Code of Practice on the Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review of Taught Programmes

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Target Audience	
People who need a detailed knowledge of the Code of Practice	Dean of Education; Learning and Teaching Committee; Academic Registrar; Registry Team; Programme Directors; Module Convenors
People who need a broad understanding of the Code of Practice	Management Committee; Students
People who need to know that the Code of Practice exists	Academic Registry; Admissions Officers; Academic Staff

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1 Introduction and Context

1.1 This Code of Practice sets out the broad principles that guide the design, approval, annual monitoring and review of taught programmes offered by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM). It also identifies the provisions that will be made in the event of a programme or award being withdrawn. It is designed to meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education that LSTM will discharge its responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and for assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities by operating:

- Effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes
- Effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes

1.2 This Code of Practice complies with all current statutory and legislative requirements, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 1998. It is set within the context of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part A and Chapters B1 (Programme Design and Approval) and B8 (Programme Monitoring and Review).

1.3 Related documents

- Procedure for the Approval of New Programmes and Major Modifications to Programmes
- Procedure for the Approval of New Modules
- Procedure for Annual Review and Approval of Minor Modifications to Programmes and Major/Minor Modifications to Modules
- Procedure for Periodic Review
- Flowchart: Overview of Programme Approval

2 Scope

2.1 This Code of Practice applies to all LSTM programmes that lead to an award. It excludes non-award-bearing short courses.

2.2 The processes described apply to:

- new programmes and modules
- major modifications to existing programmes and modules
- minor modifications to existing programmes and modules

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Dean of Education will:

3.1.1 Approve suggestions for new programmes as being appropriate for development

3.1.2 Approve the appointment of external reviewers for programme approval

3.1.3 Recommend to the Management Committee appropriate external reviewers for periodic review

3.2 The Proposer of a new programme or module will prepare and submit the approval documentation.

3.3 The Programmes Board will review the academic rationale, market need, and the relationship of proposed new modules and programmes to the overall education and training portfolio and make a recommendation to the Learning & Teaching (L&T) Committee.

3.4 The Learning & Teaching Committee will:

3.4.1 Consider the strategic fit of the proposed programme and review the proposed budget in terms of sustainability and financial return to LSTM

3.4.2 Recommend to the Management Committee that a full programme proposal be developed and that it be sent for scrutiny by the Quality Management Committee (QMC)

3.4.3 Recommend to the Management Committee that new programmes and major modifications to programmes endorsed by the QMC are given final approval

3.4.4 Approve new modules and major modifications to modules upon the recommendation of the QMC

3.4.5 Review annually the financial sustainability, resourcing and trends in student recruitment for all programmes and make recommendations to the Management Committee regarding programme continuation, suspension or closure

3.5 The Quality Management Committee will:

3.5.1 Review proposed new programmes and major modifications to programmes and make recommendations to the L&T Committee

3.5.2 Review new modules and major modifications to modules and make recommendations to the L&T Committee

3.5.3 Approve minor modifications to programmes and modules

3.5.4 Scrutinise Annual Programme Reviews

3.6 The Management Committee will:

3.6.1 Grant approval to develop a programme

3.6.2 Grant final approval of new programmes

3.6.3 Approve programme continuation, suspensions and closures

3.6.4 Approve external reviewers for periodic review

3.7 The Director of Studies for a programme will produce the Annual Programme Review in discussion with the programme teaching team

3.8 The Module Convenor will produce the Annual Module Review in discussion with the module teaching team.

3.9 The Board of Studies will discuss the Annual Programme and Module Reviews, including in-principle agreement to any proposed modifications.

4 Programme Approval and Design

4.1 The purpose of the programme approval and design process is to ensure that:

4.1.1 Threshold academic standards are maintained

4.1.2 Students receive high quality learning opportunities

4.1.3 Consideration is given to the availability of resources

4.1.4 Proposals for new programmes are relevant, compatible with other programmes offered and consistent with LSTM's mission and Strategic Plan

4.1.5 The approach used to approve new and amended programmes is proportionate to the risk inherent in the nature of a particular proposal

4.1.6 The decision to approve a programme is informed by both the business case and the academic merit of the proposal

5 New Programmes and Modifications to Programmes

5.1 **Major modifications** to programmes are those which alter the nature, focus and purpose of the programme, and/or the award title(s) to which it leads. Major modifications to a programme are defined as:

- modifications that affect 25% or more of a programme
- modifications to 25% or more of the aims of a programme
- modifications to 25% or more of the learning outcomes of a programme
- modifications to 25% or more of the mode of delivery of a programme

5.2 The *Procedure for the Approval of New Programmes and Major Modifications to Programmes* details the following stages (Appendix 1):

