navitas Europe

CPR QS1 Pathway Approval and Review

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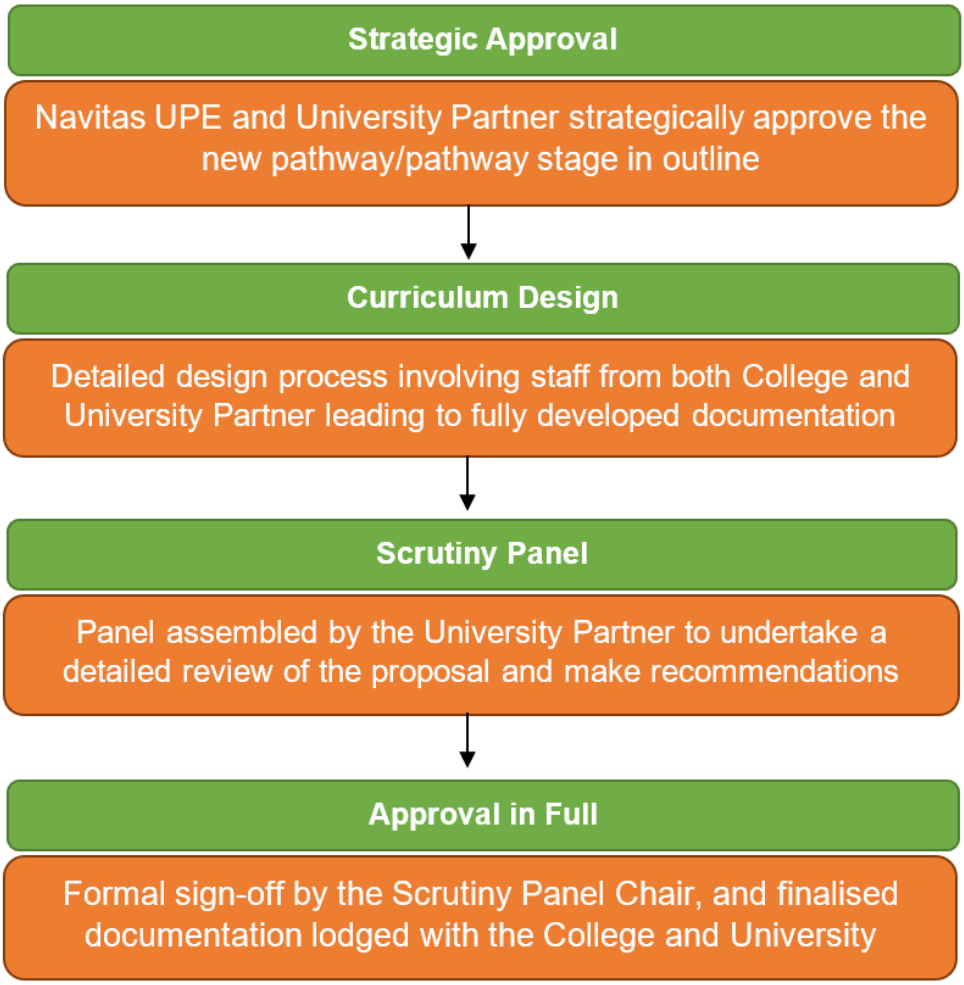
Introduction

This document sets out the Navitas policy and procedure for the approval and periodic review of the College stages of pathways. It applies to all Colleges although the procedures may vary in detail according to the differing practices of University Partners.

Development and Approval of Pathways

Proposals for a new pathway/stage of study will be subject to an approval process undertaken jointly by the appropriate Faculty/School of the University Partner and the College. There are four stages to the development and approval of new pathways/programmes as shown below.



Strategic Approval

New pathways and/or stages under discussion with a Faculty/School of the University Partner must be given Strategic Approval prior to any in-depth curriculum development or marketing activities. Section A of the Pathway Approval Form (QS1_1) should provide a clear definition of the type of pathway and/or stage of study being proposed and the business case should be completed by the College Director/Principal (CDP) and a University Proposer (normally the Academic Lead within the relevant School/Faculty). A draft Programme Specification or Pathway Framework and associated marketing collateral are also prepared.

