Sector Recognised Standards
  - the assessment strategy is designed to provide students with the appropriate opportunity to meet the programme/module aims and learning outcomes.
  - contact hours have been appropriately set, taking into account module/programme credit value and assessment type.
  - there are appropriate resources and learning opportunities for students (especially central resources like Library and IT).
- iii. The following documents should be presented to the Validation panel:
  - New programme business case
  - Academic Development proposal approval as approved by PMRC
  - Programme Specification
  - Module Specification (new modules and existing core modules for new programmes)
  - Summary of feedback from faculty, student and external expert consultation
  - Any other relevant supporting documentation

#### Validation Panel Outcome

- iv. In reviewing and considering the programme proposal, the Validation Panel will reach a decision on whether to:
  - **Recommend approval** – with/without recommendations; or

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- **Recommend approval subject to conditions** – and with/without recommendations; or
- **Not recommend approval.**

The Panel Chair is responsible for providing the programme team with the final validation outcome report normally within 4 weeks of the validation event.

### Conditions and recommendations

- v. **Conditions** may be set by the Panel where actions or revisions must be taken to address issues of a regulatory nature or that relate to resources (both physical and human), curriculum, assessment or other areas that will impact on students' learning and experience. The programme team must address all conditions by the agreed deadline before the programme can be approved and launched.
- vi. **Recommendations** are areas identified by the Panel which may enhance the quality of the programme and student experience. The programme team is expected to provide responses to all recommendations, including whether these have been accepted, or where rejected, an explanation that is acceptable to the Panel.
- vii. **Commendations** – Commendations allow Panels the chance to congratulate the programme team, Faculty or University lead on aspects of exemplary practice, i.e. those that significantly exceed normal expectations, particularly those that have had a positive effect on students' teaching and learning experience and those supporting the effective delivery of a programme. The focus should be on exemplary practice that has the potential to be transferred to other programmes.
- viii. The Academic Lead must respond to the decision outcome, addressing all conditions and recommendations following the meeting. The Chair of the Panel will be responsible for ensuring that the conditions have been met and recommendations have been appropriately responded to before the programme can progress to Stage 5, Final approval.
- ix. The programme team will be informed of the outcome, along with any appropriate conditions, recommendations and commendations on the

day of the event. This will be confirmed via email within two days of the validation event.

- x. A Validation Report will be produced within four weeks of the validation event. This will form the official documentation of the validation process, including details of conditions, recommendations and commendations.
- xi. The Validation Panel will not recommend approval of a programme/module that has not been the subject of external expertise.
- xii. For full Membership and Terms of Reference of the Periodic Review and Validation Panel please see [Chapter 10, Governance of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).

### **3.3.5 Stage 5: Final Approval for new Programmes**

- i. The validation report and final programme documentation will be approved by SRDC - for Research Degrees, and PMRC for taught Master's programmes. PMRC will make a recommendation for final approval to Senate Education Committee. In addition, the Faculty Operating Officer, Director of Education Services and where appropriate the Finance & Development Committee should also be kept informed. If the validation outcome is to not recommend approval through SRDC or PMRC, SEC will determine whether the proposal should be substantially revised or abandoned.
- ii. Final approval of new programmes must be noted at the next Senate meeting and generally launched within 18 months of approval.
- iii. In addition to the above procedures, DL programmes require formal approval by the University of London via the (Quality, Learning and Teaching Committee) and Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) following SEC approval.
- iv. Once final approval has been confirmed the following actions must be completed:

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- Notification of approval must be sent to relevant stakeholders including: Deans of Faculty, TPDs, Programme Directors, Head of Marketing and Communication, Head of Registry and Programme Administration Office.
- Advertising and promotion of the new programme: The Academic Lead will work with marketing and recruitment to develop a webpage and programme prospectus. Programmes must not be advertised to students before formal approval has been granted, or otherwise must be advertised as 'subject to validation'; however, note this can only be done once the Business Case has been approved by the Executive Team.
- Registry Systems: The Academic Lead must liaise with the Registry (and for DL programmes, UoLW) to ensure the relevant systems are set up for admissions and enrolment.
- Learning and Teaching Materials and schemes will need to be prepared for programme implementation. For new programmes, this must be in liaison with the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).
- Timetabling: The Academic lead will work with timetabling teams to ensure the programme is included in the schedule.
- Programme Administration: The Academic Lead/Programme Director (PD) must liaise with the Programme Administration Office or Distance Learning Office to ensure that all relevant administrative tasks are in place for the start of the academic year.

*N.B although some of these activities cannot take place until the programme has been approved it is expected that the programme development team has engaged with the relevant support and professional service teams to prepare for a new programme or modules.*

**3.3.6 Credit-Bearing Short Course development, design and approval**

The development, design and launch of a new credit-bearing Short course will be subject to a similar 5 stage procedure as a new award-bearing programme. However, the timeline and approval level will be adjusted to reflect the size of, and institutional risk attached to, the new offer:

- [Stage 1: Strategic, Financial Planning Approval \(Business Case\)](#)
- [Stage 2: Academic Development Proposal](#)

- [Stage 3: new credit-bearing short course Specification and Curriculum Design](#)
- [Stage 4: Validation Panel meeting for new credit-bearing short course](#)
- [Stage 5: Final Approval for new credit-bearing short course](#)

A credit-bearing Short Course will take at least 6 months to design develop and approve. Academic development approval and Final approval is overseen by the Programme and Module Review Committee.

#### 3.3.6.1 **Stage 1: Strategic, Financial Planning Approval (Business Case)**

- i. Proposals for new credit-bearing short courses should be considered at faculty level via the Faculty's Annual Budgetary round.
- ii. To develop a new credit-bearing short course proposal relevant LSHTM stakeholders must be consulted (e.g. faculty leadership, marketing, recruitment, finance, Registry, Quality & Academic Standards, University of London Worldwide).
- iii. A business case for new credit-bearing short course should be drafted and approved by the Faculty Management Group.
- iv. The business case for a new credit-bearing short course must be endorsed by the LSHTM [Executive Team](#) before proceeding to academic development and approval.
- v. To be approved the business case will be expected to include:
  - An outline of the new provision
  - A detailed breakdown of costs, income and resource implications with confirmation of the financial approval;
  - Recruitment expectations and opportunities, including a forecast of student demand;
  - Market comparison to major competitor programmes;
- vi. Once the business case is approved, the Taught Programme Director of the parent Faculty will appoint a lead academic to coordinate the development, design and approval procedure. The

lead academic is expected to form a Development Team and ensure there is a holistic approach to the curriculum design.

**3.3.6.2 Stage 2: Academic Development Proposal**

- i. Once strategic approval has been granted a comprehensive new credit-bearing short course proposal should be endorsed by the Taught Programme Director.
- ii. For a new credit-bearing short course the faculty will then need to seek academic development approval at LSHTM level from Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC).

All proposals will be expected to include:

- An outline of the new provision ((from the business case);
- A detailed breakdown of costs, income and resource implications with confirmation of the financial approval (from the business case);
- Recruitment expectations and opportunities, including forecast student demand (from the business case);
- Market comparison to major competitor courses and programmes (from the business case);
- Distinctive features of the new credit-bearing short course;
- The intended learning outcomes;
- The course structure
- A teaching, learning and assessment strategy;
- Details of staff allocated to deliver the course and an outline of their subject specialism and likely contribution to the course.

- iii. Guidance should be sought from colleagues who have specific expertise or responsibilities in these areas.