5.2.1 **Stage 1**: The Management Committee will consider a proposal to develop a new programme (make major modifications to an existing programme) following consideration of the academic rationale of the outline proposal by the Programmes Board and confirmation by the L&T Committee that it is financially sound and is in line with LSTM's mission and strategic plan

5.2.2 **Stage 2:** If approval to develop the programme (make the modifications) is given by Management Committee, , the Proposer will develop the full programme specification together with specifications for the constituent modules (if applicable) and will nominate the external reviewer(s)

5.2.3 **Stage 3:** Following approval of the external reviewer(s) by the DoE, the Proposer submits the programme documentation for external review

5.2.4 **Stage 4:** The QMC will consider the academic quality and standards of the proposed programme (or modifications), including the report(s) from external review, and make a recommendation to the L&T Committee

5.2.5 **Stage 5:** The Management Committee will consider a programme (or modifications to a programme) for final approval following a positive recommendation from the L&T Committee

5.3 Programmes will be approved for a fixed period (normally 5 years for credit-bearing programmes and 3 years for non-credit-bearing programmes) and will then be subject to re-approval (Section 8.1).

5.4 ***Minor modifications*** to programmes are defined as changes that affect less than 25% of the programme and which do not constitute major modifications.

5.5 Minor modifications are dealt with under The "*Procedure for Annual Review and Approval of Minor Modifications to Programmes and Major/Minor Modifications to Modules" which details* the following stages:

5.5.1 **Stage 1:** As part of the Annual Programme Review process, the Board of Studies will discuss any proposed minor modifications to the programme and, if considered appropriate, will endorse the proposed modification and request approval

5.5.2 **Stage 2:** The QMC will consider the proposed minor programme modifications for approval as part of the annual programme review process and will grant approval if the proposed modifications are considered to be appropriate. If the modifications are not considered to be minor, the programme will be required to go through the "*Procedure for the Approval of New Programmes and Major Modifications to Programmes*" (Section 5.2)

6 New Modules

6.1 Submission of a modular programme for approval will include consideration of its constituent modules. Proposals for new and modified modules may also be considered independent of programme approval.

6.2 The *Procedure for the Approval of New Modules* details the following stages:

6.2.1 **Stage 1:** The Module Proposal will be considered by the Programmes Board and a recommendation made to the L&T Committee.

6.2.2 **Stage 2:** The L&T Committee will refer the proposed Module Specification to the QMC to review the academic quality and standards

6.2.3 **Stage 3:** The L&T Committee will consider the module for approval following a positive recommendation from the QMC

6.3 Major and minor modifications to modules are dealt with under the *Procedure for Annual Review and Approval of Minor Modifications to Programmes and Major/Minor Modifications to Modules"*

6.4 **Major modifications** to modules are defined as changes to modules which may have an effect on the programmes of which they are part and include changes to the:

- Module title
- Credit value
- Assessment method(s)
- Assessment weighting
- Aims and learning outcomes
- Designation of the module to mandatory

6.5 **Minor modifications** to modules are defined as changes to modules which do not have any direct effect on the programmes of which they are part and which do not constitute major changes.

6.6 The *"Procedure for Annual Review and Approval of Minor Modifications to Programmes and Major/Minor Modifications to Modules"* details the following stages:

6.6.1 **Stage 1:** The Board of Studies will consider the proposed modifications and if considered to be appropriate, will request approval for the changes

6.6.2 **Stage 2:** As part of the annual module review process the QMC will consider proposed minor and major modifications to modules. Minor modifications may be approved by QMC. Endorsements for major modifications are recommended for approval by the L&T Committee

7 Programme Monitoring

7.1 A programme (and its constituent modules if appropriate) must be reviewed at least once during the academic year at a time appropriate to when it is delivered.

7.2 The *Procedure for Annual Review and Approval of Minor Modifications to Programmes and Major/Minor Modifications to Modules* details the process to be followed for the annual review of programmes and modules. The Annual Programme Review will be written by the Director of Studies and will be submitted to the Board of Studies for discussion and approval for request of any proposed changes before consideration by the QMC. The Annual Module Review will be written by the Module Convenor and follow the same approval process.

7.3 The purpose of programme monitoring is to ensure that:

7.3.1 High standards are maintained in the quality of teaching

7.3.2 The quality of learning opportunities conforms to external standards

7.3.3 Learning and teaching developments are informed by the views of staff, students, graduates, external examiners and other stakeholders

7.3.4 The aims and learning outcomes of modules are consistent with the programme(s) of which they form a part

7.3.5 Resource issues affecting the student learning experience are identified

7.3.6 Effective practice is highlighted and disseminated

7.3.7 A clear action plan for quality enhancement is developed

7.3.8 Issues regarding future recruitment and/or financial sustainability are identified

7.4 Reviews should identify what has gone well during the year, areas for improvement/enhancement and effective practice which can be shared, together with an action plan for the next academic year. Reviews are expected to be evaluative and reflective rather than descriptive and to draw on as wide a range of evidence as possible.

