DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION FOR PROPOSERS OF PROGRAMMES:

VALIDATION AND ACCREDITATION

OCTOBER 2016

APPROVED BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE 28 SEPTEMBER 2016

This document should be read in conjunction with a document entitled *Validation and Accreditation of Programmes: Regulations and Guidelines* (at http://www.dcu.ie/ovpaa/ac.shtml#ValAcc), which outlines the purpose of validation and accreditation and the procedures to be followed in the preparation of documentation.

Contents

1. Validation: management

1.1 Validation: general information

1.1.1 Validation proposals must be submitted for approval to the Education Committee.[1] This committee is managed by the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) specifically the Secretary of Education Committee and the Administrator in OVPAA.[2]

1.1.2 Validation proposals may be submitted for approval to the EC only after they have completed the approval process (including approval in relation to financial matters) within the relevant Faculty or Faculties. Information on Faculty approval processes is available from Faculty Offices. Throughout this document, references to Faculty procedures should also be read, as appropriate and necessary, as references to Open Education procedures and references to procedures in any linked colleges.

1.1.3 Within the Faculty, a future Chair of the Programme Board (or equivalent title) should be identified. This person is referred to, for the purposes of validation and accreditation, as the *principal programme proposer*.

1.1.4 Liaison with the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) should normally be carried out by the principal programme proposer and the Faculty Manager (or the latter's nominee).

1.1.5 There are ten Education Committee meetings in each academic year. Validation proposals may be considered at any of these. The exact times and dates of EC meetings are indicated in the University schedule of meetings at http://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/ovpaa/university_schedule_of_meetings_20162017.pdf Programme proposers are not required to be in attendance at these meetings, however. Instead, if the EC decides that a proposal needs to be discussed with the proposers, such discussion will take place some days after the EC meeting. It will be carried out at a meeting of the Education Committee Standing Committee. The exact times and dates for the ECSC meetings are indicated in the University schedule of meetings at link shown above.

1.1.6 If the EC or ECSC decide not to approve a validation proposal, the Secretary of Education Committee will let the programme proposers know this by e-mail following the relevant EC or ECSC meeting. Further action to be taken by the proposers will depend on the circumstances. For example, in certain cases, they may be advised that the EC or ECSC consider the programme as proposed not to be likely to be viable while, in others, they may be invited to submit a revised proposal to a future meeting of the EC.

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[1]The membership and terms of reference of the Education Committee are available at http://www.dcu.ie/ovpaa/ac.shtml#ACandCommittees
[2] Margaret Irwin-Bannon, ext. 7754, margaret.irwinbannon@dcu.ie ; Administrator: Valerie Cooke, ext. 5938, valerie.cooke@dcu.ie

1.2   Submission of documentation

1.2.1   All submissions to the EC must be with the Administrator in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available by the Secretary of Education Committee to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year. All notifications of forthcoming submissions must be made in accordance with this schedule. Proposals are required in electronic format only, and hard copies should not be provided.

1.2.2   The programme proposers are welcome to submit a draft of the programme proposal to the Secretary of Education Committee in advance with a request for advice on issues such as whether or not all of the necessary areas have been adequately covered in the document.

1.3   The Education Committee Standing Committee meeting

1.3.1   Once the EC has decided that there should be further discussion of a proposal, a discussion will take place at a meeting of the Education Committee Standing Committee (see 1.1.5 above). Where discussion takes place at the ECSC, the Secretary of Education Committee Standing Committee notifies the proposers of the exact time at which the proposal will be discussed and at which they should therefore make themselves available to meet the ECSC. This will normally be somewhere between 3.45 and 5.15 p.m. on the relevant day, though it should not be assumed that this will always be the case.

1.3.2   The principal programme proposer should be accompanied to the ECSC meeting by a minimum of one and, normally, a maximum of two colleagues – the group may include, for example, the Head of School, the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning/Education or a staff member closely associated with the programme. If a programme is proposed in partnership with an external organisation, a representative of this organisation may also attend. The principal programme proposer will be asked by the Secretary of Education Committee Standing Committee to specify in advance who will be in attendance.

1.3.3   The Administrator advises the principal programme proposer where he/she and colleagues should wait at the appointed time. They should not go directly to the room in which the ECSC meeting is held. Instead, they should wait until the Secretary of Education Committee leaves the ECSC meeting to invite them in. ECSC meetings are normally held in A204 on the second floor of the Albert College Building, and the place to wait is normally the foyer of the Albert College Building, but this cannot be assumed in all cases; the Administrator will advise.