*N.B. If circumstances change in a way that will substantively affect the development of launch of the course it may be necessary to suspend or extend the approval procedure.*

**3.3.6.3 Stage 3: new Credit-Bearing Short Course Specification and Curriculum Design**

- i. Once development approval has been granted the new credit-bearing short course specification and content can be designed.
- ii. Appropriate time is set aside for curriculum design and development. The process requires a course specification to be produced, along with an overview of the curriculum. The aims, learning outcomes and the assessment strategy and method should be mapped and documented.
- iii. Engagement with external expertise and students as co-creators is a core expectation of the curriculum design process. Feedback, advice and guidance from academic, sector and industry peers must also be documented for review at the Validation Panel.
- iv. The specification and curriculum design should go through a robust consultation process within the parent faculty. If content or delivery is shared with another faculty the consultation process should be extended across faculties.
- v. Where available the national [Subject Benchmark Statements](#) should be referenced.
- vi. The Taught Programme Director should approve the documentation before submitting to the Validation Panel via the [Quality and Academic Standards office](#).
- vii. It is recommended that Academic Leads seek advice, guidance and support from the Quality and Academic Standards office throughout the process at [qualityteams@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:qualityteams@lshtm.ac.uk)

**3.3.6.4 Stage 4: Validation Panel meeting for new Credit-bearing short course**

- i. The Quality and Academic Standards office will support Academic Leads with Validation Panel arrangements  
[qualityteam@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:qualityteam@lshtm.ac.uk).

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- ii. A Validation Panel shall meet to scrutinise the new credit-bearing short course documentation and will determine a recommendation for approval. Members are expected to consider the documentation objectively and impartially with respect to the LSHTM [Strategy](#). They will be expected to ensure that:
  - the aims are addressed through the subject specific content within the curriculum design.
  - the structure, curriculum and content meets the academic standard for the proposed equivalent level as set out in the OfS' Sector Recognised Standards and the FHEQ.
  - the assessment strategy is designed to provide students with the appropriate opportunity to meet the aims and learning outcomes.
  - contact hours have been appropriately set, taking into account credit value and assessment type.
  - there are appropriate resources and learning opportunities for students (especially central resources like Library and IT).
- iii. The following documents should be presented to the Validation panel:
  - New credit-bearing short course rationale and business case
  - new credit-bearing short course Specification(s)
  - Summary of feedback from faculty, student and external expert consultation
  - Any other relevant supporting documentation

### Validation Panel Outcome

- xiii. In reviewing and considering the programme proposal, the Validation Panel will reach a decision on whether to:
  - **Recommend approval** – with/without recommendations; or
  - **Recommend approval subject to conditions** – and with/without recommendations; or
  - **Not recommend approval.**
- xiv. The Panel Chair is responsible for providing the programme team with the final validation outcome report normally within 4 weeks of the validation event.

### Conditions and recommendations



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- xv. **Conditions** may be set by the Panel where actions or revisions must be taken to address issues of a regulatory nature or that relate to resources (both physical and human), curriculum, assessment or other areas that will impact on students' learning and experience. The programme team must address all conditions by the agreed deadline before the programme can be approved and launched.
- xvi. **Recommendations** are areas identified by the Panel which may enhance the quality of the programme and student experience. The programme team is expected to provide responses to all recommendations, including whether these have been accepted, or where rejected, an explanation that is acceptable to the Panel.
- xvii. **Commendations** - Commendations allow Panels the chance to congratulate the programme team, Faculty or University lead on aspects of exemplary practice, i.e. those that significantly exceed normal expectations, particularly those that have had a positive effect on students' teaching and learning experience and those supporting the effective delivery of a programme. The focus should be on exemplary practice that has the potential to be transferred to other programmes.
- xviii. The Academic Lead must respond to the decision outcome, addressing all conditions and recommendations following the meeting. The Chair of the Panel will be responsible for ensuring that the conditions have been met and recommendations have been appropriately responded to before the programme can progress to Stage 5, Final approval.
- iv. The Validation Panel will not recommend approval of a new credit-bearing short course that has not been the subject of external expertise.
- v. For full Membership and Terms of Reference of the Periodic Review and Validation Panels please see [Chapter 10, Governance of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).

**3.3.6.5 Stage 5: Final Approval for new Credit-bearing short course**

- i. The validation report and final programme documentation will be reviewed at PMRC who have authority to make a final approval decision on credit-bearing short courses.
- ii. If approval is not recommended PMRC will determine whether the proposal should be substantially revised or abandoned.
- iii. Once final approval has been confirmed the following actions must be completed:
  - Notification of approval must be sent to relevant stakeholders including: Deans of Faculty, TPDs, Programme Directors, Head of Marketing and Communication, Head of Registry and Programme Administration Office.
  - Advertising and promotion of the new programme: The Academic Lead will work with marketing and recruitment to develop a webpage and programme prospectus. Programmes must not be advertised to students before formal approval has been granted, or otherwise must be advertised as 'subject to validation'; however, note this can only be done once the Business Case has been approved by the Executive Team.
  - Registry Systems: The Academic Lead must liaise with the Registry to ensure the relevant systems are set up for admissions and enrolment.
  - Learning and Teaching Materials and schemes of will need to be prepared for programme implementation.
  - Timetabling: The Academic lead will work with timetabling teams to ensure the programme is included in the schedule.
  - Programme Administration: The Academic Lead/Programme Director (PD) must liaise with the Programme Administration Office to ensure that all relevant administrative tasks are in place for the start of the academic year.

*N.B although some of these activities cannot take place until the course has been approved it is expected that the programme development team has engaged with the relevant support and professional service teams to prepare for a new programme or modules.*

### 3.3.7 Module development, design and approval

- 3.3.7.1 New modules are normally approved through the validation of the new programme which has sponsored them ([as described in point 3.3.4 Programme development, design and approval](#)). New modules may also be proposed and implemented through a programme's Periodic Review (see [section 3.7 of this Chapter](#)).
- 3.3.7.2 At times there may be a need to propose and implement a new module outside of these processes. In this case, the new module must be sponsored by a parent programme and be endorsed by the parent programme's faculty.
- 3.3.7.3 In line with 3.4 Programme & Module Amendment Procedure below, a new core module will be considered a Major Amendment to the parent programme. Major Amendments to the programme will be considered for final approval at the Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC). If there are multiple new core modules proposed this will result in a revalidation of the programme (see point 3.4.5.3)
- 3.3.7.4 New elective modules will be considered a Minor Amendment to the parent programme, and therefore, final approval resides with the Faculty Taught Programme Committee,
- 3.3.7.5 New modules are resourced by a faculty and will be subject to a 3 stage faculty-based procedure to allow for speedier implementation:
- [Stage 1: Proposal Approval \(Financial and Academic\)](#)
  - [Stage 2: Module Specification and Curriculum Design](#)
  - [Stage 3: Final Approval of new modules](#)
- 3.3.7.6 **Stage 1: Proposal Approval (Financial and Academic)**
- i. Proposals for new modules should be considered at faculty level via the Faculty's Annual Budgetary round.
  - ii. A business case for new modules should be drafted and approved by the Faculty Management Group. The business case will be expected to include:
    - An outline and rationale for the new module;

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- A rationale of how the new module benefits the parent programme;
  - A detailed breakdown of costs and resource implications;
- iii. Once financial approval has been granted an academic module proposal should be considered and approved by the Faculty Postgraduate Taught Committee. The proposals will be expected to include:
- An outline and rationale for the new module
  - A rationale of how the new module benefits the parent programme;
  - Distinctive features of the module;
  - Details of LSHTM staff with subject specialism and their likely contribution to the delivery of the module.
- iv. Modules can proceed to development after approval at FPGTC.

