Programme and Module Developer’s Guidelines

Guidance notes for programme proposers / organisers in preparation for the design and revision of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes and modules.
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1. Introduction

i. Scope of procedures

The procedures contained within this document cover proposals for:

- Approval of new undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes of study;
- Approval of new modules;
- Amendments to the content of existing undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes;
- Amendments to the title of existing undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes;
- Amendments to previously approved modules;
- Withdrawal or suspension of existing undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes;
- Withdrawal or suspension of previously approved modules.

The procedures do not cover research degrees, collaborative arrangements, or non-award-bearing continuing education.

ii. Associated documents

Forms and guidance documents are provided in relation to each of the proposal types listed above. These include:

Programme-related forms
- Part 1 Programme Proposal Form
- Business Case Template
- Programme Specification Template (UG)
- Programme Specification Template (PG)
- Part 2 Programme Proposal Form
- External Adviser Feedback Form
- Programme Amendment Form
- Programme Title Change Form
- Programme Withdrawal / Suspension Form
- Partnership Proposal Form (for use for proposals with external partners only)
- Articulation Agreement Proposal Form (for use for proposals for articulation agreements with external partners only)

Module-related documents
- Module Proposal Form UG
- Module Proposal Form PG
- Half Module Proposal Form UG
- Half Module Proposal Form PG
- Module Amendment Form UG
- Module Amendment Form PG
- Module Withdrawal Form
- Summer School Module Proposal Form
2. Approval of a new undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme of study

This section provides details of the process for proposing a new undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme of study which does not involve collaboration with any institution outside of QMUL. For information about proposing a new programme involving collaboration with an external organisation, please see the guidance on Collaborative Provision.

The approval of a new programme of study is a two stage process. The first stage (Part 1) is a strategic planning process consisting of approval in principle for the business case and market focus of the programme proposal. The second stage (Part 2) consists of the approval of the detailed academic content of the proposal.

Indicative timescales are provided for each stage of the process to ensure that there is sufficient time to:

(i) establish the market for the programme;
(ii) develop the programme itself;
(iii) consult with relevant stakeholders across the institution;
(iv) ensure that appropriate space and physical resources are available to deliver the programme;
(v) undertake the approval processes;
(vi) benefit from full marketing and recruitment cycles.

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<th>Prospectus deadlines</th>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate programmes</td>
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Schools / Institutes are encouraged to discuss new programme proposals with the Academic Secretariat as early as possible in the development process. The Academic Secretariat can advise colleagues on the approval process, provide support in developing the paperwork, and guidance in matters relating to academic standards and quality.

Proposers should also give consideration to other key internal and external reference points throughout the programme development process, including:

- The Student Experience, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy;
- Academic Regulations;
- QMUL Academic Credit Framework;

Schools / Institutes are encouraged to discuss new programme proposals with the Academic Secretariat as early as possible in the development process. The Academic Secretariat can advise colleagues on the approval process, provide support in developing the paperwork, and guidance in matters relating to academic standards and quality.

Proposers should also give consideration to other key internal and external reference points throughout the programme development process, including:

- The Student Experience, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy;
- Academic Regulations;
- QMUL Academic Credit Framework;
• **Academic Development** - Guidance on curriculum design (learning outcomes, employability, entrepreneurship, teaching, learning and assessment, and research-informed teaching, etc.);

• **QMUL Code of Practice on Assessment and Feedback**;

• **Good Practice Guide on Writing Aims and Outcomes**

• **QAA Quality Code for Higher Education**

• **QAA Subject Benchmark Statements**
i. Process overview

Any significant revisions to the proposal may need to be resubmitted to the relevant approval body for consideration.
ii. Process details

1. Part 1 strategic approval in principle by:
   - Head(s) of School(s) / Institute(s)
   - Faculty Executive (or equivalent)
   - Student Recruitment and Admissions Group

2. Part 2 approval of academic content by:
   - Head(s) of Schools(s) / Institute(s)
   - Taught Programmes Board

1. Part 1 – strategic approval in principle

The Part 1 stage of the process consists of approval in principle of the business case and market focus of the programme proposal. Proposals must always be put forward in the context of QMUL's Strategic Plan.