1.3.4   The ECSC members will, as appropriate and necessary, ask questions of the programme proposers and seek clarifications in relation to the proposal. When this process has been completed, the programme proposers leave the meeting.

1.4   Following the ECSC meeting

1.4.1   The Secretary of Education Committee Standing Committee advises the principal programme proposer and the Faculty Manager (or the latter's nominee), normally on the day on which the ECSC meeting takes place, of the outcome of the meeting. This outcome will normally be a recommendation either to approve or not to approve the programme for development towards accreditation. The information communicated should be understood as being provisional, however, pending approval of the ECSC's recommendations (as

outlined in the validation report – see Item 1.4.4 below) by the full Education Committee. This process will normally be finalised not later than two weeks after the ECSC meeting.

1.4.2   In the event of a recommendation to approve, there may be sub-recommendations which the programme proposers are to take into account   in the development of the programme, and these will be communicated by   e-mail by the Secretary of Education Committee Standing Committee.

1.4.3   If the ECSC decides not to recommend approval, the Secretary of Education Committee Standing Committee will let the programme proposers know this by e-mail following the ECSC meeting. Further action to be taken by the proposers will depend on the circumstances. For example, in certain cases, they may be advised that the ECSC considers the programme as proposed not to be likely to be viable while, in others, they may be invited to submit a revised proposal to a future meeting of the EC.

1.4.4   In the event of a recommendation to approve a proposal, the Secretary of Education Committee drafts a validation report to be approved by the members of the ECSC and the EC and then forwarded for approval to the next available meeting of Academic Council. This report includes a summary of each programme proposal approved together with a statement of the recommendation to approve and a list of sub-recommendations, if any. The Secretary of Education Committee forwards this report to the principal programme proposer, the relevant Faculty Managers(s) (or nominee(s)) and the relevant Associate Dean(s) for Teaching and Learning/Education as soon as it has been approved by the ECSC and the EC. Normally, the sub-recommendations relate to matters that need to be addressed in the accreditation proposal. If that is not the case, the Secretary of Education Committee arranges with the principal programme proposer for confirmation to be submitted to the EC, at an appropriate date, that the sub-recommendation has been implemented.

1.5   Academic Council approval

1.5.1   Validation reports are placed in Section C of the agenda for Academic Council, which means that they are normally for formal approval only and will be discussed only if a member of Council requests, by a specified deadline before the meeting, that this be done. If there is a request for a discussion, the Secretary of Academic Council will notify the principal programme proposer of this.

1.5.2   If there is to be a discussion about the proposal, it should be ensured that there is a person present at Academic Council who can address any issues raised. This may be the principal programme proposer, if he/she is a member of Council; if not, a colleague who is a member of Council may address the issues, or the principal programme proposer may submit a request to the President via the Administrator to attend the relevant part of the meeting.

1.5.3   If there is no discussion about the proposal, it will be formally approved by Academic Council. If there is a discussion, various outcomes are possible: Council may approve, reject or amend the validation recommendations. In all cases, the decision (and recommendations, if any) of Council will be communicated to stakeholders by the Secretary of Academic Council.

1.5.4   If approval is indicated by Academic Council, the programme proposers are in a position to prepare for accreditation. It is understood that, for practical reasons, they may already have begun the preparations, following EC approval.

2. Accreditation: management

2.1 Approval mechanism – general

Accreditation is carried out by an Accreditation Board, composed of a number of external experts, a senior member of the University who acts as Chair, and a member of the Academic Affair's Secretariat who acts as Rapporteur.

2.2 Accreditation Board members

2.2.1 The identification of likely external members of the Accreditation Board is the responsibility of the programme proposers. Those nominated must be approved by the EC. The process is activated by the inclusion in the relevant section of the validation document of CVs for all those nominated, using the standard form.[3] Where a subsequent change has to be made, e.g. where an individual nominated and approved becomes unavailable and a substitute has to be sought, the CV of the substitute (on the standard form) should be forwarded to the Administrator, who will submit it electronically to the EC and request responses by a specified date, and communicate the outcome to the principal programme proposer, the relevant Faculty Manager(s) (or nominee(s)) and the relevant Associate Dean(s) for Teaching and Learning/Education.

