

Procedures for Course Creation, Changes, Cancellation or Closure

STU 19

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This document can also be produced in alternative formats upon request.

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Procedures for Course Creation, Changes, Cancellation or Closure

1. Introduction

These procedures are an opportunity for all curriculum staff to be involved in developing an innovative curriculum provision.

Procedure 1 describes the process that all staff must follow when developing a new course (including additionality, cost recovery and leisure courses). Procedure 2 must be adhered to when it is necessary to change a course (including cancelling or removing a course at risk).

All requests to approve a new course or changes to an 'at risk' course must receive final approval from the core College Planning Team.

2. Procedure 1 - Course Creation

All new courses must be fully researched, align to the College's strategic priorities, Curriculum objectives and reflect the direction of both FE Means Success and the NI Skills Barometer.

Course creation proposals must include the following information and be submitted via the [Curriculum Development and Approval Form \(2020-21\)](#) online via Canvas or the Staff Intranet:

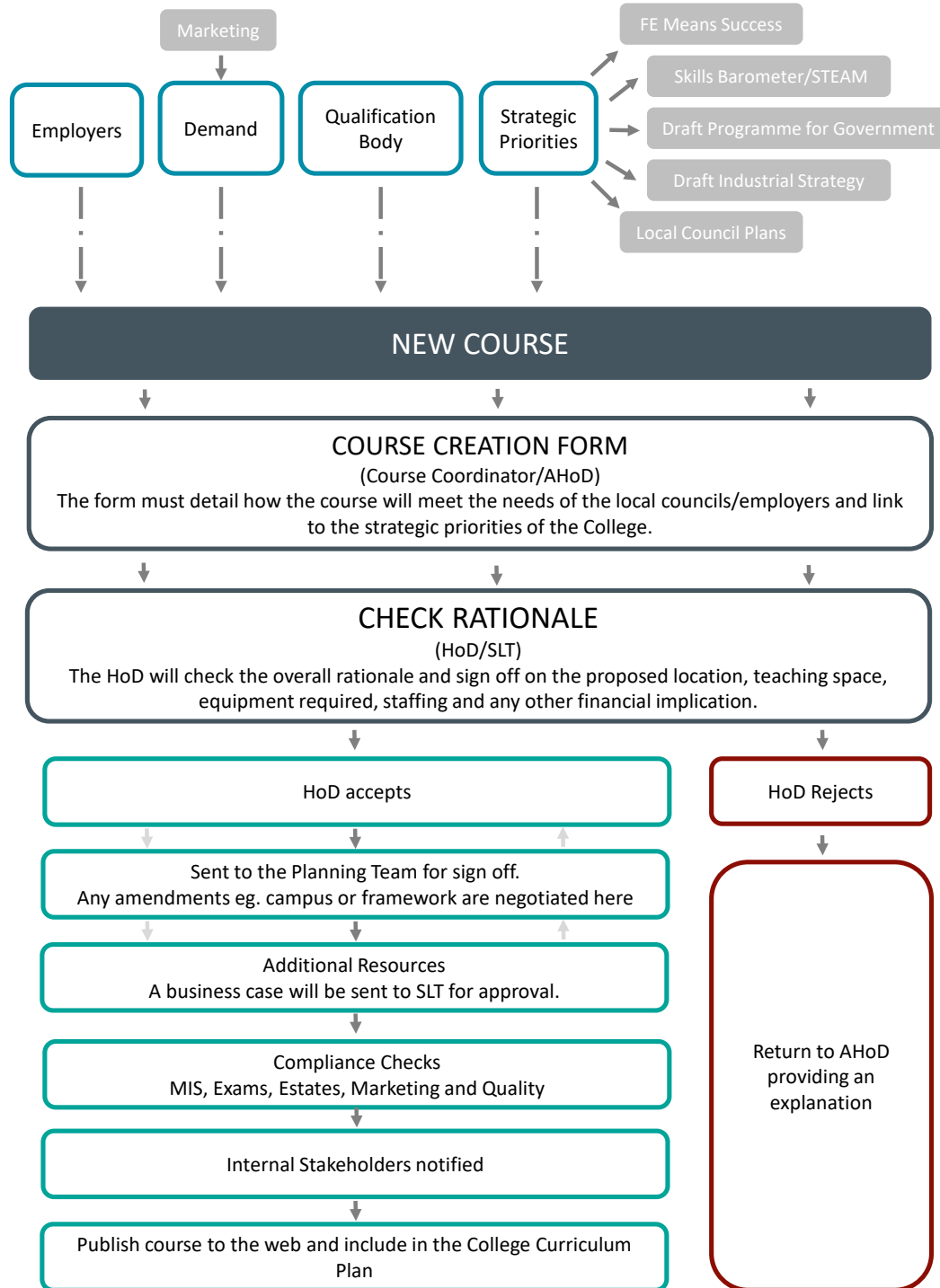
- Alignment to strategic priorities
- Alignment to Curriculum objectives
- Upskilling of staff to deliver
- Cost to deliver
- Resources required
- Awarding body
- Impact on internal stakeholders
- Minimum class size
- Mode of delivery

