**Validation under delegated authority: Guidance notes for monitoring committees**

**Introduction and context**

1. SGUL’s validation procedure is set out in Section A of this Manual. Under this procedure, authority for approving some programme-level proposals is delegated to monitoring committees.
2. Delegation to monitoring committees assumes that some proposals can be considered efficiently and with appropriate external input other than through a full meeting of a validation panel. In these cases, existing committee structures and scheduled committee meetings can be used to consider proposals simply and expeditiously and without undue bureaucracy. These notes have been developed to support monitoring committees in the organisation and conduct of approval events conducted under delegated authority.

**Criteria for validation by monitoring committees**

1. Authority to consider for approval the following types of proposal will usually be delegated to monitoring committees:
   1. New modes of study based on existing modules;
   2. New awards and award titles to be added to validated programmes;
   3. New pathways and new modules
   4. Substantive modifications to existing programmes (see section D of this Manual).
2. In the event of doubt about whether a proposal is appropriate for consideration under delegated authority, the matter will be referred to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee or its chair. For the most part, proposals to initiate or extend collaborative arrangements will not be considered under delegated authority without the prior agreement of QAEC or its chair.

**Timescales**

1. Monitoring committees will publish a schedule of meetings at the start of each academic year. Proposals will usually be considered at a scheduled meeting. However, at the discretion of the chair, an extraordinary meeting may be scheduled for this purpose.

**Documents**

1. Approval documents will vary in accordance with the type and scale of the proposal. These might include:
   1. The rationale for the proposal
   2. An evaluation of the resource needs and/or implications of the proposal
   3. Programme Specification (amended, if appropriate)
   4. Programme regulations and Scheme of Assessment (amended, if required)
   5. Module templates for any new modules
2. For approved programmes, the Course Document may be provided as a contextual document. However, it is expected the documentary requirements will be kept to a minimum and the production of these documents will not be burdensome.

**External advice**

1. Monitoring committees will determine on a case-by-case basis whether proposals shall be considered by an academic authority external to SGUL. In some instances, the internal membership of the monitoring committee may have sufficient subject expertise to consider a proposal. Alternatively, it may be appropriate to ask existing external examiners to comment on proposals prior to their consideration at the monitoring committee.
2. In some instances (for example the approval of a highly specialised module) it may be appropriate to seek external advice prior to consideration at the monitoring committee level. If this is the case, the external shall be nominated by the course leader using the approval criteria set out in paragraph 65 of the validation procedure (section A of the Manual). The monitoring committee chair will confirm the suitability of the external prior to his/her involvement in the approval process.
3. The secretary to the monitoring committee will despatch the validation documents to the external with a request to respond in advance of the committee meeting at which the proposal will be considered.
4. The external will not usually be required to attend the monitoring committee.
5. In the event of doubt about whether external advice should be sought the matter will be referred to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee or its chair or secretary. For the most part, it is expected that proposals will be considered through the committee’s internal membership (with advice from external examiners).
6. SGUL will pay a fee to external panel members involved in approval processes. If an external examiner is asked to comment on a proposal, the external will not usually receive an additional fee.

**Meeting of the monitoring committee**

1. The meeting of the monitoring committee will be conducted in accordance with the usual arrangements for the committee. The course leader and other relevant personnel will be in attendance to answer queries from members of the monitoring committee and to respond to queries that have arisen as a result of the scrutiny of the documents by the external.
2. It is expected that the standing membership of the monitoring committee will be sufficient to consider proposals. However internal experts may be invited to attend the monitoring committee and take part in discussions to aid the process.
3. It is expected that the monitoring committee will be able to reach a decision without a requirement for a private meeting (i.e. a meeting from which the course leader is absent). However, a private meeting may take place if, in the view of the monitoring committee, this will aid the decision-making process.

**Approval criteria**

1. In reaching its decision, the monitoring committee will be mindful of the approval criteria set out in the Validation Procedure (Quality Manual Section A, paragraph 79).

**Outcomes of validation**

1. The monitoring committee is empowered to make the judgments set out in the Validation Procedure (Quality Manual Section A, paragraph 81).
2. The outcome of the validation is usually communicated orally to the course leader at the conclusion of the meeting by the chair together with any deadlines for the fulfilment of conditions.
3. The chair will usually consider the response to conditions on behalf on the committee. In some circumstances, this may involve further communication with the external.

**Periods of approval**

1. Approval will normally be co-terminous with the substantive programme.

**Appeals against recommendations of monitoring committees**

1. The Course Leader may appeal against the recommendation of the monitoring committee. Appeals may be made against the summative decision or against specific conditions.
2. The appeal, which must be submitted with one week of the publication of the monitoring committee minutes, may be made on one or more of the grounds cited in the Validation Procedure (Quality Manual Section A, paragraph 94).
3. The chair of the committee will consider the appeal in the first instance to determine whether the matter can be resolved informally. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the matter will be referred to QAEC for resolution. No appeal against the decision of QAEC will be allowed.

**Monitoring Committee minutes**

1. The minutes should record:
   1. The decision of the committee on whether approval is recommended
   2. The conditions of approval and any recommendations
   3. The deadline for responding to the conditions and recommendations
2. The extract from the minutes pertaining to the validation will normally be produced within ten working days of the event.
3. Minutes will be submitted to the secretary of QAEC. The secretary will report the monitoring committee recommendations to QAEC and to Senate if appropriate.