2.2.2 In the selection of nominees to the Accreditation Board, account must be taken of the following:
- The principal programme proposer should ensure that there is appropriate professional distance between all nominated Board members and the University. No individual employed by the University, or a student of the University, in the previous five years may be considered. Nomination of individuals with a personal connection with the University should also be avoided, as appropriate. Reference should be made to the University's Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines at http://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/president/pdfs/conflict_guidelines.pdf.
- It should be ensured that the Board includes senior academic and professional experts as appropriate. There should normally be a minimum of one individual of professorial rank.
- It can be desirable, even necessary, for an individual to be appointed to a Board because he/she represents a professional accrediting body. In no circumstances, however, should an individual be appointed who is a member of an organisation which has commissioned a programme.
- Every effort should be made to ensure an appropriate gender balance and an appropriate balance between national and international expertise.
- An Accreditation Board should include no more than one representative from any one institution.
- Reciprocal arrangements between the University and other institutions should be avoided.
- In no circumstances may a staff member from DCU act as a member of an Accreditation Board in a linked college, or *vice versa*. Nor may a staff member of a linked college act as a member of an Accreditation Board in another linked college.

2.2.3 The number of external experts who actually sit on an Accreditation Board should never be less than three and should normally not be more than five. To allow for unforeseen events which might prevent an individual from attending a Board meeting as scheduled, it is

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[3] Available in *Validation and Accreditation of Programmes: Regulations and Guidelines*, Section 4.2 (Section 12).

recommended that a minimum of four be identified and invited. This ensures that, if one individual is prevented at short notice from attending, there will still be a minimum of three in attendance.

2.2.4   If one individual indicates, within a reasonable time period before the Board meeting (for example, a month in advance) that he/she cannot now attend, there may be time for the programme proposers to identify, nominate and request approval of a substitute. It is essential, in all cases that a CV is supplied for the substitute (on the standard form) and that formal approval of this CV is sought. (See 2.2.1 above in respect of the relevant procedure.)

2.2.5   In certain cases, an individual may indicate that he/she cannot attend the Board meeting but would be willing to read the documentation and submit comments in advance. This can be accommodated on occasion, though it is not recommended because it does not allow the individual to interact with the other members of the Board or the programme proposers. The comments should be e-mailed to the Rapporteur at the earliest opportunity, but not later than 5.00 p.m. on the day before the meeting is to take place. The Rapporteur will make the comments available to the other Board members. They will not be made available to the programme proposers, as they have the same status as comments made by the Board during its private sessions.

2.2.6   The principal programme proposer should ensure that the Administrator has a complete street address and e-mail address for each of the external experts. (The standard CV form, if completed fully, should include this information. However, the principal programme proposer should check, in each case, whether or not there is an additional street address, different from the professional address, to which documentation is to be sent, and notify the Administrator if this is the case).

2.3   Arrangements for Board meetings

2.3.1   To arrange a date for the meeting, the principal programme proposer must first contact the Secretary of Education Committee. In no circumstances should dates be arranged with the external experts, even tentatively, without prior consultation with the Secretary of Education Committee. The approximate time period in which the meeting will take place depends on a number of factors, including the likely amount of time required by the programme proposers to prepare the accreditation proposal and the availability of those who must be present for all or part of the meeting. These include, besides the members of the Board itself, the principal programme proposer and others closely associated with the proposal,[4] the relevant Dean(s) of Faculty and Head(s) of School and the module co-ordinators. If it appears likely that it will be impossible for an individual to attend, a substitute should be identified who will be able to speak on the individual's behalf.

2.3.2   The Secretary of Education Committee agrees with the principal programme proposer a list of possible dates within the general time period identified. Each date includes a morning or an afternoon slot, or both, and only one of these slots is used for accreditation. Therefore, for example, within a range of four dates, there is a maximum of eight slots. The morning slot lasts from 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m., and the afternoon slot lasts from 12.30 to 5.30 p.m. Both include lunch for the members of the Accreditation Board.

2.3.3   The principal programme proposer negotiates with all relevant parties about these slots and will advise the Secretary of Education Committee, as soon as possible, which one is most

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[4] This is, typically, the group of people outlined at 1.3.2.

suitable. This slot will then be entered into the accreditation diary and all others (which will have been held provisionally in the accreditation diary) will be erased.

2.3.4   The principal programme proposer advises the Administrator how many people will be in attendance for the discussion of individual modules (i.e. the section of the meeting that begins with coffee at either 10.30 a.m. or 3.00 p.m. – see timetables at 2.5.2 below).