The purpose of the process of applying for approval in principle is to ensure that:
   - The proposal fits into the School's / Institute's academic profile and QMUL’s Strategic Plan;
   - There is evidence that there is a market demand for the proposed programme;
   - The School / Institute is able to provide adequate resources to support the proposed programme.

This stage of the process should involve a detailed discussion of the staffing, space and resource implications, and liaison with other relevant academic units. Consultation should also be undertaken with students and External Examiners as appropriate. Advice should also be sought from Marketing and Communications with regard to the market potential of the programme under development, and the Academic Secretariat regarding the intended content and structure of the proposed programme. The strategic consideration of new programmes should also involve a review of existing programmes and their continuing viability.

The Programme Proposer should complete a Part 1 Programme Proposal Form and develop a detailed set of costings, using the Business Case Template. There are additional elements in the process for developing collaborative arrangements, and additional documentation may be required. Proposers should refer to the Collaborative Provision webpages for further information about collaborative proposals.

Faculty Finance Managers are available to support Programme Proposers with the completion of the business case. Additional guidance on completing each of the different sections of the Part 1 form is available here. The Academic Secretariat can assist with any further questions.

Part 1 Proposal Forms and the accompanying business case(s) should be considered and endorsed by the School / Institute Teaching and Learning Committee (or equivalent)
before being signed by the Head of School / Institute. Proposals involving more than one School / Institute require the signature of all participating Heads of School / Institute.

Following approval by the School / Institute Teaching and Learning Committee (or equivalent), Part 1 Proposal Forms should be submitted to the Academic Secretariat for scrutiny, and onward consideration by the Faculty Executive (or equivalent) if proposed outside the Planning and Accountability Review timeframe.

Following Faculty approval, Part 1 Proposal Forms and the accompanying business case(s) must then be discussed and approved by the Student Recruitment and Admissions Group (SRAG). SRAG maintains strategic oversight of QMUL’s taught programmes portfolio.

Completed and signed Part 1 forms will then be returned to the Academic Secretariat for final scrutiny before they are advertised. This is to ensure that any potential issues relating to regulations, programme structure and set-up on the Student Information System (SIS) are resolved at an early stage.

A programme can be advertised after approval in principle has been given, but any such promotional material should be clearly marked as ‘subject to approval’.

| Documentation to be submitted: | Part 1 Programme Proposal Form  
|                              | Business Case Template |
| Authorisation required:      | Head(s) of School(s) / Institute(s)  
|                              | Faculty Vice-Principal(s)  
|                              | Student Recruitment and Admissions Group |

| Timeframe:                  | **Undergraduate programmes**: Part 1 proposals should be approved 24 months in advance of the programme start date (e.g. approval by September 2018 for programmes starting in September 2020).  
|                            | **Postgraduate programmes**: Part 1 proposal should be approved 17 months in advance of the programme start date (e.g. approval by March 2018 for programme starting in September 2019). |

2. **Part 2 – academic approval (development of curriculum and Programme Specification)**

The Part 2 stage of the process requires the submission of the detailed academic content of the proposed programme, following approval in principle.

The Programme Proposer should complete a **Part 2 Programme Proposal Form**, along with a **Programme Specification** (please note that the Programme Specification templates differ for UG and PG programmes). Proposers will also need to ensure that at least one **External Adviser Feedback Form** has been completed, and if any new modules are proposed as part of the programme, **Module Proposal Form(s)** must also be submitted.
These documents will clarify the academic content and structure of the programme, as well as the arrangements for programme management and organisation. This will enable the programme to be set up on the Student Information System.

A Programme Specification is a student-facing document which summarises a programme’s structure, aims, learning outcomes, and the teaching, learning and assessment processes which allow these aims and learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated.

Programme specifications should therefore provide clear information to enable students to make informed choices, by outlining the intended outcomes of a programme of study and identifying potential stopping-off points within it. Once the new programme is running, the programme specification should be reviewed each year and kept up to date. Revised programme specifications should be sent to the Academic Secretariat for publishing online.