It will then be submitted to the relevant Navitas UPE EGM and Head of Academic Quality. Once approved, the Form is passed to the University Partner for consideration and approval by the relevant University authority. Formal notification of the decision on strategic approval will be made to the Academic Advisory Committee, the Joint Strategic Partnership Management Board and the relevant University Committee.

Strategic Approval, once granted, allows the marketing of a pathway to fully commence and for the College to issue Offers of Admission. The phrase 'subject to approval' must be contained in all marketing literature until such time as the pathway has been fully approved.

Curriculum Design

Once a new pathway and/or stage of study has been granted Strategic Approval, the draft Programme Specification or Pathway Framework can be fully developed into a full Programme Specification along with draft module Definitive Module Documents (DMDs) and associated documentation, as required. This process should involve Academic Registry and College Academic Services with input from appropriate staff of the University Partner (e.g., pathway/programme leaders).

Pathway and programme development will be undertaken by the College together with input from appropriate subject specialist staff of the University Partner. The process will be overseen by Academic Registry.

In undertaking the development work, the following considerations must be taken into account.

All pathways will incorporate the following design principles:

1. adhere where appropriate to the learning needs of an international cohort and to national guidelines on credit volume, thus enabling students to achieve the outcomes expected at each stage of study
2. facilitate accessibility
3. anticipate disparities in the learning backgrounds of students
4. provide the appropriate balance of core learning skills, linguistic competence, practical skills, transferable skills, and disciplinary knowledge and understanding
5. provide a contemporary and flexible learning system relevant to the pathway of study
6. provide an increasing level of demand on students as they progress through a pathway and to ensure learning preparedness and self-reliance for the mature environment of higher education
7. consider the views and the needs of College students (inclusive of disability and special needs) and the subject specialists of the University Partner
8. consider the requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)
9. provide an opportunity for students to reflect upon skills and attributes required for further study, professional development and employment
10. ensure that all intended learning outcomes are clearly identified, developed and assessed as appropriate for progression to the next stage of study
11. ensure that pathways accurately reflect the requirements of onward University study

College Stage Design should:

1. provide and agree appropriate content with the relevant School/Faculty of the University Partner to ensure progression to degree awards at a designated point in the pathway provision
2. reflect the outcomes of market research among potential applicants
3. consider aims and learning outcomes to the onward stages of study at the University
4. consider relevant University strategies and policies (e.g. Assessment Regulations, skills requirements)
5. operate within the Navitas UPE approved Policies and Regulations (NPRs)
6. provide an appropriate level of academic challenge and rigour
7. develop students' capability and autonomy, including the ability to learn and to manage their own learning
8. ensure that students will have attained the prescribed level of interdisciplinary language competence described as 'Proficient User' by the Council of Europe by inclusion of the appropriate English Language and Academic Skills modules.
9. where possible, offer students some choice in the degrees available from an articulation point;
10. provide opportunities for exit with a Confirmation of Attainment or transfer to other cognate areas offered by the College or the University

At the conclusion of the curriculum design process, the following documentation will be submitted to the University Partner:

- Programme Specification
- Definitive Module Documents (DMDs) or Module Outlines
- Pathway Approval Form
- Other relevant documents as appropriate

Scrutiny Panel

The University will facilitate a Scrutiny Panel, according to its procedures for the approval of collaborative provision, to determine the appropriateness of the proposed curriculum for the level of articulation required.

Membership of the Panel will depend on University Partner practices, but will normally comprise:

- the relevant Associate Dean or nominee, who shall normally be Chair
- at least two other Faculty/School representatives – Head of School and relevant Programme Leader(s)
- College Director/Principal
- College Director of Academic Services or equivalent
- Navitas UPE Head of Academic Quality or nominee
- An External (where appropriate)

The University will provide a secretary to the Scrutiny Panel.