2.3.5   The Administrator books the room for the meeting of the Accreditation Board. Where possible, this is A204 on the second floor of the Albert College Building, though it cannot be assumed that this room will always be available.

2.3.6   The Administrator contacts Trispace Ltd. to arrange catering for the meeting.

2.3.7   The Secretary of Education Committee and the Administrator – not the programme proposers – identify a senior member of the academic staff of the University to chair the meeting. This person will usually be a Dean of Faculty. In no instance will a meeting be chaired by the Dean(s) of Faculty from which the programme proposal has come.

2.4   Accreditation documentation

2.4.1   The final accreditation proposal must be submitted to the Administrator at least two weeks in advance of the date of the meeting. Both an electronic copy and the appropriate number of hard copies are required. The number of hard copies required is one for the Chair, one for the Rapporteur, one for each external expert and one spare. A table of contents should be provided. If possible, for ease of reading, hard copies should be colour-coded (e.g. one colour used for the module descriptors (Section 10), another for the CVs (Section 11) and white for all the rest (Sections 1-9 inclusive)[5]). The CVs should normally be omitted from any additional copies of the documentation which are made available to the programme team. Documentation should be in Word, not PDF, format, with the exception of the module descriptors, which are necessarily in PDF format because they are produced by Akari.

2.4.2   Programme proposers are welcome to submit an electronic draft of the accreditation proposal to the Rapporteur in advance with a request for advice on issues such as whether or not all of the necessary areas have been adequately covered in the document.

2.4.3   Two weeks before the date of the meeting (never later than this), the Administrator sends an electronic copy of the accreditation proposal to each member of the Accreditation Board and, on the same day, sends each member a pack containing the following:[6]
   - a hard copy of the proposal
   - a covering letter
   - a list of the members of the Accreditation Board
   - a timetable
   - a copy of the University's regulations and guidelines on validation and accreditation[7]
   - where appropriate,[8] the validation recommendations approved by Academic Council (extracted from the validation report)

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[5] See *Validation and Accreditation of Programmes: Regulations and Guidelines*, Section 5.2.
[6] The Chair of the Accreditation Board, as a member of DCU staff, does not get the campus map, travel expenses claim form or bank transfer form.
[7] This *is Validation and Accreditation of Programmes: Regulations and Guidelines*, in an abbreviated and adapted version to meet the needs of external readers. Programme proposers will also be familiar with the full version.

- a campus map
- a travel expenses claim form
- a bank transfer form.

2.4.4   When the above have been despatched, the Administrator e-mails the following documents, for information purposes, to the principal programme proposer with a request to forward them to the relevant staff members:
- the covering letters
- the list of the members of the Accreditation Board
- the timetable
- where appropriate,[9] the validation recommendations approved by Academic Council (extracted from the validation report).

2.4.5   It is important to note that, where a proposed new programme incorporates both new and existing modules, the latter are not of themselves deemed due for accreditation (as they have already been accredited in a previous context). What is due for accreditation is (a) the new modules, and (b) the programme as a whole, including the appropriateness of the relationship between the new and the existing modules. The members of the Accreditation Board need not necessarily comment on existing modules *per se*, though it is open to them to make suggestions for amendments to them where they consider it appropriate to do this as well as to consider the appropriateness of the relationship between the existing modules and the proposed new modules.

2.5   The meeting

2.5.1   The programme proposers are responsible for liaising with the external experts in relation to travel arrangements and accommodation, as required. It is quite usual for the external experts to book and pay for their own travel and accommodation and claim reimbursement later. Any additional activities, such as evening meals, site visits or lectures in which the external experts are to be involved, are the responsibility of the programme proposers. To avoid any possible confusion on the part of the external experts as to which staff members are responsible for the various aspects of the preparation for accreditation, the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) should not be copied on correspondence relating to any of the above activities.

2.5.2   The timetable for morning meetings is as follows:

9.00 a.m.	The members of the Accreditation Board assemble in the foyer of the Albert College Building (or elsewhere as directed, if the meeting is being held elsewhere)
9.00 a.m.	Private meeting of the Accreditation Board
9.45 a.m.	Meeting with the Dean, principal programme proposer and others closely associated with the proposal[10]
10.30 a.m.	Coffee (for the Board members and all those associated with the programme)
10.45 a.m.	Meeting with module co-ordinators for detailed

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[8] Sometimes there are no validation recommendations, or no validation recommendations that are of relevance for accreditation purposes.