**3.3.7.7 Stage 2: Module Specification and Curriculum Design**

- i. Once development approval has been granted the module specifications and content can be designed.
- ii. Appropriate time should be set aside for curriculum design and development. The process requires a module specification(s) to be produced, along with an overview of session content. The module aims, learning outcomes and the assessment strategy and method should be mapped and documented.
- iii. Engagement with external expertise and students as co-creators is a core expectation of the curriculum design process. Feedback, advice and guidance from academic, sector and industry peers must also be documented. Approval of the new module will require evidence of academic engagement and scrutiny from:
- an independent internal academic peer (member of PMRC);
  - an external academic subject expert, or an external examiner if the module is part of a programme;
  - The Quality and Academic Standards team; and
  - Current students, typically through a programme committee in the case of an existing programme, or student-staff fora for new developments.

- iv. Module Specification and curriculum design should go through a robust consultation process within the parent faculty. If content or delivery is shared with another faculty the consultation process should be extended across faculties.
- v. Where available the national [Subject Benchmark Statements](#) should be referenced.
- vi. It is recommended that Academic Leads seek advice, guidance and support from the Quality and Academic Standards office throughout the process at [qualityteams@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:qualityteams@lshtm.ac.uk)

#### **3.3.7.8 Stage 3: Final Approval of new modules**

- i. The Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC) will approve core modules, and the Faculty Postgraduate Taught Committee will approve new elective modules, based on the documents provided:
  - the initial proposal and rationale
  - the new module specification
  - a summary of the feedback from the consultation listed in 3.3.6.2
- ii. The Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC) will note the approval of elective modules.
- iii. Once formal approval has been confirmed the following action must be completed:
  - Notification of approval must be sent to relevant stakeholders, including: Deans of Faculty, TPDs, Programme Directors, Head of Marketing and Communication, Quality and Academic Standards, Head of Registry, Head of Distance Learning, and Programme Administration Office.
  - Student Record Systems: The Academic Lead must liaise with the Registry (and for DL programmes, UoLW) to ensure the relevant systems are set up.
  - Learning and Teaching Materials and schemes of will need to be prepared for module implementation.
  - Programme Administration: The Academic Lead/Programme Director (PD) must liaise with the Programme Administration

Office to ensure that all relevant administrative tasks are in place for the start of the academic year.

### **3.4 Programme & Module Amendment Procedure**

- 3.4.1 LSHTM operates an annual and periodic monitoring and review process which enables programmes and modules to identify if there is a need to update and enhance the offering to reflect the latest developments in subject knowledge, pedagogy, student feedback and accrediting body requirements so as to deliver the most effective student experience.

#### **3.4.2 Programme Specification Amendments**

- 3.4.2.1 LSHTM publishes intensive programme specifications an academic year prior to a cohort enrolling. For example, September 2022 for the academic year 2023/2024. Therefore, 'Major' programme amendments must be approved by the last Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC) 15 months prior to implementation (June/July meeting).
- 3.4.2.2 Distance learning (DL) programme specifications are under the jurisdiction of the University of London's marketing and recruitment. They are published in January for recruitment to the next academic year. To meet the January publication date, the University of London require amendments to programme specifications and the accompanying programme regulations to be submitted by 1 September. DL - programme and module amendments require approval at LSHTM prior to submission to the University of London, therefore 'Major' DL programme amendments must be approved at PMRC in the summer term (June/July).
- 3.4.2.3 Amended Programme Specifications for Distance Learning provision will apply to the student cohort registering for the first time in the following academic year. Changes that are advantageous to registered Distance Learning students may be applied retroactively.
- 3.4.2.4 For intensive programmes, only typographical error corrections and staffing amendments to programme specifications may be made after the 15-month deadline ahead of intensive programme cohort enrolling. Such amendments do not require Committee approval but the updated forms and track-changed documentation should be submitted via the

Taught Programme Director (TPD) to the Quality & Academic Standards office (QAS) no later than 3 months prior to a cohort enrolling (July 2019 for 2019/2020), to ensure that the definitive record is accurate. DL programme specifications are overseen by University of London and may not be amended after they are published in January.

- 3.4.2.5 In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to amend a programme/module after publication of the Specification. If this occurs, applicants and/or current students must be informed about the changes in writing.

### **3.4.3 Module Specification Amendments**

- 3.4.3.1 Module specifications provide students with details of the programme's associated compulsory and recommended option modules. They provide the student with an overview of the module aims and learning outcomes as well as indicative content and the assessment methods. Module specifications are published in the summer prior to the start of the academic year.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.4.3.2 Minor module amendments can be made during the academic year prior to a cohort enrolling. Minor module amendments are approved at the FPGTC and should be received and noted by PMRC.
- 3.4.3.3 Minor block E module amendments may be approved by FPGTC via Chair's Action and submitted to PMRC for noting.
- 3.4.3.4 Amendments to modules that have an impact on Programme Specifications (and/or Programme Regulations for Distance Learning), such as module name changes, are deemed major amendments. They must be approved by the last Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC) 15 months prior to implementation (June/July meeting).

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<sup>1</sup> DL Modules are published in May to align with the UoL Recruitment cycle. Ideally Term 1 intensive Module Specifications are published as early as possible to coincide with Short Course recruitment.

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- 3.4.3.5 Editorial amendments to module specifications do not require Committee approval and must be submitted via the TPD to QAS during the summer prior to the start of the academic year.
- 3.4.3.6 Major and minor amendments to programmes or modules will be informed by a variety of factors as suggested in paragraph 3.4.1 above. These factors should be evidenced in the amendment proposal procedure (for example, PTES results, and attainment figures or in response to student feedback). It is expected that there has been suitable consultation prior to proposals being made with, but not limited to, Programme Committee and FPGTC, the External Examiner, and current students and/or alumni.
- 3.4.3.7 It is recommended that guidance is sought from QAS and the TPD at the start of the process.

### 3.4.4 Definitions

#### 3.4.4.1 Editorial Amendments

*Editorial amendments* are defined as editorial updates to programme and module specifications that are routine measures of housekeeping and that do not affect the substantive outcomes of a programme or module. *Editorial amendments* include, but are not limited to:

- Correcting typographical errors;
- Updating staffing information;
- Augmenting reading lists;
- Revising the wording of Module Intended Learning Outcomes in a way that has no bearing on the meaning, as agreed by the Taught Programme Director; and
- Providing additional factual information without implication to the aims and outcomes of the programme or module.

#### 3.4.4.2 Minor Amendments

*Minor amendments* are made to single elements of the learning experience that go further than simple *editorial amendments*. These might include, but are not limited to:

- Changes to module description that moves it away from the current module aims and learning outcomes;



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- Changes to the aims or learning outcomes of a module, that bear no implication to the overall aims and learning outcomes of the programme;
- Changes to module assessment that do not require changes to Programme Specifications (and/or Programme Regulations for Distance Learning);
- Changes to delivery of a Recommended module, such as term or teaching slot allocation;
- Changes to the distribution of teaching methods, such as contact hours; and
- The addition of Recommended modules to the suite within a programme.

