

# PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 44<sup>th</sup> edition of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the President's News Digest. In this issue, I will be covering the topic of "Course Portfolios". A course portfolio presents the planning, design, execution, results, updating and future directions of a particular course.



Course portfolios can be seen as a repository of good knowledge about the courses that you are teaching. They can also be considered as a source of information to improve these courses and to provide evidence during program reviews and accreditation visits. The reflective part of a course portfolio can help in improving the content and delivery of future courses.

The QAAC center at the University provides a template for what needs to be included in the Course Portfolio. The preparation of a good course portfolio should start at the beginning of the Semester by including information about the course specifications and syllabus. As the semester progresses you can include any additional information and by the end of the semester the course portfolio should be completed with the inclusion of the reflective part.

The Course component of the course portfolio should include the syllabus, teaching materials, support materials, sample assignments, and reading materials.

In the template provided by the QAAC center, the following needs to be filled in: course specification, teaching materials (samples), assessment criteria and rubrics, assessment setting report (internal examiner report and external examiner report), students' assessed work (samples) - including feedback sheets, where applicable (home work, individual or group tasks/ projects, quizzes, midterm exam papers, final exam papers), internal moderation report, course evaluation (student survey with analysis & feedback, course evaluation report with learning outcome assessment) and additional course materials

Producing good course portfolios should be embedded in our culture, values and daily practices, as this will help our students and future developments of the University. Quality is a key word in producing course portfolios of the highest standards. There is a strong commitment from the senior

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leadership of the University to scrutinize course portfolios, as any failures in this area could be disastrous from reputational and directional points of view. Course portfolios are the starting points for program reviews and accreditation activities. They usually give a first impression of the University and its academic staff. It is therefore of crucial importance to produce these portfolios to the highest standards.

I would like to conclude this message by wishing you and your families Eid Adha Mubarak. May this Eid bring you and your families health, success and happiness.



## SAD LOSS



It is with great sadness that our popular colleague, Mutaleb, passed away on Tuesday during his sleep. Mutaleb was a true asset to ASU and he will be missed badly by everybody around the University. The Chairman of the BOT and the President and on your behalf express their sincere condolences for this loss.

## POLICY OF THE WEEK

### MONITORING AND REVIEW OF PROGRAMMES – PART 1

#### 1. Introduction

Having carefully engaged in the development of programmes of study it is important that any changes to programmes are monitored closely by the University. Changes to the programme are normally proposed and made as part of the annual or periodic review of programmes. The purpose of this policy is to clearly outline the procedures for making changes to courses and also to describe the procedures for annual review and for periodic review of the programmes.

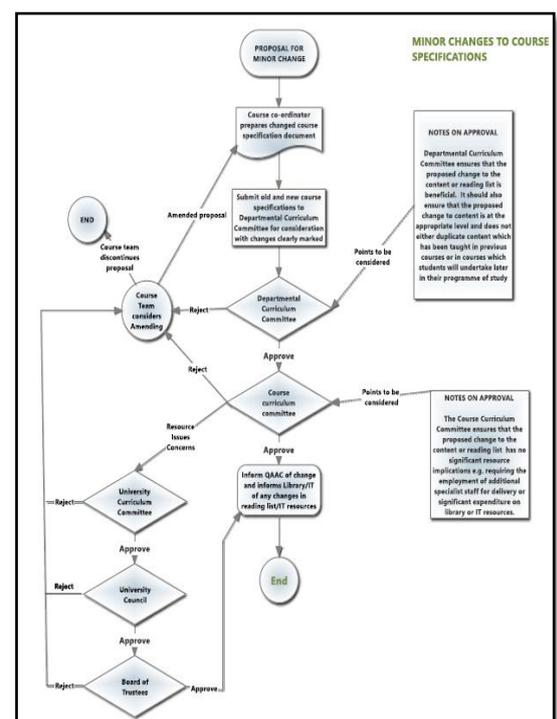
#### 2. Course Changes

The purpose of clearly defining the procedures for course changes is to ensure that:

1. Changes are clearly documented.
2. The authority for making changes is clearly defined.
3. The consequence of making changes which potentially have an impact on the coherence of the programme as a whole are clearly understood as these may require the University to seek re-validation of the programme.
4. The resources which are required to deliver the course change are identified and taken into account by senior managers when reviewing the change .

Course changes are classified as either minor or major. The classification is directly linked to the data which is required in a course specification which indicate:

1. The title of the course.
2. The course code.
3. The status of the course (e.g. as an elective course or as a compulsory course).
4. The NQF level assigned to credits.



5. The number of credits which are assigned to the course (which are an indication of notional study hours to successfully achieve the learning outcomes for the course).
6. The description of the content which is covered in the course.
7. The learning outcomes of the course.
8. The balance of assessment methods (coursework or examination) which are used.
9. The reading material (indicative bibliography) to which students are directed to support their independent learning.