The Part 2 Form requests information about the operational management, administration, and quality assurance of the programme. The Part 2 submission must include at least one External Adviser Feedback Form, which is a written expression of support and / or commentary from an expert in the area of the programme who is external to QMUL, e.g. a senior academic within the discipline and / or running a similar programme elsewhere, along with a detailed response from the Programme Proposers to address each of the queries and / or issues raised by the External(s).

Additional guidance on completing each of the different sections of the Programme Specification and Part 2 form is available on the ARCS website. The Academic Secretariat can assist with any further questions.

The Part 2 Form, External Adviser Feedback Form, Programme Specification, and any Module Proposals Forms should be considered and endorsed by the School / Institute Teaching and Learning Committee (or equivalent) before being signed by the Head of School / Institute. Proposals involving more than one School / Institute require the signature of all participating Heads of School / Institute.

The full set of Part 2 documentation should then be submitted to the Academic Secretariat who will arrange for the proposal to be considered by Taught Programmes Board. The Academic Secretariat will scrutinise all proposals, and retains the right to send an incomplete proposal back to the originator for amendment before it is submitted to the Board.

Taught Programmes Board may request further information or refer the proposal back to the Programme Proposer / responsible School / Institute for further development. If significant redevelopment of the proposal is required it should be resubmitted to Taught Programmes Board for reconsideration.

In cases where the approval of a programme requires a validation meeting in association with an external body, the arrangements are made by the Head of School / Institute.
responsible for the programme in consultation with the external body and the Academic Secretariat.

Once Part 2 approval is granted, the programme is formally approved for its first student intake.

| Documentation to be submitted: | Part 2 Programme Proposal Form  
|                              | External Adviser Feedback Form(s)  
|                              | Programme Specification  
|                              | Module Proposal Form(s) (if new modules are proposed) |
| Authorisation required:      | Head(s) of Schools(s) / Institute(s)  
|                              | Taught Programmes Board |
| Timeframe:                   | **Undergraduate programmes**: Part 2 proposals should be approved 14 months prior to the proposed start date of programme (e.g. approval by July 2019 for programmes starting in September 2020).  
|                              | **Postgraduate programmes**: Part 2 proposals should be approved 10 months prior to the proposed start date of programme (e.g. approval by November 2019 for programmes starting in September 2020). |
3. Approval of new modules

This section provides details of the process for proposing a new undergraduate or postgraduate taught module.

Proposals for a new module may arise from an initiative of an individual or a group of staff, from a collective decision of a staff meeting or committee, from discussions with a partner institution (if appropriate) or as part of the development of a new programme. Proposals must always be put forward in the context of School / Institute academic development plans, and QMUL’s Strategic Plan.

Proposals for new modules associated with a new programme of study must be considered as part of the Part 2 submission by Taught Programmes Board (please see section 2 above). The responsibility for approving new modules that are part of existing programmes of study (with some exceptions noted below) is devolved to Schools / Institutes, subject to the deadlines specified below.

i. Process overview

¹ Any significant revisions to the proposal may need to be resubmitted to the relevant approval body for consideration.
ii. Process details

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute
2. Approval by Taught Programmes Board (where applicable)

| Documentation to be submitted: | Module Proposal Form  
| Programme Amendment Form  
| Programme Specification(s) |
| Authorisation required: | Head of School(s) / Institute(s) |
| Timeframe: | Approved module proposals must be submitted by the annual ARCS deadline for all module proposals which are due to start in the following academic year. |
2. Approval by Taught Programmes Board (where applicable)

Following approval by the Head(s) of School(s) / Institute(s), the following types of module proposals require institutional level approval, due to the level of risk involved and the need to apply a consistent approach across the institution:

- modules that are being developed as part of a new programme of study;

The following types of modules may require institutional level approval, depending on the level of risk involved. These will be assessed by ARCS on a case-by-case basis, and may be referred for consideration by Taught Programmes Board and, where applicable, Partnerships Board:

- modules delivered through a collaborative arrangement;
- modules that involve work-based learning or study abroad;
- modules that involve distance learning.

All module proposals should be submitted to the Academic Secretariat for scrutiny. The Academic Secretariat will then arrange for onward consideration by the appropriate Board(s).