### 3.4.4.3 Major Amendments

Generally occurring at programme-level, *major amendments* are changes that have a bearing on the overall structure, aims and/or outcomes of a programme, and present a material change to the learning experience and associated information provided to students and applicants. Module amendments may fall within the *major* category if the changes have a bearing on a programme's structure. *Major amendments* include, but are not limited to:

- Programme title change;
- Introduction of, or change to, entry and/or exit awards;
- Introduction of a new cohort entry point;
- Introduction of a new, or change to the existing, mode of study;
- Change to the mode of delivery;
- Addition, removal or restructuring of routes within a programme;
- Change to admissions requirements;
- Changes to the programme description that moves it away from the current programme aims and learning outcomes;
- Changes to delivery of a compulsory module, such as term or teaching slot allocation;
- Amendments to the title of a module;
- Changes to Distance Learning module assessment that is specified in the Programme Specification and/or Programme Regulations;
- Change to Award Schemes;
- Change to the credit value of a module;
- Change(s) to the diet of compulsory modules; and

- The removal of recommended modules.

### **3.4.5 Points of Note**

- 3.4.5.1 Consultation throughout the process should serve to support the Module Organiser (MO) and/or PD looking to update content. Editorial and minor amendments should be brought to the attention of the PD and the TPD, whilst major amendments should be designed in consultation with the TPD and QAS. It is important to note that the approval of amendments is beyond the remit of this consultative stage, sitting with FPGTC and PMRC for minor and major amendments respectively.
- 3.4.5.2 Multiple minor amendments to a module that have a material effect on the parent programme may be considered a major amendment and therefore will need to be submitted to PMRC for approval.
- 3.4.5.3 If significant change is made to a programme or module that presents a combination of amendments as categorised and defined above, this may result in revalidation. If the change culminates in a new programme offer then the validation procedure would need to be followed.
- 3.4.5.4 Changes that relate only to the MSc Award Scheme or programme-specific Award Scheme will be submitted directly to the Senate Education Committee for approval.
- 3.4.5.5 FPGTC and PMRC secretaries will send notification of approval for minor and major amendments, respectively. Following the last PMRC of the academic year, the Secretary to PMRC will provide a summary and accompanying documentation of all approved amendments to Registry, the Programme Administration Office, and Communications and Engagement.
- 3.4.5.6 In all instances of minor and major amendment, the MO or PD (as appropriate) will ensure that the Committee-approved amendment form and track-changed specification are then submitted to QAS for publication.

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- 3.4.5.7 A summary of changes to modules and the parent programme is to be delivered at the corresponding Exam Board, ensuring External Examiners are fully abreast of developments.
- 3.4.5.8 Amendments to provision within the remit of the Doctoral College will follow the same categorisation, with approvals handled by the appropriate Programme Committee and Senate Research Degrees Committee for minor and major amendments, respectively.

### 3.5 Suspension & Discontinuation of Programmes or Modules

- 3.5.1 In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend recruitment (hereafter suspension) to or discontinue a programme of study and/or an individual module. The decision will be made for operational viability and/or student experience, for example where low numbers of students have applied/registered, or there are constraints due to staffing and/or resources, or there has been a loss of external funding, or substantial restructuring is needed. Generally, suspension will be the first consideration, as a temporary solution; however, this may lead to discontinuation if deemed necessary. This document sets out LSHTM's procedures for suspending or discontinuing programmes and modules, in order to protect the interests of students, applicants, and LSHTM.
- **Suspension** is the temporary closure of a programme or module for recruitment. The decisions – normally considered at Faculty level, in consultation with and endorsed by SEC - may be repealed on the authority of those who made them. This will involve consultation with all relevant stakeholders. It may be appropriate to undertake a review or re-validation prior to repealing any suspension, depending on the reasons for the original decision and whether circumstances have changed.
  - **Discontinuation** is where a programme of study or a module is formally closed.
- 3.5.2 The proposal to discontinue or suspend a programme or module must come from the Faculty responsible for that programme in consultation with, and endorsed by, SEC and after consultation with key stakeholders. Throughout the process, students currently registered on the programme or module must be consulted.

Consultation must occur with and agreement be obtained from stakeholders in all faculties. For collaborative provision, LSHTM must obtain the agreement of the partner institution to the discontinuation or suspension. In all cases the proposal must cover the following areas:

- The rationale for suspension or discontinuation;
- The impact of suspension or discontinuation on applicants and current students;
- The proposed arrangements for all students currently registered on the programme or module (paying particular consideration to those students on deferrals, interruptions or part-time/flexible modes of study);
- The proposed arrangements for students on any other impacted programmes (particularly where a module crosses programmes);
- The proposed arrangements for applicants and recruitment;
- Evidence that students registered on the programme or module have been consulted (e.g. dates of meetings or correspondence details);
- Proposed arrangements for official communication with applicants and students currently registered on the programme or module once the suspension or discontinuation has been approved by the relevant committee;
- The impact on staffing and evidence that staff have been consulted;
- The level of risk in terms of student experience and the student/LSHTM contractual liabilities (e.g. is the module part of the selling point of a programme or is the module part of another programme).

### **3.5.3 Programme<sup>2</sup> Suspension or Discontinuation**

- 3.5.3.1 Suspension or discontinuation of a programme will be a case of closing a programme to new registrations, and LSHTM will endeavour to limit the impact on students currently registered on the programme with a 'teach-out' plan. A recommendation to suspend or discontinue a programme is made by the relevant Faculty to Senate Education

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<sup>2</sup> All award-bearing LSHTM programmes, credit-bearing Continuing Professional Development, 'special' non-degree-awarding programmes defined by Senate as needing more scrutiny e.g. Professional Diplomas.

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Committee (SEC) or Senate Research Degrees Committee (SRDC)<sup>3</sup>; however, the overriding authority to approve proposals to suspend or discontinue a programme rests with Senate. Through Senate, LSHTM will take account of the contractual liabilities it has with applicants and students and where applicable agree an appropriate 'teach-out' to complete within their maximum period of registration (3-year FT or 5-year PT).

3.5.3.2 All programme suspensions should be reviewed annually at PMRC. All requests to reverse a programme suspension should also be considered by PMRC. All requests should detail the rationale for the reversal with reference to the original reasons for the suspension.

3.5.3.3 Where a programme is taught by distance learning (DL), confirmation of suspension or discontinuation should be sent (via email) from the Chair of Senate to Pro-Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive and/or the Director of Operations & Deputy Chief Executive of University of London Worldwide (UoLW). This email should be copied to the Academic Services Manager and Contracts and Central Services Manager. The notice must include:

- Date for last initial student registration
- Date for final examination
- Date for final awards and programme closure

3.5.3.4 LSHTM is required by the UoL to continue the programme for a period of 5 years to enable students to complete within their maximum period of registration.

### 3.5.4 Module Suspension or Discontinuation

3.5.4.1 The **suspension** of modules may be proposed by the relevant Faculty and will be approved by the Programme and Module Review Committee on behalf of SEC. The overriding authority to approve proposals to **discontinue** a module rests with SEC.

3.5.4.2 All module suspensions should be reviewed annually prior to the start of a new academic year at PMRC. Requests to reverse a module suspension should be submitted to PMRC for consideration prior to

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<sup>3</sup> SRDC oversee this stage of the process for Professionals Doctorates programmes with a taught element.

the start of a new academic year. All requests should detail the rationale for the reversal with reference to the original reasons for the suspension.

### 3.5.5 Short Course Suspension or Discontinuation

- 3.5.5.1 Suspension of non-award-bearing short courses that are not classified under 'Special Programmes' may be approved by the Dean of Faculty for the Faculty responsible for that short course, and the Secretary & Registrar on behalf of the Planning & Finance Committee.