## 2.1 Minor changes

These are changes which should be implemented in order to ensure that course descriptors are updated to take into account recent developments in the subject or, to update reading lists which students are required to make reference to in order to support independent study of the subject. Therefore minor changes include:

1. Description of the content (unless this is so extensive that it would require a change in the title of the course).
2. The suggested reading material

Minor changes require approval by the Department Curriculum Committee which considers whether the revised content is appropriate and consistent with the student learning path through the programme. If approval is given the College Curriculum Committee must confirm there are no resource implications. If approved a copy of the course specification must be provided to QAAC.

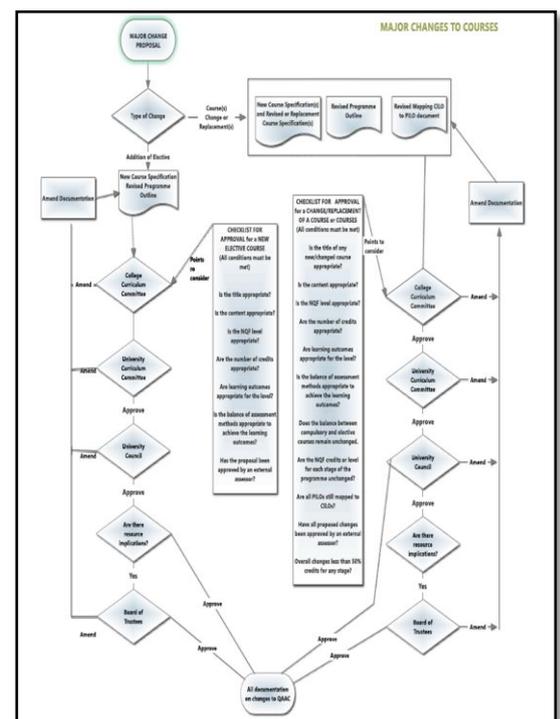
## 2.2 Major changes

These are changes which have more far reaching impact. Therefore, major changes include:

1. The title of the course or its course code
2. The status of the course
3. The credits which are assigned to the course
4. The learning outcomes of the course
5. The balance of assessment methods
6. introduction of a new course or removal of an existing course from the programme

This can significantly affect the learning pathway through the programme. Any new course must be carefully checked to ensure that its design is appropriate and meets NQF requirements.

Major changes require the approval of the College Curriculum Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, and University Council and, where there are resource implications, the Board of Trustees.



QAAC must be provided with details of any approved major changes and, where appropriate, QAAC will communicate any changes made to courses and programmes to the General Directorate Qualification (GDQ) for approval in line with the requirements of the NQF. QAAC will maintain a definitive set of all versions of course specifications.

## 2.3 Aspects of the process

The key aspects of this process include:

1. The clear presentation of proposed changes by the Programme Coordinator.

The Programme Coordinator should provide a copy of the appropriate Course Change Proforma (Appendix 1) and the existing course specification and a copy of the new course specification with changes clearly indicated.

2. for major changes only - consultation with an external assessor (normally the external examiner associated with the programme).

The external assessor should be a subject expert who is able to comment critically on the change to assure the University that the content of the course is relevant and up to date and that the change course is at the appropriate credit level number of credits awarded for the course.

3. Checking to ensure that the effect of changes do not have an impact on enabling the programme to demonstrate that students meet all the required programme learning outcomes.

If a course change affects the learning outcomes for the course a revised mapping of the PILOs and CILOs should be provided to demonstrate this.

4. Checking to ensure that other programmes are not affected by the change.

As it is often the case that courses may be delivered over a number of programmes. It is important that if the course is also part of another programme that the relevant College has been consulted and approved the change.

5. Checking to ensure that the cumulative effect of changes introduced in one academic year do not affect more than 50% of the credits awarded within any stage of the programme.

If the changes affect more than 50% of the credits at any level the learning pathway has been significantly changed and the programme should be re-validated. The process is exactly the same as for New Programme Validation with the exception that HEC approval is not required but the qualification may have to be re-submitted for placement on the NQF. This should only be the case when the programme is being subject to periodic review.

6. Approval by relevant University Committees.

Major changes must be approved by the College Curriculum Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, University Council and, where there are resource implications, by the Board of Trustees.

The procedures for making changes to programmes are complex but it is extremely important that in terms of quality assurance and monitoring of resources for programmes that these are followed rigorously. They are intended to allow Departments to make necessary changes for updating the curriculum of their programmes but the University must be assured that the overall aims of the programme and the learning path for students are not fundamentally compromised

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*When a team outgrows individual performance and learns team confidence, excellence becomes a reality.*

*Joe Paterno*

Happy Reading