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<tr>
<th>Documentation to be submitted:</th>
<th>Module Proposal Form</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programme Amendment Form</td>
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<td>Programme Specification(s)</td>
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| Authorisation required: | Taught Programmes Board |

| Timeframe: | Approved module proposals must be submitted by the annual ARCS deadline for all module proposals which are due to start in the following academic year. |
4. Amendments to the content of an existing undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme

This section provides details of the process for proposing an amendment to the content of an existing undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme.

Amendments to the content of a previously approved programme may arise as a result of discussion in staff meetings, External Examiner recommendations, Student-Staff Liaison Committees, discussion with a partner institution (in the case of collaborative provision), or recommendations from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

i. Process overview

An any significant revisions to the proposal may need to be resubmitted to the relevant approval body for consideration.
ii. Process details

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute

2. Approval by Taught Programmes Board (where applicable)

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute

A revised Programme Specification and a Programme Amendment Form should be completed by the Programme Organiser and considered and approved at the School/Institute Learning and Teaching Committee (or equivalent). Approval will be denoted by the signature of the Head of School / Institute on the form.

The Programme Organiser should also ensure that programmes delivered by more than one School / Institute have appropriate signatures to indicate the support of each Head of School / Institute, and, in the case of collaborative provision, should ensure that the partner institution is consulted as appropriate, and any potential changes to the Memorandum of Agreement considered and approved. Evidence of this consultation should be attached to the Programme Amendment Form.

Where substantial and significant changes to a programme are proposed that would affect current students, the proposed amendments must be discussed first with the student group, e.g. through a special meeting or via the Student-Staff Liaison Committee, and their consent must be secured.

Please note that it is no longer possible to change the title of a programme, duration, mode of study via a Programme Amendment Form. Due to the implications of these changes, amendments to the duration, or mode of study must be submitted as a new programme proposal. Requests to change a programme title should be submitted via a Programme Title Change form (see section 5 below).

Schools / Institutes are encouraged to discuss their proposed amendments with the Academic Secretariat for advice on the appropriate procedure. The Academic Secretariat may seek the view of Taught Programmes Board where appropriate.

Additional guidance on completing each of the different sections of the Programme Amendment Form is available on the ARCS website. The Academic Secretariat can assist with any further questions.

All programme amendments should be submitted to the Academic Secretariat where they will be logged and scrutinised for completeness of information and the appropriateness of the proposed amendment. The Academic Secretariat retains the right to send an incomplete proposal back to the originator for amendment before it is processed.

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<tr>
<th>Documentation to be submitted:</th>
<th>Programme Amendment Form</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programme Specification</td>
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</table>
Authorisation required: Head of School(s) / Institute(s)

Timeframe: Approved programme amendment forms must be submitted by the annual ARCS deadline for all changes which are due to be implemented in the following academic year.

2. Approval by Taught Programmes Board (where applicable)

The following types of programme amendments may require institutional level approval, depending on the level of risk involved. These will be assessed by ARCS on a case-by-case basis, and may be referred for consideration by Taught Programmes Board and, where applicable, Partnerships Board:

- programmes delivered through a collaborative arrangement;
- programmes involving work-based learning or study abroad;
- programmes involving distance learning.

Documentation to be submitted: Programme Amendment Form
Programme Specification

Authorisation required: Taught Programmes Board
Partnerships Board

Timeframe: Approved programme amendment forms must be submitted by the annual ARCS deadline for all changes which are due to be implemented in the following academic year.
5. Amendments to the title of an existing undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme

This section provides details of the process for proposing an amendment to the title of an existing undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme.

Amendments to the title of a previously approved programme may arise as a result of discussion in staff meetings, External Examiner recommendations, Student-Staff Liaison Committees, discussion with a partner institution (in the case of collaborative provision), the Marketing and / or Admissions teams, or recommendations from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

i. Process overview
iii. Process details

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute

A revised *Programme Specification* and a *Programme Title Change Form* should be completed by the Programme Organiser in consultation with the Marketing team.