[9] Sometimes there are no validation recommendations, or no validation recommendations that are of relevance for accreditation purposes.

[10] This is, typically, the group of people outlined at 1.3.2.

	discussion of the academic content and other programme-related matters
12.15 p.m.	Private meeting of the Accreditation Board to review the outcome of discussions and formulate the recommendations
12.45 p.m.	Final meeting with the Dean, principal programme proposer and others closely associated with the proposal[11]
1.00 p.m.	Close of proceedings
1.00 p.m.	Lunch for the members of the Accreditation Board

The timetable for afternoon meetings is as follows:

12.30 p.m.	The members of the Accreditation Board assemble in the foyer of the Albert College Building
12.35 p.m.	Lunch for the members of the Accreditation Board
1.30 p.m.	Private meeting of the Accreditation Board (normally in A204, or elsewhere if A204 is not available)
2.15 p.m.	Meeting with the Dean, principal programme proposer and others closely associated with the proposal[12]
3.00 p.m.	Coffee (for the Board members and all those associated with the programme)
3.15 p.m.	Meeting with module co-ordinators associated with the programme for detailed discussion of the academic content and other programme-related matters
4.45 p.m.	Private meeting of the Accreditation Board to review the outcome of discussions and formulate the recommendations
5.15 p.m.	Final meeting with the Dean, principal programme proposer and others closely associated with the proposal[13]
5.30 p.m.	Close of proceedings

2.5.3   During the first private meeting of the Accreditation Board (9.00 a.m. or 1.30 p.m.) the members agree on the issues to be raised with the principal programme proposer and others closely associated with the proposal.[14] These are normally generic issues relating to the programme rather than module-specific issues.

2.5.4   The coffee (10.30 a.m. or 3.00 p.m.) is available in the room in which the meeting is held and is for everyone, including the module co-ordinators.

2.5.5   The sessions at 10.45 a.m. or 3.15 p.m. are intended to allow detailed discussion of individual modules with the module co-ordinators. If possible, the Dean(s) and Head(s) should be present at this point. The principal programme proposer should in   all cases be present at this point.

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[11] This is, typically, the group of people outlined at 1.3.2.
[12] This is, typically, the group of people outlined at 1.3.2.
[13] This is, typically, the group of people outlined at 1.3.2.
[14] This is, typically, the group of people outlined at 1.3.2.

2.5.6　During the second private meeting of the Accreditation Board (12.15 p.m. or 4.45 p.m.) the members agree on the main recommendation to be made, i.e. that the programme either be launched, or not be launched, at the time and on the basis proposed. If the recommendation is that the programme be launched, there will normally also be sub-recommendations which are also formulated. If the recommendation is that the programme not be launched, the reasons are agreed.

2.5.7　During the final meeting with the Dean, principal programme proposer and others closely associated with the proposal[15] (12.45 p.m. or 5.15 p.m.) the Chair of the Accreditation Board summarises verbally the main recommendation to be made, as well as the main sub-recommendations (where relevant) or the reasons for a negative recommendation (where relevant).

2.5.8　In no instance should anyone due to join the meeting at the following times:

| 9.45 a.m. or 2.15 p.m. |
| 10.30 a.m. or 3.00 p.m. |
| 12.45 p.m. or 5.00 p.m. |

go to the room in which the meeting is taking place. They should instead assemble in the foyer of the Albert College[16] and wait there until the Rapporteur leaves the meeting to invite them in. The principal programme proposer is responsible for ensuring that all involved know this. It is very important that this arrangement is adhered to, as otherwise the management of the meeting becomes problematic. Occasionally, the Chair, in consultation with the other members of the Board, may decide to lengthen the session beginning at 9.45 a.m. or 2.15 p.m. and shorten the session beginning at 10.45 a.m. or 3.15 p.m. by a corresponding amount of time.[17] Those due to join the meeting at 10.30 a.m. (coffee) for 10.45 a.m. (discussion) or 3.00 p.m. (coffee) for 3.15 p.m. (discussion) should be aware of this and prepared to wait as necessary (it is not usually possible to give advance notice of whether or not this adjustment to the timetable will be made). In no instance will the overall Board meeting go beyond the scheduled finishing time of 1.00 p.m. or 5.30 p.m.