When a proposal has been developed by an academic staff member the following steps must be followed:

- I. Discussed with relevant AHOD
- II. Supported by AHOD or additional work required to develop proposal
- III. Initial approval granted by HOD
- IV. Proposal submitted to planning team
- V. Discussion at planning team meeting
- VI. Approved/ rejected/ returned for further development
- VII. Project implementation plan developed by course coordinator
- VIII. Key stakeholders informed

For a new course to be included in the prospectus for the next academic year +1, the request for approval must be submitted to the planning team no later than May of the current academic year.

Course Creation Flow Diagram



3. Procedure 2 - Change Management (Changes, cancellation or closure of a course)

The College may decide to change, cancel or close a course for a number of reasons including insufficient demand, limited resources to support delivery or strategic developments in the Colleges academic planning. All proposed changes must be submitted via the [Course Management Form](#) for approval, the form is also available via the Staff Intranet and Canvas.

3.1. Changes to a course

Course changes are most likely to be required in year following a decrease in student numbers or staffing issues. Changes to a course include, but are not limited to:

- change in venue
- change in class times
- change in unit/module content
- change in awarding body
- change in lecturer

All changes must be agreed with the relevant Assistant Head of Department and there must be written evidence to illustrate that this has happened. Formal communication with students should not happen until changes have been agreed with Assistant Head of Department. Changes in campus must be submitted to the planning team for consideration of impact within the catchment area. The changes form on canvas should be used. If changes are made due to low retention then this course should be placed on the departmental risk register.

The College policy when such changes occur is that all currently enrolled students must be contacted by the Course Coordinator to:

- explain the changes **before** the changes happen; and
- offer the opportunity for discussion about the changes.

Written evidence must be kept to illustrate that these activities have been completed.

In communicating with students regarding changes, the following methods of communication must be used:

- e-mail
- letter

Minutes from meetings between staff and students should also record that the changes have been discussed with students and that their feedback has been recorded. It is also advisable that changes are alerted to students via the DLE and/or other discussion forums.

The Course Coordinator must also inform the College's Marketing team to allow publicity material to be updated.

3.2. Cancellation or merger of a Course

The College procedure when a course is cancelled is that:

- a. The Course Coordinator and Assistant Head of Department agree that the course has low applicants and recommend that the course should be cancelled. This recommendation must be recorded in the cancellation form available on Canvas.
- b. The Assistant Head of Department alerts the Head of Department to the cancellation recommendation providing details as to why the recommendation is being made. These recommendations should be included in the form and submitted to the planning team and the course placed on the departmental risk register.
- c. Courses recommended for cancellation must be discussed at the planning team and a decision made that is approved by the VP for T&L.
- d. If in agreement that the course should be cancelled, the HOD will advise all those involved with the enrolment process i.e. AHoD, Departmental PA, and Campus Administrators.
- e. If in agreement that the course should be cancelled, the HOD will advise the Marketing team that publicity material must be updated.
- f. The Departmental PA must contact potential applicants immediately to inform them of the cancellation. Students must be provided with information about the College's Careers Advisors who will be available to discuss alternative options.

3.3. Closure of a Course

If there is a proposal to close a course, this must only be considered after changes have been implemented to improve the course or the course has been cancelled in the previous academic year. It must be discussed and the outcome documented at the Curriculum Planning team meeting with the decision ratified by all core members and approved by the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning. When any closure proposals are being discussed at the planning team meeting the relevant Assistant Head of Department, the Head of Marketing and the College's Equality Officer must also be in attendance.

Closure of a course is where the College agrees that the course will be removed from the College portfolio. This decision may affect, but is not limited to:

- 1st year students on a 2-year programme
- Students who have withdrawn, but who may still have a live registration with the awarding body
- Students who completed the course in previous years, but who may still have a live registration with the awarding body
- Prospective students currently enrolled in lower level College courses who had the potential to progress to the course
- Employers or schools who engage with the College and who may advise prospective students about the course

The College procedure regarding course closure is that:

- all currently enrolled students and all students with a live registration must be contacted by e-mail or letter to advise them of the closure **before** the closure happens with an opportunity offered to discuss the closure
- all prospective students are identified as far as possible and are contacted by e-mail or letter to advise them of the closure
- the awarding body is notified and that their process for course closure is followed.