Once completed, the documents should be considered at the School/Institute Learning and Teaching Committee, and signed by the Head of School/Institute(s) to denote that the proposal has the support of the responsible School/Institute(s) and submitted to the Academic Secretariat for scrutiny.

The Programme Organiser should ensure that programmes involving more than one School / Institute have appropriate signatures to indicate the support of each Head of School / Institute, and, in the case of collaborative provision, should ensure that the partner institution is consulted as appropriate, and any potential changes to the Memorandum of Agreement considered and approved. Evidence of this consultation should be attached to the Programme Title Change Form. Consultation should also be undertaken with students and External Examiners as appropriate.

| Documentation to be submitted: | Programme Title Change Form  
|                             | Programme Specification(s) |
| Authorisation required:     | Head of School(s) / Institute(s) |

**Timeframe:**

- **Undergraduate programmes:** Programme title changes should be approved 24 months in advance of the programme start date (e.g. approval by September 2018 for programmes starting in September 2020).

- **Postgraduate programmes:** Programme title changes should be approved 17 months in advance of the programme start date (e.g. approval by March 2018 for programme starting in September 2019).

2. Approval by the Faculty Vice-Principal, and Student Recruitment and Admissions Group

Following approval by the School / Institute Teaching and Learning Committee (or equivalent), Programme Title Change Forms and corresponding Programme Specifications should be submitted.
Specifications should be submitted to the Academic Secretariat for scrutiny, and onward consideration by the Faculty Executive (or equivalent).

Following Faculty approval, Programme Title Change Forms and the accompanying Programme Specification(s) must then be considered by the Student Recruitment and Admissions Group (SRAG).

SRAG will review the proposed title change to ensure that:
- The proposed programme title fits into the School's / Institute's academic profile and QMUL’s Strategic Plan;
- There is evidence that there is a demand for the proposed programme title.

Completed and signed forms should then be submitted to the Academic Secretariat for final scrutiny before the programme title is change is implemented.

| Documentation to be submitted: | Programme Title Change Form  
| | Programme Specification(s) |
| Authorisation required: | Faculty Vice-Principal  
| | Student Recruitment and Admissions Group |
| Timeframe: | **Undergraduate programmes:** Programme title changes should be approved 24 months in advance of the programme start date (e.g. approval by September 2018 for programmes starting in September 2020).  
| | **Postgraduate programmes:** Programme title changes should be approved 17 months in advance of the programme start date (e.g. approval by March 2018 for programme starting in September 2019). |
6. Amendments to a previously approved module

i. Process overview

1 Any significant revisions to the proposal may need to be resubmitted to the relevant approval body for consideration.
ii. Process details

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute

2. Approval by Taught Programmes Board (where applicable)

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<tr>
<th>1. Approval by Head of School / Institute</th>
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<tr>
<td>The module organiser should complete a <em>Module Amendment Form</em> to outline the proposed amendment(s) to the module.</td>
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School / Institute Teaching and Learning Committees (or equivalent) consider and approve all module amendments. Approval will be denoted by signature from the Head(s) of School / Institute. For collaborative programmes, approval must also be sought from the partner institution, and appropriate evidence (for example an email or letter) attached to the module amendment form.

It is the responsibility of the owning School / Institute to seek approval of proposed amendments from any other School / Institute which offers the module as part of their programme(s).

Please note that changes to either the level, or credit value of a module cannot be requested via the module amendment process. If the level or credit value of a module is to be changed then a module proposal form must be submitted as alterations will be needed to the substance of the module.

Additional guidance on completing each of the different sections of the Module Amendment Form is available on the ARCS website. The Academic Secretariat can assist with any further questions.

All signed module amendment forms should be submitted to the Academic Secretariat where they will be logged and scrutinised for completeness of information and the appropriateness of the proposed amendment.

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<th>Documentation to be submitted:</th>
<th>Module Amendment Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>Authorisation required:</td>
<td>Head of School(s) / Institute(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timeframe:</td>
<td>Approved module amendments must be submitted by the annual ARCS deadline for all amendments due to be implemented in the following academic year. Amendments relating to assessment only must be submitted by the late summer ARCS deadline.</td>
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</table>
2. Approval by Taught Programmes Board (where applicable)

The following types of module amendments may require institutional level approval, depending on the level of risk involved. These will be assessed by ARCS on a case-by-case basis, and may be referred for consideration by Taught Programmes Board and, where applicable, Partnerships Board:

- modules to modules delivered through a collaborative arrangement;
- modules involving work-based learning or study abroad;
- modules involving distance learning.