8 Re-approval of Programmes and Periodic Review

8.1 Programmes will be reviewed for re-approval according to the timescale specified at the point of initial approval. The process should follow that described in Section 5.2 but the documentation should in addition include consideration of:

8.1.1 Incremental changes made since approval as a result of annual monitoring

8.1.2 The continuing relevance and financial sustainability of the programme

8.1.3 Proposed revisions to the programme and module specifications and how these have been informed by experience of delivering the programme

8.2 LSTM will organise a periodic review of all of its teaching provision every five years according to the *Procedure for Periodic Review*. The review will be timed to coincide with the mid-point between institutional reviews by the QAA and involve external reviewers and students. The remit of periodic review will be broad and consider the continuing validity and relevance of the teaching portfolio, the provision of learning opportunities and the quality of the student experience.

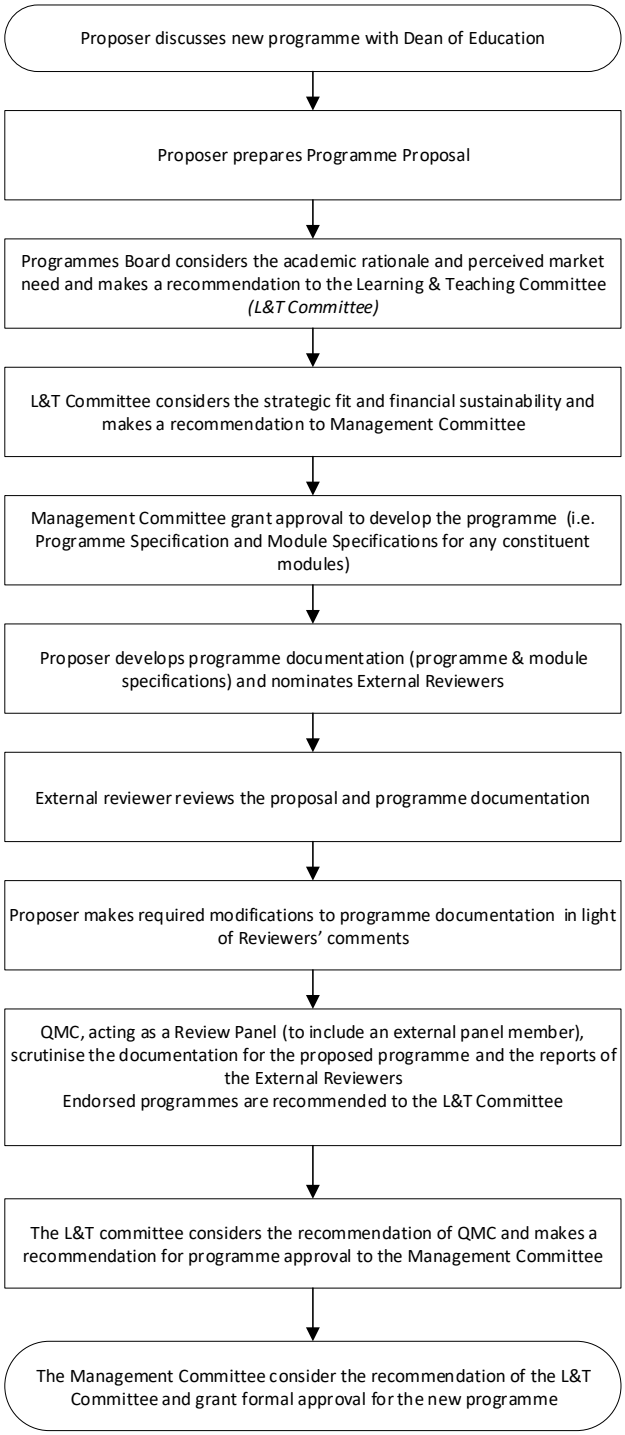
9 Programme Closure

9.1 The Management Committee will discontinue or suspend a programme upon the recommendation of L&T Committee based on the outcomes of monitoring and review.

9.2 Programmes may be discontinued or suspended without the withdrawal of their constituent modules.

Appendix 1: Overview of Programme Approval

Overview of Programme Approval



Annex of Modifications		
Version	**Date of issue**	**Details of modification from previous version**
1.1	30.01.15	Minor edits following review by Management Committee 28.01.15
1.2	10/04/15	Minor edits following University of Liverpool Accreditation review 02.03.15
1.3	03/08/15	Edits following review of programme/module approval procedures
2.1	01/02/19	Changed references to Director of Education to Dean of Education.
2.2	14/11/22	Minor edits to reflect changes to Target Audience. Updated reapproval date.