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## CD04: PROCESS FOR THE DISCONTINUATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMMES

### 1. General Approach

The course approvals process is predicated on a risk-based approach: those proposals posing greater risk to academic quality and standards, the student learning experience, institutional reputation or financial loss requiring greater scrutiny and higher levels of authority as the final point of approval. The purpose is to evaluate and confirm the final detail of all courses of study open to students. The formally approved version of any course is designated as the 'definitive document' forming the basis of the record in LUSI (Lancaster University Student Information).

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### 2. Categories of approval

The Course Approvals Process is aligned to the University's statutory and regulatory obligations in relation to quality and standards, and consumer protection rights. Categories of approval are further determined by the scope of the proposal, the breadth of scrutiny required, and the level of reputational, financial or organisational risk which the proposal may expose the University. There are three broad categories of approval.

- a) New programmes  
Which covers both new programmes and the introduction of new variants to existing programmes.  
Note that where new core or optional modules are being introduced *as part of a new programme*, these should be submitted alongside the programme proposal for scrutiny and approval.
- b) Modification of existing provision  
Which covers
  - i) major modifications;

programme of study. Because of the contractual obligations between applicants and students and the University, no department or faculty may permanently lay-down a programme on its own authority. Proposals to temporarily suspend an existing programme of study must be approved by the faculty, but proposals to permanently lay-down an existing programme of study must be approved by the University Dean (UA ), acting on behalf of Senate and Council. This ensures that the interests of offer-holders, applicants with deferred places, and students who have intercalated from the Senate support

### 3.3.1. Evidencing the proposal

#### 3.3.1.1. Rationale

- If the programme uses modules from other areas, will the student numbers on those modules be affected? Could the reduction in the subsequent student numbers make such modules unviable?
- Will the discontinuation of a programme also result in modules being discontinued that are used in other programmes? How will the discontinuation of these modules affect those programmes?

#### Current students

- Will the choice of modules available to students remaining on the programme be fewer or different?
- What will the impact be on students who have to re-sit a module, or repeat a year, or have interrupted their studies?
- If modules are to be laid down that are used in other programmes, how might this affect students on those programmes?

#### Applicants

- Have any offers of a place on the programme been made to prospective students?
- Have any applicants accepted a place on the programme, and have any of these elected to defer their year of entry?
- If the programme is no longer available to them, what alternatives will be offered? Are there any other stakeholders who will be impacted by the proposed discontinuation, and what is that impact likely to be?

Should any additional resources be needed to support the proposed programme? If so, what resources are needed, and how will they be provided? (A12)

In the case of discontinuation proposals, the departmental approval gateway will want to ensure that the proposal aligns with wider department, faculty or University plans and that appropriate steps have or will be taken to protect the interests of any applicants holding offers or students registered on the programme in question.

In the event that there are:

- no students registered on the programme proposed for discontinuation,
- no applicants who have been made or accepted offers on the programme, and
- there is no impact from the discontinuance on other departments or faculties,

a written recommendation, signed by the relevant Associate Dean, to discontinue a programme can be submitted directly

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Once a decision regarding approval has been made, the outcome should be recorded on the \_\_\_\_\_, noting any observations, assumptions or conditions which contributed to the decision taken, and signed by the UA