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Validation and revalidation process

Validation is the process through which PYF establishes that the AKTO programme is academically viable, that educational standards have been appropriately defined and that it will offer users the best opportunity to learn. It is about assuring quality and adding value by enhancing the quality of the proposal. Validation provides an opportunity to review the information that will be provided to users.

The PYF approach to validation is one of rigour and proportionality with flexible arrangements for chapters approval, allowing us to be responsive to external demands and take account of the levels of risk involved. Validation involves meetings during which a panel of professionals and academic representatives scrutinize the chapters of the programme and new proposals. However, the approval process also places great emphasis on the programme development stage, and the preparation and consideration of proper draft documentation is considered key to facilitating an effective validation.

During the validation process consideration is given to the following themes:

- the programme structure, its design, content, delivery and assessment
- the appropriateness of the standards set for the different levels (basic, first and second)
- the suitability of other learning resources to support the programme (downloads)
- the narrative
- the way in which the programme facilitates the widest possible access to ensure that all users can maximize their potential with particular emphasis on learning and gaming and reviewing the programme where appropriate
- the rationale for a new chapter

PYF remains solely responsible for the validation of the programme. In some circumstances PYF may simply “kite mark” a chapter as meeting the requirements.

Types of validation activity

There are two types of validation.

Devolved: the programme is to be delivered by PYF staff, in corporate setting, or via distance learning.

Non-devolved: activities which involve academic representatives delivering reports or supporting an element of, or an entire, AKTO chapter.

Normally chapters which are successfully validated do not require revalidation at fixed periods. However, some chapters will require revalidation and their delivery will be reviewed for re-approval. Where a

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validated chapter is modified it may require revalidation depending on the nature and extent of the changes.

Advice from the Academic Committee (AC) can help to ensure that the proposal is as robust as possible by the time it comes to validation or revalidation.

Where an existing chapter is due for revalidation, because significant changes have been made, approval for the revalidation will be given by the Programme Management Board, after consulting AC.

Fast track proposals

Normally a chapter should go through the above committee in good time to allow the advice for the validation. Fast-tracking allows a chapter narrative to be developed more rapidly in order to meet a strategic requirement, or to respond to external body or employer needs. Such rapid development can be seen as a higher risk, and therefore fast-tracking requires the explicit agreement of the Chair and of the Deputy Chair of the Programme Management Board. Where a proposal has been fast-tracked outside of the Academic Committee structure, this should be noted at the next meeting of the relevant committee.

The validation panel and participants. Roles and responsibilities

Programme Management Board

The management board has the responsibility for the overall management, development and quality assurance of the programme/subject area/chapters. It is constituted by:

Chair and Deputy Chair - CEO and CMO of AKTO PYF. The role of the validation panel chair is to ensure a fair judgement about the proposed programme and that all issues are explored and debated.

Programme leader. The main role of the programme leader is to take the lead in preparing for the validation, overseeing the production of the relevant documentation. The programme leader co-ordinates responses to the issues raised by panel members on the validation documentation and takes the lead in preparing the programme team's response to any required technical corrections and/or recommendations set for the validation.

Programme team members. The programme team contributes to the development of the programme (in particular for the narrative) and takes part in the validation process.

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Academic representative. The academic representative within PYF is in charge of research activity, content selection (initial data collection) and plot outline of AKTO. Also a member of the Academic Committee.

Academic Committee

The Academic Committee is responsible for giving advice on quality and standards, as well as on procedures associated with the maintenance and enhancement of academic quality for the validation and modification of the programme. AC devolves responsibility for most validation activities to PMB, excluding those relating to non-devolved provision.