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[15] This is, typically, the group of people outlined at 1.3.2.

[16] Or elsewhere, as directed, if the meeting is not held in A204.

[17] This may happen when the number of modules to be considered is relatively small.

2.6   Following the meeting

2.6.1   After the meeting, each external expert may, as appropriate, submit a completed travel expenses claim form and bank transfer form to the Administrator. The bank transfer form is used to request details of the bank account into which the travel expenses, as well as the honorarium due to each external expert, are to be paid. The Administrator will submit the documentation to the Finance Office, which will arrange for the appropriate bank transfer to be made. The gross honorarium is €250 (or €125 in the case of an individual who submitted written comments but did not attend the meeting in person).[18]

2.6.2   In the event of a positive recommendation, the Rapporteur will draft an accreditation report to be approved by the Accreditation Board and then forwarded for approval to the next available meeting of Academic Council. This report will include a summary of the programme proposal approved together with a statement of the recommendation to approve and a list of the sub-recommendations. Once the members of the Board have approved the report, the Rapporteur forwards it to the principal programme proposer, the relevant Faculty Manager(s) (or nominee(s)) and the relevant Associate Dean(s) for Teaching and Learning. Depending on the circumstances, this may happen sometime before the meeting of Academic Council to which the report is submitted for approval.

2.6.3   In the event of a negative recommendation, the Rapporteur drafts a report to be approved by the members of the Accreditation Board. This report contains the reasons for the recommendation and any further recommendations that may be made. Once the members of the Board have approved the report, the Rapporteur forwards it to the principal programme proposer, the relevant Faculty Manager(s) (or nominee(s)) and the relevant Associate Dean(s) for Teaching and Learning/Education.

2.6.4   Board members are typically requested to approve, or propose amendments to, draft reports within two weeks of the date of the meeting of the Accreditation Board. If necessary and with the agreement of the Board, however, this time period can be shortened.

2.7   Academic Council approval

2.7.1   Accreditation reports are placed in Section C of the agenda for Academic Council, which means that they are normally for formal approval only and will be discussed only if a member of Council requests, by a specified deadline before the meeting, that this be done. If there is a request for a discussion, the Administrator will notify the principal programme proposer of this.

2.7.2   If there is to be a discussion about the proposal, it should be ensured that there is a person present at Academic Council who can address any issues raised. This may be the principal programme proposer, if he/she is a member of Council; if not, a colleague who is a member of Council may address the issues, or the principal programme proposer may submit a request to the President via the Administrator to attend the relevant part of the meeting.

2.7.3   If there is no discussion about the proposal, it will be formally approved by Academic Council. If there is a discussion, various outcomes are possible: Council may approve, reject or amend the accreditation recommendations. In all cases, the decision (and recommendations, if any) of Council will be communicated to stakeholders by the Secretary of Academic Council.

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[18] Deductions will be made as required by the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.

2.8   Finalisation of accreditation documentation

In the event of a positive recommendation, the Rapporteur requests the principal programme proposer to ensure that finalised documentation is lodged with the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) before the beginning of the next academic year. This finalised documentation consists of the following:

(a)   the accreditation proposal, now incorporating the accreditation recommendations, with all changes tracked[19]
(b)   the above document with all changes untracked
(c)   a copy of the accreditation report, with an indication under each recommendation of where and how it has been addressed in the revised accreditation proposal.

These documents are required in electronic copy, not hard copy. The document at (b) becomes the definitive accreditation document which describes the programme as it was accredited and should be used as the basis for any future revisions. The Administrator archives all such documents. A copy should also be held by the relevant Faculty/Faculties and School(s).

2.9   Advertising a programme

A programme should not be advertised before the EC has approved the validation proposal (see 1.4.4 above). After this, and before the meeting of the Accreditation Board, the programme may be advertised as 'subject to accreditation'. Between the meeting of the Accreditation Board and approval of its recommendations by Academic Council, and if the recommendation of the Board is positive, the programme may be advertised as 'subject to final approval'.

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[19] The module descriptors will have been submitted in PDF format, as noted at 2.4.1. Procedures for indicating changes to module descriptors should be discussed with Margaret Irwin-Bannon, as these may vary according to circumstances.

3. Remote accreditation: management

3.1 In certain exceptional circumstances, accreditation may be carried out remotely, i.e. by e-mail, without the necessity for the Board members to meet in person. These circumstances may include the re-accreditation of a programme, after it has been running for some years, where the changes are relatively straightforward.