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<th>Documentation to be submitted:</th>
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| Authorisation required:      | Taught Programmes Board  
                              | Partnerships Board       |
| Timeframe:                   | School / Institute-approved module amendment forms must be submitted by the annual ARCS deadline for all modules which are due to start in the following academic year. |
7. Withdrawal or suspension of an existing undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme

i. Process overview

1 Any significant revisions to the proposal may need to be resubmitted to the relevant approval body for consideration.

ii. Process details

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute

2. Consideration by Faculty Vice-Principal

3. Consideration by Student Recruitment and Admissions Group

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute

After discussion within the School / Institute, the Programme Organiser or Director of Taught Programmes should complete a Programme Suspension / Withdrawal Form. All
sections of the form must be completed, and discussed with all relevant QMUL departments listed on the form. The completed form must be considered by the School / Institute Teaching and Learning Committee (or equivalent) and signed by the Head of School/Institute(s) to denote that the proposal has been approved.

The Programme Organiser should also ensure that programmes delivered by more than one School / Institute have appropriate signatures to indicate the support of each Head of School / Institute, and, in the case of collaborative provision, should ensure that the partner institution is consulted as appropriate. Evidence of this consultation should be attached to the Programme Suspension / Withdrawal Form.

Once approved by the School / Institute Learning and Teaching Committee (or equivalent), requests to suspend or withdraw programmes should in the first instance be referred to the Academic Secretariat, who will scrutinise the form for completeness.

| Documentation to be submitted: | Programme Suspension / Withdrawal Form |
| Authorisation required:       | Head of School(s) / Institute(s)       |
| Timeframe:                    | Please contact ARCS for advice         |

2. Approval by the Faculty Vice-Principal(s), and Student Recruitment and Admissions Group

Following approval by the School / Institute Learning and Teaching Committee (or equivalent), the Academic Secretariat will refer all requests to suspend or withdraw programmes for consideration by the Faculty Vice-Principal, followed by the Student Recruitment and Admissions Group (SRAG).

| Documentation to be submitted: | Programme Suspension / Withdrawal Form |
| Authorisation required:        | Faculty Vice-Principal                  |
|                               | Student Recruitment and Admissions Group |
| Timeframe:                     | Please contact ARCS for advice          |
8. Withdrawal or suspension of a previously approved module

i. Process overview

ii. Process details

1. Approval by Head of School / Institute

A proposal to withdraw a module should be detailed by the module organiser on a Module Withdrawal Form. The completed form must be considered by the School / Institute Teaching and Learning Committee (or equivalent) and signed by the Head of School/Institute(s) to denote that the withdrawal has been approved.

It is the responsibility of the owning School / Institute to seek approval of proposed withdrawals from any other School / Institute which offers the module as part of their programmes.

The form should clarify how the withdrawal of the module will affect the student diet, for example withdrawal of a module that is core/compulsory to a programme may mean that another module has to be introduced in its place to ensure consistency with the QMUL Academic Credit Framework. In the case of collaborative programmes, evidence that the partner institution has been appropriately consulted should be included with the Module Withdrawal Form. The proposal will be scrutinised to ensure that withdrawals are
appropriately timed and any implications for current students are fully considered prior to authorising the subsequent amendment on SIS.

A Programme Amendment Form, and updated Programme Specification(s) should also be provided to remove the module from any programme(s) of study where it is currently offered.

The approved Module Withdrawal Form should be forwarded by the module organiser to the Academic Secretariat, for scrutiny and implementation. Please note that modules cannot be registered as withdrawn on the SIS until resitting / retaking students have completed the appropriate assessment.

| Documentation to be submitted: | Module Withdrawal Form  
Programme Amendment Form  
Programme Specification |
| Authorisation required: | Head of School(s) / Institute(s) |
| Timeframe: | Please contact ARCS for advice |