### 3.5.6 Student Consultation

- 3.5.6.1 **Student consultation** is a key component in the process of programme and module suspension and discontinuation. The Faculty is responsible for communicating the impact of suspension and discontinuation to applicants and students currently registered on the programme or module at the earliest opportunity. It is encouraged that they have open discussions with students on the rationale to suspend or discontinue, the impact it may have on them and the proposed arrangements for those currently registered.
- 3.5.6.2 Evidence of student consultation must be included in the proposal to suspend or discontinue the programme or module.
- 3.5.6.3 Students and applicants must also receive in writing confirmation of the suspension and discontinuation once approved by Senate that covers the rationale as well as the impact and arrangements agreed.

### 3.5.7 Timeline

- 3.5.7.1 The proposal to suspend or discontinue a programme or module should be made in advance of the next recruitment cycle to limit risk of contractual liabilities.
- 3.5.7.2 For **DL programmes**, LSHTM is required by the UoL to give a notice of at least one year if a module is permanently withdrawn and five years' notice if a programme is to be discontinued. Once the proposal for discontinuation is approved, applications and registrations for the programme may continue to be processed for one final session.

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- 3.5.7.3 In rare, unforeseeable and unavoidable circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend or discontinue an intensive programme or module after recruitment has begun and applications have been submitted.
- 3.5.7.4 Once students are enrolled at LSHTM suspension and discontinuation of intensive programmes and modules will, where possible, be avoided; however, in the event that an optional module is undersubscribed it may be necessary to suspend it for an academic year.
- 3.5.7.5 In the case of the circumstances outlined above the rationale to suspend or discontinue an intensive programme or module must be sufficiently strong to justify the disruption, and arrangements should be made to ensure that the applicants and students receive an alternative, comparable experience. Students may be given the opportunity to change programme; where this is not suitable or possible, applicants will receive a full refund of any deposit paid and students currently registered should refer to section 6 'Refunds' in the [Student Tuition Fees Policy](#).

## **3.6 Annual Programme and Module Monitoring**

### **3.6.1 Taught Annual Programme Monitoring Procedures**

- 3.6.1.1 LSHTM monitors the quality of its academic provision on an annual basis through a mixture of reviews at module, programme and faculty level. Academic staff responsible for the delivery of modules or programmes are asked to reflect on their teaching practice, to respond to student feedback and to ensure that no major difficulties have arisen and identify areas for enhancement. During the process they will draw upon key datasets from student surveys and student achievement as well as the annual External Examiner Report.
- 3.6.1.2 Annual programme and module reviews feed into the wider cycle of quality assurance at both faculty and LSHTM level, with the overall aim to enhance the student experience at LSHTM.
- 3.6.1.3 Annual monitoring is undertaken by Programme Directors (PDs) and Module Organisers (MOs). It is the faculties' collective responsibility to

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ensure that the module or programme review is completed by the end of the academic session. It is a requirement of annual monitoring that detailed action plans are produced, monitored with actions addressed. This should happen through Programme Committees, FPGTC, PMRC and SEC on behalf of Senate. There should be a clear audit trail through the committee structure with a series of separate written reports for each module or programme, summary reports and records of discussions noted in the minutes.

3.6.1.4 The main divisions are between programme, module, faculty level. The major elements that feed into the LSHTM's annual monitoring procedure are mapped as follows:

- External Examining process and reporting
- Annual Programme Director Review (APDR)
- University of London Worldwide (UoLW) - Annual Programme Planning and Review (APPR)
- Annual Module Review and Action Plans (AMRAP)
- Faculty and School summaries of External Examining, APDR and AMRAP
- Internal Moderators' reports
- Student Feedback Surveys (Module and PTES, PRES and UoLW)
- Key data sets from Exam Boards and Registry relating to student admissions, retention, attrition, attainment and student destinations

**3.6.2 Annual Module Review and Action Plans (AMRAP)**

3.6.2.1 The [AMRAP](#) is drafted by MOs at the end of the module. MOs gather key data sets from Registry, Exam Boards, Alumni and Student Surveys to support Module Review. The AMRAP is discussed with relevant Programme Committees and a revised version if necessary will be sent to the Taught Programme Directors (TPDs) for scrutiny and approval through FPGTC. Each Module Organiser is required to complete and submit the AMRAP to the relevant Faculty Committee. QAS will work with the TPD to ensure that AMRAP completion is tracked.

3.6.2.2 The TPD produces a Module Review Summary for their faculty which will be scrutinised at FPGTC.



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- 3.6.2.3 The AMRAP should be used to inform the Annual Programme Director Review report.

**3.6.3 Annual Programme Director Review (APDR)**

- 3.6.3.1 The [Annual Programme Director's Review report](#) will be drafted by the PD using key data sets including: AMRAPs; student feedback (PTES surveys); admissions, retention, attrition, attainment and student destinations data gathered from Registry and Exam Boards; External Examiner reports; and input as appropriate from partners and /or professional bodies.
- 3.6.3.2 ADPRs are discussed at Programme Committee before submission to the TPD for scrutiny and approval through the Faculty PG Taught Committee. Following faculty level discussions, a final version will be submitted to the Quality & Academic Standards office (QAS) for submission to PMRC for noting. TPDs will produce a Faculty Programme Review Summary, which will be scrutinised at PMRC.
- 3.6.3.3 Programmes will be exempt from annual monitoring (APDR) in the year of their periodic review.

**3.6.4 Research Annual Programme Monitoring Procedures**

- 3.6.4.1 Research degrees monitoring procedures operate differently, because of the individual nature of students' work. The key elements are: progress monitoring of individual students (primarily in departments, with potential involvement of Faculty-level staff); consideration of examiners' reports relating to individual students; and consideration of data and management information (primarily at LSHTM and Faculty level, with departmental involvement where appropriate).

**3.7 Periodic Programme Review and Evaluation (Revalidation)**

**3.7.1 Purpose, Scope and Frequency of Periodic Reviews**

- 3.7.1.1 All LSHTM programmes are required to undertake a periodic review, generally every 5 years, although this timescale is not prescriptive but rather, indicative. This is a more substantial process than annual

monitoring which will require scrutiny from external peers as well as internal stakeholders. In the year of Periodic Review a programme will be exempt from annual monitoring (APDR)

- 3.7.1.2 The University of London Worldwide (UoLW) Quality Assurance Framework recommends distance learning (DL) programme periodic review follow the lead school procedures, with a dual monitoring and reporting procedure through the governance structures of both the lead college and UoLW. It is LSHTM's responsibility to keep the UoLW informed of the periodic review timetable and to consult with the UoLW Quality, Standards and Governance Directorate when a review date is being finalised. Depending on the size of the provision and review method, the UoLW requires a **three- to six-month notification period** from LSHTM.
- 3.7.1.3 Periodic review is an in-depth evidence-based evaluation of the quality and standards of a programme or related programmes. The reviews will consider a programme's aims and intended outcomes, and identify where further improvements need to be made. An internal panel, which will incorporate significant external input via an External Reviewer, will undertake the review. All reviews should have flexible parameters to ensure relevance to the programme(s) involved. Beyond simply confirming the sufficiency of current provision, review reports should provide constructive recommendations on the future enhancement of this provision.
- At minimum, the review should function as a revalidation exercise to monitor and assure the quality of the existing programme model;
  - The outcome from the review panel may include commendations on good practice that can be disseminated across LSHTM, and recommendations or conditions for reapproval;
  - A review may also serve as an opportunity to consider comprehensive updates to the programme, curriculum or delivery;
  - Collaborative or joint programmes may wish to cover specific topics relevant to their individual arrangements.
- 3.7.1.4 It should be noted that the Review Panel is within its jurisdiction not to recommend revalidation, and that the programme be suspended or discontinued. The committee responsible for quality assurance, Senate Education Committee (SEC), will be responsible for final approval of all revalidations and confirming to Senate that a

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programme should be suspended or discontinued, or working with the Chair of the review panel to revisit the concern(s) over the programme, and whether conditions can be set for revalidation.