The remit of the Scrutiny Panel is to consider:

- the appropriateness of the curriculum for progression to the prescribed articulation point with the University Partner provision in terms of its level, learning outcomes and academic rigour
- progression criteria
- College management arrangements for the pathway/stage
- resources will not normally be the focus of discussions, since resource requirements will have been reviewed and agreed at the Strategic Approval stage and minuted at the OAC. However, if during the course of discussions additional requirements or issues of concern are identified, these should be noted at the Scrutiny Panel and in the subsequent Report
- Agree any amendments to the proposals as documented

At the end of the meeting the Scrutiny Panel will conclude whether the pathway/stage of study meets Navitas requirements and those of the University Partner or whether additional development is required. The outcome of the Scrutiny Panel will be one of the following:

a) Full approval which may be subject to specified conditions, and/or recommendations
b) More development work is required before further consideration by the Scrutiny Panel

In each case, the Panel will specify dates by which revised documentation should be submitted.

In the case of outcome (a) above, the College in consultation with University Partner representatives will address any conditions and/or recommendations, revise the documentation accordingly, and submit a statement of how the conditions and/or recommendations have been addressed, together with a copy of revised documentation, to the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel. The Chair will consult with members of the Panel and must be satisfied that there is evidence that all conditions of approval have been fulfilled and recommendations appropriately considered before granting Full Approval under Chair's action.

In the case of outcome (b), the Scrutiny Panel will give clear guidance on the areas where further development is required.

Final Approval

Once a new pathway and/or stage of study has been granted Full Approval by a Scrutiny Panel, the College will complete Section B of the Pathway Approval Form (QS1_1) and submit it to Academic Registry together with the final agreed versions of the Programme Specification and required DMDs. Academic Registry will then formally incorporate the pathway/stage into the College provision.

Academic Registry will instruct the College Director/Principal to formally notify the University of the outcome of the Scrutiny Panel, and forward final versions of the pathway documentation.

Formal notification of Full Approval including the minutes of the Scrutiny Panel will be made to the Academic Advisory Committee (AAC), the Joint Strategic Partnership Management Board and the relevant University Committee.

Periodic Review of Programmes

Periodic review of College pathway stages will take place according to the requirements and practices of the University Partner. This will be either (a) according to the University Partner's collaborative provision review procedures, or (b) as part of the periodic review of the linked university provision. In both cases, the processes will be those of the University Partner. Exceptionally, the provision of a College may be the subject of periodic review initiated by Navitas. In such cases, Navitas will adopt the process of the University Partner after suitable adaptation.

Portfolio Expansion

Portfolio expansion refers to the addition of further degree awards to an existing College pathway. In practice, portfolio expansion arises when a University Partner adds one or more degree award variants to an existing degree programme. Such expansion requires approval from the Head of Academic Quality.

A College's Senior Management Team will discuss a proposal for portfolio expansion and maintain a record of its decision. It will take into account market research data supporting the expansion and costs related to meeting the required student target.

The CDP (College Proposer) and the University Proposer will complete the Portfolio Expansion Form (QS1_4) and submit to the relevant Executive General Manager and the Head of Academic Quality for approval.

Portfolio Expansion may be granted by the Executive General Manager with support from the Head of Academic Quality via email. This notification of approval should be attached to this Form and noted in Section C by the College Proposer.

Modifications

Modifications are dependent upon the change being proposed/made, and whether it constitutes a change to a module or pathway/stage of study.

Changes to a module must be notified to Academic Registry by the CDP or nominee via the Module Management Approval Form (QS1_5) along with the revised Module documentation for approval.

Routine changes to a programme must be notified to Academic Registry by the CDP or nominee via the Programme Modification Form (QS1_6) along with the revised Programme documentation for approval.

Changes to a pathway/stage of study must be notified to the Executive General Manager and Academic Registry by the CDP. If the changes are substantive, a full re-approval procedure must be carried out as set out in the Pathway Approval Form (QS1_1) accompanied by all associated curriculum documentation.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Navitas UPE Academic Board unless there are internal or legislative changes that necessitate earlier review. The policy was last reviewed on 12 January 2023 and approved as a Chair's action on behalf of the UPE Academic Board.