3.2 Procedures for identifying the members of the Board are as at 2.2.1 above except that, normally, (re)validation will be deemed not to be necessary so there will be no validation document.

3.3 Procedures as at 2.2.2, 2.2.4 and 2.2.6 above should be followed. 2.2.5 is not relevant. With regard to 2.2.3, it is still desirable to identify and have approved a minimum of four people, though if only three are identified and approved this can be accommodated because the chances of an individual being unable to participate at the last minute are lower than in the case of an actual meeting. The Education Committee must approve the CVs of the nominated Board members; to facilitate this, the summary list of nominees and CV template should be copied and pasted from *Validation and Accreditation of Programmes: Regulations and Guidelines*, completed in respect of all nominees and sent to the Administrator, who will forward them to the EC for consideration.

3.4 The principal programme proposer should discuss with the Rapporteur an approximate time period during which the accreditation takes place. Normally, about three weeks are required from the point of view of the members of the Board, though this can be extended to four if necessary. The principal programme proposer should confirm the availability of the members to undertake the work within this time period.

3.5 The principal programme proposer, the Administrator and the Rapporteur then agree a number of key dates:

- the date on which the accreditation proposal is to be submitted to the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) (in electronic format only)[20]
- the date on which the proposal is to be e-mailed to the Board members (this is normally the same date)
- the date by which responses are to be requested from the Board members (normally – as noted at 3.4 above – about three weeks from the date on which they get the proposal, though this can be extended to four if required)[21]
- the date by which the Secretary of Education Committee completes the accreditation report and agrees it with the Board members (normally about one week from receipt of responses from the members of the Board).

3.6 As well as the accreditation proposal, the Administrator sends the Board members a copy of the University's regulations and guidelines on validation and accreditation.[22]

3.7 Once the accreditation report has been agreed by the members of the Board, the Rapporteur forwards it to the principal programme proposer, the relevant Faculty Manager(s) (or nominee(s)) and the relevant Associate Dean(s) for Teaching and Learning/Education.

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[20] As with Accreditation Board meetings, the principal programme proposer is welcome to submit a draft to Margaret Irwin-Bannon in advance to check for completeness.

[21] Board members are welcome to use the 'reply all' facility when commenting to facilitate the discussion.

[22] This *is Validation and Accreditation of Programmes: Regulations and Guidelines*, in an abbreviated and adapted version to meet the needs of external readers. Programme proposers will also be familiar with the full version.

3.8   The Administrator arranges for an honorarium of €125 (gross)[23] to be sent to each of the external experts.

3.9   Procedures as at 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9 apply.

Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar)
1 October 2016

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[23] Deductions will be made as required by the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.

Appendix: Flowchart outlining the validation and accreditation procedures

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┌──────────────────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Development of proposal by        │ ┄┄┄┄┄┄▶ │ • Due diligence, if needed       │
│ programme proposers               │          │ • CAO timescales                 │
└──────────────────────────────────┘          │ • Consultation with relevant     │
               │                                │   offices                        │
               ▼                                │ • MoU, if needed                 │
┌──────────────────────────────────┐          └─────────────────────────────────┘
│ Discussion by School(s)           │
└──────────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ Approval by Faculty/Faculties/    │
│ Open Education/                    │
│ any linked college                 │
└──────────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ Validation – Education Committee   │
│ (Education Committee Standing      │
│ Committee)                         │
└──────────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ Academic Council approval of       │
│ validation recommendations         │
└──────────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ Accreditation – Accreditation Board│
└──────────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ Academic Council approval of       │──────────┐
│ accreditation recommendations      │          │
└──────────────────────────────────┘          ▼
               │                     ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
               │                     │ Finalisation of accreditation    │
               │                     │ documentation in light of         │
               │                     │ Accreditation Board recommendations│
               │                     └─────────────────────────────────┘
               ▼                          │            │
┌──────────────────────────────────┐◀────┘            │
│ Preparations for launch            │                 │
└──────────────────────────────────┘                 ▼
               │                     ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
               ▼                     │ Submission of finalised           │
┌──────────────────────────────────┐│ documentation to OVPAA for        │
│ Launch                             ││ confirmation to Academic Council  │
└──────────────────────────────────┘│ that recommendations have been    │
                                      │ addressed (Oct meeting)           │
                                      └─────────────────────────────────┘
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