3.7.1.5 **Scope:** For a successful and constructive review, it is important to establish key objectives at an early stage. Programme Directors (PDs), with the support from the Quality & Academic Standards office (QAS), will identify areas of concern or specific themes to address. These topics may arise from consultation with the Programme Committee and through annual monitoring.

3.7.1.6 Through Periodic Review, Programme Directors are expected to undertake critical analysis to measure the health of the programme. This should include:

- Mapping individual modules of study and progression pathways to the programme's overall aims and learning outcomes;
- Review of the assessment model ensuring an appropriate variety of assessment methods are utilised for the level of award;
- Trend analysis of the student profile and outcomes for the period under review;
- Assessing the currency of the curriculum and learning strategy against developments in the discipline as well as pedagogical innovations.

3.7.1.7 In addition to the standard LSHTM purpose and scope for review, DL reviews are expected to meet the following UoLW criteria:

- Assess the currency and overall effectiveness of the learning materials, resources and guidance in relation to the programme specification, in the light of:
  - current research and practice in the relevant discipline;
  - developments in pedagogical methods for effective distance-learning;
  - technological developments for enhancing the distance-learning experience
- Evaluate the extent to which minimum expectations for the academic guidance and personal support of students learning at a distance are met;

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- Ensure that the UoL's Academic Regulations and quality assurance mechanisms of the UoLW and LSHTM are implemented effectively, and that any variations in practice are addressed;
  - Review the interface between the UoLW and the LSHTM in the management and enhancement of the quality of the programme.
- 3.7.1.8 **Schedule:** LSHTM academic programmes will go through a process of Periodic Review, generally on a five-year cycle, although note this is an indicative timeframe. QAS maintain the schedule on behalf of Programme and Module Review Committee (PMRC). The Committee will confirm the schedule and approve any amendments at the summer term meeting.
- 3.7.1.9 On occasion, it may be appropriate to request a change to a programme's scheduled periodic review. PMRC requires requests to be submitted to the committee along with the justifiable reasons.
- 3.7.1.10 **Types of programme involved:** All award-bearing LSHTM programmes, credit-bearing Continuing Professional Development, and special programmes<sup>4</sup> undertake periodic review. The procedures set out in this document have been written with a focus on Master's degree programmes; diploma or certificate programmes are normally expected to be reviewed alongside relevant Master's degree(s) as part of a single exercise. Where a diploma or certificate programme functions independently and does not have significant academic overlap with any LSHTM MSc programme, then a standalone review may be undertaken.
- 3.7.1.11 **Collaborative links:** Collaborative programmes are reviewed according to the relevant Memorandum of Agreement. A list of LSHTM's collaborative programmes can be found on the [Collaborative Provision Register](#).

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<sup>4</sup> Special Programmes are those non-degree-awarding programmes defined by Senate as needing more scrutiny e.g. Professional Diplomas.

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3.7.1.12 LSHTM DL programmes are reviewed under LSHTM procedures, but reviews should take account of additional UoLW requirements and will also be reported on through the UoLW governance structure.

### 3.7.2 Periodic Review Procedure Timeline:

- **End of autumn term prior to review year** – QAS notify the Programme Team including the PD, Exam Board Chair, Taught Programme Director (TPD), Programme Administration Office and Registry that the Periodic Review will take place the following academic year;
- **Spring/summer term prior to review year** – The Programme Team to identify any concerns, issues or amendments they want to raise in the review and start to develop a self-evaluation document (SED);
- **Autumn term of the review year** - the Programme Team:
  - consults with Programme Committee, Exam Board Chair and Dean of Faculty to identify and nominate External, Internal and Student Reviewers for the Review Panel;
  - gathers preparatory work and information in the autumn term, in order to finalise a SED and supply further information to the Review Panel;
  - Any changes to the programme that will be proposed in the review should undertake programme and faculty consultation;
- **Autumn term of the review year** – QAS liaise with Programme Team and proposed panel to finalise the Review Panel meeting date;
- **Autumn term of the review year** – PMRC confirms the review schedule and the panel nominations
- **Early spring term of the review year** – the Programme Team submits the SED and supporting documentation to the Review Panel via QAS;
- **Spring term of the review year (March-April)** – Review Panel meeting takes place between March and April;
- **4 weeks after the review meeting** – Panel Officer provides the Review Panel's report which details the outcome including any conditions, recommended actions and commendations;
- **Early summer term of the review year** - The External Reviewer returns the independent report 2 weeks after the review meeting. This will be appended to the main report;
- **Summer term of review year** – The PD with support from the Programme Committee considers the Report including the addendum and External Reviewer Report and drafts response/action plan to

appropriately address all **conditions, recommendations** and **commendations**;

- **Summer term of review year** – Programme Team submits their [Review Response Report](#) to FPGTC (this can be conducted via Chair's action where the TPD deems it appropriate)
  - *Programme Team should undertake any additional consultation in relation to the actions taken in response to the recommendations and conditions;*
- **Late summer term of the review year** – The Programme Team submits their final response/action plan to the final PMRC of the academic year. This ensures that any improvements to programmes and modules will be enacted promptly;
  - *If the final review report is submitted after the end of the academic year it will be submitted to the **first PMRC of the next academic year**, however, this may delay the implementation of any amendments to programmes or module Specifications;*
- **Summer term following review year** – the Programme Team submits the one-year follow-up report to PMRC (the review outcomes should be monitored at Programme Committee and FPGTC level prior to submission).

### 3.7.3 Programme Team

- **Programme Director** – must be a member of the Programme Team, taking responsibility for co-ordinating major activities. Where there are multiple PDs for a programme, only one need be nominated to lead on the review, however, the others must take part. The specific work this will entail during the review year should not necessarily represent a major extra commitment, but may create pressures of time and work intensity at key stages (depending on the size of the programme and the scope chosen for the review). It will be important to consider this when planning for the academic year.
- **Exam Board Chair** – must be a member of the Programme Team, as the senior academic responsible for assuring the academic standards of the programme. However, they may delegate this responsibility to the Deputy Exam Board Chair if necessary, e.g. due to work commitments.
- **Wider Faculty input:** PDs should seek support from their faculty team, including Module Organisers (MOs) that are linked to the programme. The TPD should be kept informed of any significant issues or proposals emerging during review work, so that they have visibility at an early stage and can provide appropriate guidance.

- **Professional Services:** PDs will need to engage the support of Professional Services to gather supporting documentation. It's important to ensure that relevant teams and departments are given advance notice of expected requirements as soon as notice is received of the periodic review taking place.

- 3.7.3.1 Programme Teams are expected to act in a collegiate way, and may divide responsibilities between themselves as they see fit especially to help reduce the burden on the PD.
- 3.7.3.2 QAS can provide guidance and advice on the procedure and will be in liaison with the PD at an early stage.