Formal communication with students should not happen until the course closure has formally been agreed by the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning. In contacting enrolled students and prospective students the following advice must be provided:

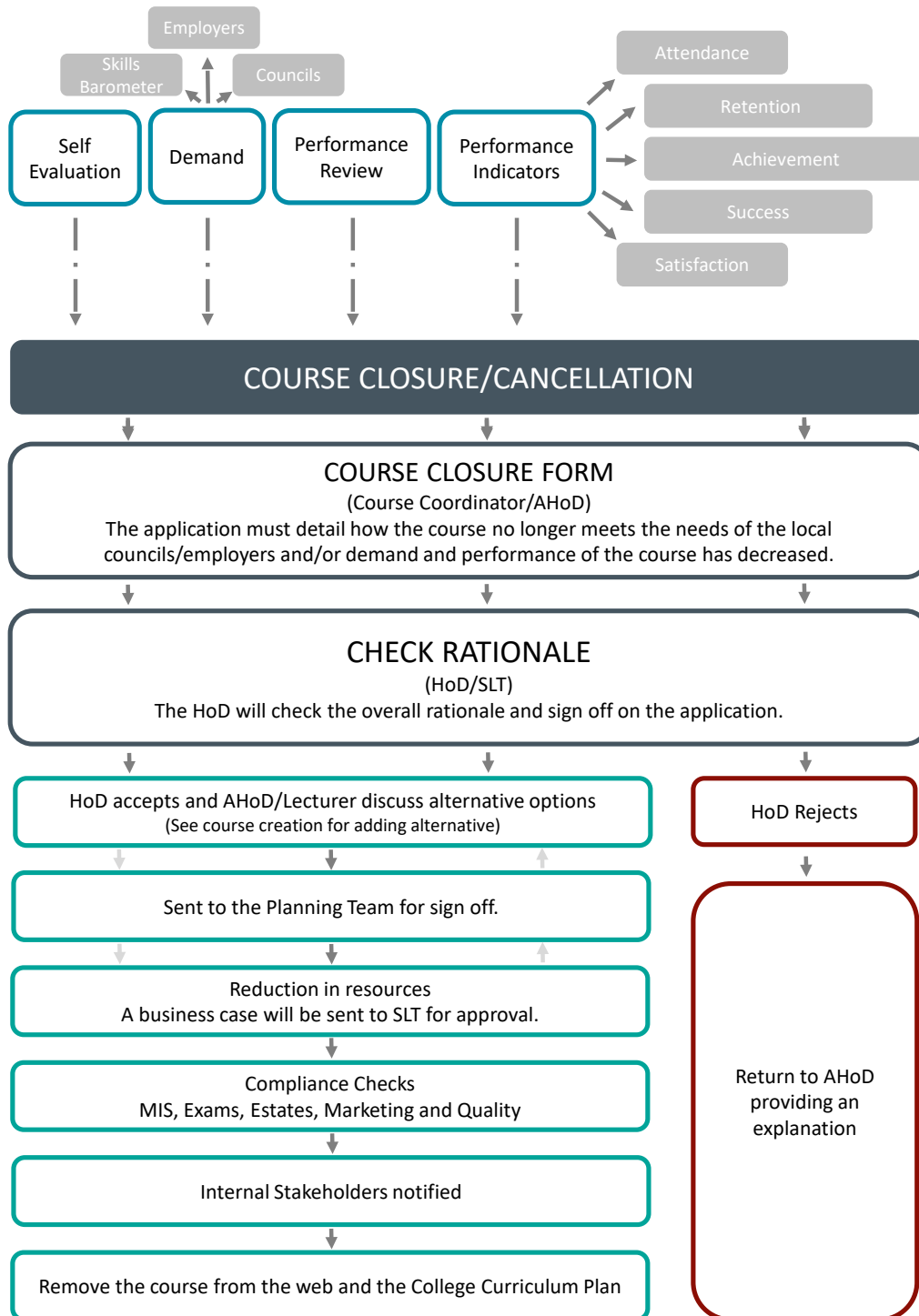
- availability of the College's Careers Advisors who will be

available to discuss alternative College options

- information about other educational establishments that offer the course

Evidence of communication and discussion must be recorded and retained.

Course Closure/Cancellation Flow Diagram



4. Quality Assurance

- 4.1. Comments and complaints regarding this document will be handled through the College's comments and complaints mechanisms. If you have a comment or complaint, or require further information regarding the process, please e-mail quality.improvement@nrc.ac.uk.
- 4.2. The following processes must be followed to monitor and review this document:
 - a. It will be monitored on an ongoing basis and subject to a full review at least every two years.
 - b. It may also be updated if changes or improvements in processes or procedures are identified.
 - c. In monitoring and reviewing the document, the following will be taken into consideration:
 - feedback regarding the content and format of the document;
 - uptake and usage;
 - comments or complaints regarding the document;
 - Equality information and monitoring data.

5. Links to other Documents

- 5.1. Internal Documents:
 - Curriculum Plan
 - Admissions Policy
- 5.2. External Documents
 - CMA Guidance for HE
 - QAA Quality Code B2