

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

COURSE APPROVAL POLICY

POLICY DETAILS:

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| Date of approval | 26 October 2022 |
| Approving body | Academic Council |
| Supersedes | Course Approval Policy, December 2021 |
| Date of EIA | November 2016 |
| Date of next review | <i>See departmental schedule</i> |
| Author | Academic Quality Office |
| Responsible Executive Group area | Academic Quality Office |
| Related policies and documents | Pro formas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course Information Document• Course Specification |
| Benchmarking | UK Quality Code for Higher Education University of Glasgow |

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COURSE APPROVAL POLICY

Context and General Approach

Procedures for new courses exist to ensure that academic standards are maintained. GSA's excellent reputation relies on this.

Course proposals are adopted after careful consideration of their relevance and appeal to potential students, their compatibility with existing course and programme provision, and the strategic objectives of the School and GSA as a whole. Consideration shall be given to the availability of resources, the coherence and academic standard of the course, the quality of the learning experience of all students.

GSA demonstrates its commitment to diversity and promoting equality by ensuring that due regard is given to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in the implementation and application of this policy.

GSA believes that course design should be initiated in Schools, where design concepts arise from the experience of specialist academics and their departments, and in relation to changes in their discipline and the employment trajectories and potential of those who study in these and other cognate subject areas. These concepts are informally and formally explored, before a specific design process takes place, within the structures of the particular School – in programme management teams, for example.

PRECEPTS

- 1.1 Proposers shall, at an early stage, discuss their outline course with the Head of Programme Development and the relevant School Academic Lead, and Academic Quality Office.
- 1.2 All new courses shall be compatible with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Subject Benchmark and Characteristic Statements, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and the academic standards of GSA and the University of Glasgow.
- 1.3 All proposals for new courses shall satisfy Boards of Studies, Programme Approval and Course Approval and Amendment Group (PACAAG) as a sub-group of Education Committee, and Academic Council that the assurance and review of academic quality and standards is in keeping with GSA expectations and reputation.
- 1.4 Approval from the University of Glasgow shall be sought only where appropriate. When appropriate, approval requests shall be submitted in consultation with the University's Academic Collaborations Office. The Academic Quality Office will advise as appropriate when consulted by the Programme Leader.
- 1.5 Academic Council shall be responsible for new courses in terms of academic matters. The Senior Leadership Group may require to be assured regarding academic and non-academic matters. The Academic Quality Office will advise proposers of the information, documentation and approval routes regarding their particular proposal.

- 1.6 Programme Leaders shall ensure that students are consulted on proposals for new courses. This is a requirement where the new course being proposed would form a core component of the programme they are studying.
- 1.7 GSA and Schools shall demonstrate their commitment to diversity and promoting equality by ensuring that due regard is given to the requirements of the Public Sector Duty (PSED) in the implementation and application of this policy.
- 1.8 Programme Leaders shall ensure that the current External Examiner(s) is consulted, where appropriate, on proposals for the development of new courses which would form a core component of the programme they are examining.
- 1.9 Heads of Schools shall ensure that proposals for new cross GSA courses are considered and approved by each relevant¹ Board of Studies. This includes courses which would form a core component of the programme or would be optional (for example PGT Stage 2 electives).
- 1.10 Boards of Studies shall consider proposals for new courses in detail and make recommendations to the Programme Amendment and Course Approval and Amendment Group (PACAAG).
- 1.11 Boards of Studies shall not approve or recommend new courses without having been assured by the proposer that the proposal has been fully discussed with and satisfied the guidance provided by the Academic Quality Office.
- 1.12 PACAAG, as a sub-group of Education Committee, is responsible for providing focused deliberation of new courses and considering these matters on behalf of Academic Council.
- 1.13 The Academic Quality Office is responsible for maintaining the final approved versions of all programme and course specifications, and Schools and departments shall assist the Academic Quality Office in maintaining a current, transparent and accessible archive of programme and course specifications.
- 1.14 The Programme Leader is responsible for ensuring that the final version of the approved documentation is lodged with the Academic Quality Office. The Academic Quality Office will hold and maintain a record of the final versions of programme and course specifications.

PROCEDURE

New Course Approvals

- 2.1 The precepts detailed in 1.1 – 1.14 apply.
- 2.2 It is recommended that Programme Leaders refer to the Course Approval Policy, and consult with the Academic Quality Office at an early stage for clarification regarding the process.
- 2.3 Blank copies of Course Specifications are available on the GSA website. Programme Leaders can request the current and up-to-date Course Specification in a format which can be edited from the Academic Quality Office by emailing Quality@gsa.ac.uk.

¹ A School is considered relevant if the course is or could be taken by students in that School.

2.4 Proposed courses are considered first by Boards of Studies, then by the PACAAG. The proposer must submit the following documentation:

- Course Information Document;
- Updated Programme Specification (if appropriate); and
- New Course Specification.

2.5 Any amendment made to a Programme Specification required as a result of the new course shall be highlighted as appropriate.

Role of Board of Studies

2.6 Board of Studies must be satisfied with the documentation before the proposer may submit the new course to PACAAG for consideration.

2.7 The Course Information Document requires the proposer to consider implications for Support Departments, and to consult where appropriate with relevant Support Departments, External Examiners, and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB). Board of Studies must be satisfied with the information given and the consultation undertaken by the proposer before the documentation may be submitted to PACAAG.

2.8 If a new a cross-School course (core or optional/elective) is proposed, the Board of Studies for all relevant² Schools must be satisfied with the documentation before submission to PACAAG

Role of PACAAG

2.9 The report from the PACAAG meeting is on the subsequent Education Committee and Academic Council agenda for approval, papers from the meeting are made available on Office 365 -, and may be considered at Academic Council should any member request this.

2.10 Education Committee and Academic Council are informed of the rationale for any rejected course approval, which would be noted in the minutes reported to Education Committee and Academic Council.

Timeline

2.11 The following timeline should be used as a guide for proposing new courses. Programme Leaders are advised to contact the Academic Quality Office to request the exact deadlines for a specific academic session.

| Academic Session prior to that of the intended launch of the new course: | |
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| Semester 1 to Early Semester 2 | Programme Leader develops proposal for new course and submits the completed proposal to the relevant School's Board of Studies in Semester 2. |
| Semester 2 (at the latest) | Board of Studies convenes to review and approve proposals. Programme Leader makes any further amendments as required. Board of Studies submits approved proposals to PACAAG. |

² A School is considered relevant if the course is or could be taken by students in that School.

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| Semester 2 (standardly April) | PACAAG convenes to review and approve proposals. Programme Leader makes any further amendments as required. |
| End of Semester 2 | Academic Quality Office confirms approval of the new course and publishes the new course specification on the GSA website. |
| Academic Session of the intended launch of the new course: | |
| Start of Semester 1 (of the following academic session) | Launch of the new course. |

Guidance:

- Programme Amendment and Course Approval and Amendment Group Remit and Membership

Templates:

- Course Information Document
- Course Specification