### **3.7.4 Review Panel**

- 3.7.4.1 No member of the Review Panel should be associated or have a conflict of interest with the programme under review (for example, no MOs who have modules attached to the programme, a tutor or supervisor from the programme). Any potential conflicts of interest should be raised with QAS. The PD will identify and nominate an External Reviewer, whilst QAS will work with TPDs and Committee Chairs to identify appropriate individuals to be on the Review Panel. PDs should approach the External Reviewer informally before they are nominated to the Panel to ensure that they are able to participate. The nominations for the Review Panel are submitted to QAS who will seek final approval at PMRC in the autumn term of the year of the review.
- 3.7.4.2 PDs should seek guidance from QAS if they are unsure of a nominee's suitability and/or need support seeking panel members.
- 3.7.4.3 Panel members should be identified as early as possible to ensure a suitable meeting date can be found and confirmed (see paragraph 3.7.4.5).
- 3.7.4.4 For full Membership and Terms of Reference for the of the Periodic Review and Validation Panels please see [Chapter 10 of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).

**Review Panel meeting:**

3.7.4.5 **Date:** The Review Panel meeting takes place at a time agreed with the Faculty, QAS and subject to confirmation with the Chairs of PMRC and SEC. The PD must liaise with QAS when selecting the meeting date, specifically noting:

- The External Reviewer's availability (they should be contacted at an early stage, to help identify a suitable meeting date);
- The availability of the Internal Reviewer and Student Reviewer;
- **For face-to- programmes**, the visit should take place when current students will be available to meet the Review Panel;
- **For DL programmes**, the Review Panel will not necessarily be expected to meet current students. However, the Programme Team should aim to set up channels for student input or liaison—such as a live online discussion via Moodle, or a survey run in advance of the visit—so that feedback is available to the Review Panel;
- Colleagues who are required to meet the panel will be available (TPD, MOs, Teaching staff, Supervisors)

3.7.4.6 **Schedule:** The Panel meeting will normally take place over one or two days. The standard agenda template below can be adapted to include more sessions at the Panel's discretion.

3.7.4.7 **Final Feedback Session:** During the final session, the Panel will provide their feedback to the Programme Team (PD, Exam Board Chair, and TPD) in the form of a verbal outcome. This may include commendations, conditions for reapproval and recommended actions. The Report is used by the Programme Team to formulate an action plan in response.

### **3.7.5 Self-evaluation and Further Supporting Information**

3.7.5.1 The review should be evidence-based, with relevant information about the programme made available to the Review Panel.

3.7.5.2 **Responsibilities:** The PD will take the lead in preparing information for the review—particularly the SED. The PD is responsible for gathering all supporting documentation. It is advisable to involve Professional Service departments, including the Programme Administration Office and the Alumni Relations and Annual Giving



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team, from as early as possible in the process, so they can start to collate information.

- The SED and material about the programme must be made available to the Review Panel (including the External Reviewer) at least one month before the Review Panel meetings;
- A SharePoint and/or Moodle page will be set up for the Review Panel so that the sharing of documents is effective and efficient;
- QAS will set a deadline for the relevant documents, and/or links to pages must be made available to the Review Panel.
- Review records are kept by QAS for archiving after completion of the review.

3.7.5.3 The following standard documentation should be collated for an MSc review. Fewer or different documents may be relevant or required for Diploma or Certificate reviews.

### 3.7.5.4 **Self-Evaluation Document (SED)**

- **Purpose:** All programmes undertaking a periodic review produce a SED. This should provide information and a critical analysis of the health of the programme for the Review Panel, as a starting point for their enquiries.
- **Key content:** The SED should indicate the key priorities, challenges, strengths and weaknesses of the programme, and summarise the key issues around delivery of the Programme. It should be evidence-based and provide a balanced and open critical reflection on the quality of curriculum and learning opportunities, and the supporting systems and mechanisms in place. It should highlight areas of concern or for improvement, as well as identifying features of good practice or areas for enhancement. It should include within the document or as appendices:
  - A mapping exercise of individual modules of study and progression pathways to the programme's overall aims and learning outcomes;
  - A review of the assessment model ensuring an appropriate variety of assessment methods are utilised for the level of award;
  - Trend analysis of the student profile and outcomes for the period under review;
  - Assessment of the currency of the curriculum and learning strategy against developments in the discipline as well as pedagogical innovations.

3.7.5.5 **Programme Documents:**

- **Programme specification** – links to the latest version online and a tracked changed version if the Programme Team has identified areas for improvement in the programme. Proposed amendments to programmes should have had faculty consultation and finally be considered at the first PMRC after the review is completed, as per LSHTM's procedure for programme and module amendments contained in [section 3.4 of this document](#);
- **Programme handbook** – latest version of handbook for students on the programme;
- **Programme Readers** – where relevant. [Note that Programme Administrators will need to keep these on file; they may be in hardcopy only due to licensing restrictions on electronic distribution, and it can be hard to track previous versions down once the Library reference copy gets updated];
- **Project guidance** – including handbook and related forms (e.g. approval form, feedback questionnaire) for programmes where this is relevant.

3.7.5.6 **Module information:**

The Review Panel should be given information about all core Term 1 modules and all compulsory and recommended Term 2 and 3 modules (at least the same core spectrum of modules as allocated to the Exam Board for moderation, and possibly a wider spread beyond those), including:

- **Module Specifications** - links to the latest versions online
- **Annual Module Report and Action Plan (AMRAP) forms** for most recent two years, as completed annually by MOs, plus any related cross-module summary/overview (whether for the specific programme, or prepared by TPDs at Faculty level)
- **Module handbooks** – including any practical handbooks.
- **Assessment details.**
- Any **teaching materials** (from Moodle), lecture outlines etc. as requested by the Panel.

*Periodic reviews of individual programmes should confirm that the modules relevant to the programme remain fit for purpose (compulsory and recommended modules). This is expected to entail scrutiny of how*

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*the key elements highlighted in Module Specifications (key areas of content, intended learning outcomes etc.) support intended learning outcomes for the larger programme. In some cases, it may be appropriate to look at particular modules in more depth, but this is not a general requirement, and while not every optional module in LSHTM's portfolio is covered in a programme review, the currency of the curriculum is maintained through standard annual monitoring. However, it is helpful to note how programme staff monitor the appropriateness of student choices.*

### 3.7.5.7 Programme quality and academic standards information:

- **Programme Committee meeting minutes** – for current year and previous year
- **Annual Programme Director's Review (APDR)** – for most recent two years.
- **External Examiner reports plus responses**– for most recent two years.
- Any **prior review reports**, working group reports or other documents of relevance – from within the last five years.
- **Reports to and from accrediting or other bodies** – from within the last five years.
- **Information from LSHTM-wide student surveys** (e.g. PTES) – for most recent two years, and showing both programme-level and LSHTM-level results. This can be supplied by QAS.
- Further **specific feedback** about the programme should normally be sought for the purpose of the review, from both current students and alumni
- Any other relevant Programme level student evaluations if carried out

*For DL the following additional information is required:*

- The current **programme agreement between LSHTM and UoLW**: comprising Schedule A (distribution of activities) and Schedule B (academic decision-making and quality assurance pathways)
- The original **report from External Assessor** dating from when the programme was formally approved or last substantially revised.
- The UoLW **form for adding new award(s) to an existing programme** dating from when any last substantive programme revisions were made.

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- **DL Annual Programme Review reports** for the most recent two years (supplementing standard LSHTM Annual Programme Director Reviews).
- Specific **DL Programme Regulations**.

### 3.7.5.8 **Student statistics** (PD to request information from Registry/UoLW)

- **Applications and admissions** information (numbers, origin, support) – for most recent four years, including current student numbers.
- **Pass rates data** – for most recent four years.
- **First career destinations** data for intensive programme alumni, collected by Registry for the HESA “Destination of Leavers from Higher Education” survey.

### 3.7.5.9 **Student assessed work** (PD to request information from the Programme Administration Office)

- An appropriate **sample from the most recent year of projects and module assessments/assignments** should normally be provided. The Review Panel may ask to see further information.
- A list of **project report titles** for the most recent four years should be provided, as appropriate.
- **Exam papers** for the previous two years should normally be provided, as appropriate.
- **Exam Board spreadsheets** may potentially be provided at the request of the Review Panel, i.e. to show module, exam and project grade data (esp. mean Programme GPA) – for the previous year, or possibly up to the last four years.

### 3.7.5.10 Other information which may be gathered specifically for the review

- **Feedback from employers and/or professional organisations** should be sought where appropriate – e.g. for Programmes which have strong links with particular organisations.
- **Information on competitor programmes** – this can be a challenge for PDs to research, but potentially a worthwhile exercise. The Pro-Director of Education and the Registry may have relevant information collected at LSHTM level. It can also be helpful to check which members of staff (or whether any) have acted in similar External Review or external examining roles on programmes elsewhere.

- **Emerging research areas** in the subject which are yet to be incorporated into the curriculum but may be of (future) relevance – may be worth considering or detailing where appropriate.

3.7.5.11 **Sources of information:** Registry, the Alumni Relations and Annual Giving team and QAS can also assist with provision of centrally-held information.

### 3.7.6 Student and alumni voice

3.7.6.1 Gathering views from past and current students is an important part of the review process. The aim should be to give the Review Panel, and particularly the External Reviewer, an understanding of typical views and opinions about the programme, as well as student destinations after graduating. Potentially useful channels or sources of information include:

- **Direct meetings:** The Review Panel must receive direct feedback from a selection of students and programme reps as part of the Review Panel meeting. It may be desirable, particularly for smaller programmes taught intensive, to arrange an open meeting with all current students. It is also recommended to arrange for the Review Panel to meet some intensive alumni. For DL programmes, VLE discussion channels (e.g. Moodle) may be a helpful channel to obtain feedback from students – e.g. through a protected online discussion forum, primed with questions from the Review Panel and open for a set period, or via a live online ‘chat’ between the Review Panel and students who have agreed to participate at a set time.
- **Past surveys:** Feedback recorded by LSHTM, programme and module surveys will provide useful primary data. Centrally held data from PTES and PRES can be requested from QAS. Module and other programme surveys from the Programme Administration Office, and the Alumni Relations and Annual Giving team and/or the Registry will hold graduate destination surveys.

- **Specific surveys for the review:** It is recommended that a survey of alumni be undertaken for each periodic review. This allows scope to ask any questions that the Programme Team are particularly keen to have answered. The current student body may also be specifically surveyed. If necessary, survey exercises can be administered centrally by the Alumni Relations and Annual Giving team. [Further guidance is available.](#)

### 3.7.7 Review Outcome and Reporting

- 3.7.7.1 **Revalidation:** The Panel will provide a report of the Review summarising the findings and capturing the key points discussed which informed the outcome decision. A separate report from the External Reviewer must be included as an appendix. The Panel report may make a recommendation to PMRC for the programme(s)' continued approval. The Programme Team's response should be included paperwork submitted to PMRC. The reapproval may be subject to conditions set by the Review Panel. PMRC will consider whether these conditions have been met before submitting to SEC for formal approval and note at Senate.
- 3.7.7.2 In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to recommend that a programme is suspended or discontinued. The decision to discontinue a programme will ultimately reside with Senate.
- 3.7.7.3 For DL Programmes, a copy of the final review report should be sent to the UoLW Academic Services Manager.
- 3.7.7.4 **The Review Panel's Report :** The Panel Officer will provide the Programme team with the Panel's Report within 4 weeks of the Review Panel meeting. The report will include the outcome and any conditions, recommended actions, and commendations. Once approved they should be shared with the Programme Team (Programme Director) so that they can respond in a timely manner.
- 3.7.7.5 [External Reviewer's report:](#) The External Reviewer should return a written report within 2 weeks after the Review Panel meeting, via QAS. Approximately one-day's work is estimated for post-visit follow-up

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and report preparation. The External Reviewer report should reflect their own views, but may refer to material from the SED, or as recorded by the note-taker during the review visit, as they see fit.

- **Overview of main Programme characteristics:** A summary of programme content, approach and notable strengths and weakness.
- **Conclusions on innovation and good practice:** Identifying any current aspects of the programme which are particularly innovative or which represent good practice.
- **Conclusions on quality and standards:** Confirming whether the programme specification for the programme is appropriate and supports achievement of the programme objectives, the quality of learning opportunities available to students, and whether intended learning outcomes are being obtained by students.
- **Conclusions on currency of the curriculum:** Confirming whether the programme remains current and valid in the light of developing knowledge in the discipline, practice in its application, and developments in teaching and learning.
- The External Reviewer should use the [template report provided by the Panel Officer.](#)

### 3.7.7.6 Programme Team response report:

- **Conditions:** The Programme Team will be required to respond to the report addressing all conditions raised within the periodic review by the agreed deadline;
- **Recommendations:** The Programme Team will be expected to consider and respond to any recommendations made by the Review Panel. The Programme Team will be required to provide justification where recommendations are being rejected;
- **Programme Amendments and Improvements:** Proposed improvements to programmes, which have been identified, raised and discussed as part of the review, should be included in the response. If amendments to programme or module specifications are submitted to the final PMRC of the academic year the module improvements can be implemented for the next academic year, whereas programme specification amendments will be implemented for the next academic year (plus 1) in line with LSHTM's Programme and Module Amendment procedure (as

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outlined in [section 3.4 of this document](#)).<sup>5</sup> Other programme improvements should be implemented and monitored through the Programme Committee, FPGTC and annual monitoring procedures;

- The Programme Team should use the report response [template provided by the Panel Officer](#).

- 3.7.7.7 **Publication:** Once approved and reviewed at PMRC, final review reports will be made available on the [Academic Quality & Standards pages of LSHTM website](#) – being publicly available, so that prospective students would be able to read them, Personal information (as per the GDPR) will be redacted prior to publication.
- 3.7.7.8 **Programme Committee:** The Programme Committee is expected to take on responsibility for monitoring the recommendations and associated actions raised in the review. Where these are not items under the direct control of the Programme Committee, e.g. LSHTM-wide requirements, they should be referred on as appropriate. The PD is responsible for their review action plans and it is recommended that this be incorporated into their general annual monitoring.
- 3.7.7.9 **Experience-sharing:** The Associate Dean of Education (Quality, Academic Standards & Collaborative Provision) will hold an informal meeting for PDs who have undertaken reviews in the previous year to share feedback on their experience with the PDs due for review in the current academic year, who will be starting the preparatory stages.
- 3.7.7.10 **One-year-on reporting:** A brief update is added to the response report on progress of implementing actions. This should be monitored by the Programme Committee and submitted to FPGTC for comment prior to being submitted to PMRC approximately one year after the review. Relevant PDs should complete the follow up report, and may wish to discuss with their TPD.

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<sup>5</sup> Any programme or module amendments proposed through the Periodic Review Procedure must have undergone consultation with relevant stakeholders before being submitted to PMRC for approval.



- 3.7.7.11 **Ongoing work:** Any major recommendations, which have not been implemented by a year after the review should be specifically flagged to PMRC by the Faculty. PDs will be expected to take forward and imbed any outstanding/ongoing action points in their Annual Programme Director Review (APDR).