

A. VALIDATION PROCESS FOR NEW XJTLU PROGRAMMES

Background

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) is an independent Chinese University accredited by the University of Liverpool (UoL) for the delivery of Liverpool awards at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Undergraduate students may have options to study for two years within XJTLU and articulate to UoL to complete the final two years of their degree programme. Alternatively, students may study all four years of their undergraduate programme within XJTLU. In both cases, students will be eligible for a dual award from UoL and XJTLU.

New programmes and programmes requiring revalidation are scrutinised internally at XJTLU in accordance with the principles and regulations of the University, including alignment with internal modular frameworks for taught provision. The validation process within UoL operates in tangent with programme approval processes within XJTLU with consideration to appropriate subject benchmarks and the UK qualifications framework.

Process

The UoL validation process for new XJTLU programmes is:

1. **Outline Approval** – granted by the University Collaborative Provision Committee (CPC);
2. **Subject scrutiny** – UoL subject reviewer scrutiny by representatives of the Curriculum Board and the School Scrutiny Panel;
3. **University Approval Panel** –; review of programme documentation with input from subject reviewers and/or CB/SSP representative.

Evidence of internal programme scrutiny and approval processes within XJTLU, and reports from external advisors with responses from the XJTLU programme team to queries or issues, will be submitted with programme documentation.

Validation of XJTLU programmes by UoL requires the documentation to be scrutinised by external advisors and staff from relevant academic departments within UoL. The University Approval Panel (UAP) will consider and approve programmes from XJTLU on behalf of UoL. UoL reserves the right to request additional external and/or internal scrutiny of programmes should the evidence presented not meet UoL validation requirements.

An overview of the validation process for XJTLU programmes can be found within **Appendix A**. More detailed guidance on each stage of the process is provided below.

The process has been developed with a view to complementing internal programme approval processes within XJTLU.

Outline Approval

XJTLU will provide an outline proposal for each programme they are submitting for approval. The outline proposal will advise of any additional staffing or physical resources required to deliver the programme and identify the market research undertaken for the new programme. The proposal will be endorsed by the appropriate Level 1 Head of Department/School and reviewed and approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) on behalf of the Collaborative Provision Committee in order to progress to the next stage of the approval process. All outline approvals are noted at the Collaborative Provision Committee.

External Advisors

Following approval of the outline proposal, programmes will be subject to scrutiny by external advisors. The scrutiny process will normally be coordinated by XJTLU. XJTLU will be responsible for identifying and appointing two suitable external advisors and ensuring they are provided with all necessary documents and information.

The following criteria applies to the appointment of external advisors for the scrutiny of XJTLU provision:

- At least one of the two external advisors should be a senior academic from a higher education institution within the UK. The second external advisor may be from a University within China or other higher education system, as considered appropriate;
- Both external advisors should have suitable qualifications and experience within the relevant subject area;
- External advisors will not normally be approved if they are from the same institution as the current External Examiner for the programme or subject area.

Appointments of UK-based external advisors will be subject to approval by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) at UoL and noted at CPC. XJTLU should provide to UoL information on the qualifications and experience of proposed external advisors, alongside details of any previous associations with the department within XJTLU, sufficient for UoL to make a judgment on their suitability. XJTLU should also provide details of external advisors based outside the UK for note by CPC.

Documentation

XJTLU will submit documentation to UoL as follows:

- A programme specification;
- Module specifications as appropriate (relevant module specifications are for new modules and modules undergoing modification, shown as tracked changes within the specifications);
- Module overview and programme assessment matrix
- A commentary on the provision including any key differences between the XJTLU programme and its equivalent within UoL, as appropriate;
- External Advisor reports;
- Programme team responses to comments from Advisors;
- XJTLU internal reviewer comments and responses from the programme team;
- An extract from the minutes of the XJTLU Learning and Teaching Committee providing details of the outcomes of the approval process and any additional recommendations.

For postgraduate taught provision, additional evidence to demonstrate capacity for delivery will be required and should be provided to UoL as listed below:

- An overview of the overall staffing of the department and details of any additional appointments required to back-fill for undergraduate delivery;
- Research plans/strategy for the department, and details of research income and outputs;
- A statement of endorsement from the Associate Vice-President of Education confirming confidence in the ability of the school/academy to manage additional demands of the PGT provision.

Documentation above should be submitted to the Academic Quality and Standards Division (AQSD) by the deadline agreed for that academic year.

UoL Curriculum Boards and School Scrutiny Panels

Representatives of the relevant academic subject area within UoL will be involved in subject discussions with the equivalent department within XJTLU from the early stages of new programme developments. At least one representative should also be a member of the relevant Curriculum Board (CB) for the subject. The subject reviewer(s) from the Curriculum Board and at least one representative of the relevant School Scrutiny Panel (SSP) should scrutinise and review the documentation and report on the outcomes to the University Approval Panel. Subject reviewers may or may not be **Link Tutors**, depending on the expertise required for scrutiny of programmes. The CB and SSP will have a particular focus on the module specifications and will have authority to approve modules or to determine the conditions required for approval.

XJTLU programmes will not be expected to be the same as internal provision within UoL. However, Key areas for consideration are:

- Appropriateness of programme aims, outcomes and curricula in relation to the award title;
- Identification of formal articulation routes to undergraduate provision within UoL and any issues with regard to Years 1 and 2 of the curriculum within XJTLU;
- Implications for accreditations within UoL.

University Approval Panel (UAP)

Documents to be submitted to the University Approval panel are:

- The approved Application in Principle for a New Validated Programme at XJTLU (outline approval)
- The programme specification
- The module overview and programme assessment matrix
- Reports from external advisors and responses from the XJTLU programme team
- Reports from XJTLU internal reviewers and responses from the XJTLU programme team
- Reports from the Curriculum Board and SSP, including decisions on modules in the programme.

Proposals will not be accepted by UAP for consideration if the proposal documentation is incomplete.

UAP will decide whether the programme should be approved, and whether any conditions should be attached.

The UAP Secretary will notify XJTLU of the decision, and the decisions of the CB and SSP on the modules, and ensure that any conditions of approval are recorded within the minutes and clearly articulated to XJTLU with a deadline by which revised documentation should be submitted to the UAP Secretary for approval by the Chair.

Academic Quality and Standards Division (AQSD)

AQSD will be responsible for liaison with XJTLU to facilitate the validation process. This will include receiving and collating information from XJTLU with regards to the appointment of external advisors, and all programme and supporting documentation to be provided to Curriculum Boards and School Scrutiny Panels. AQSD will ensure that both XJTLU and internal stakeholders are informed of the decisions of the UAP in relation to the validation of provision, and any required actions. AQSD will also coordinate arrangements for further external scrutiny should documents presented by XJTLU not be approved.

Timescale

An indicative timescale for completion of the validation process is provided within **Appendix A**.

B. APPROVAL PROCESS FOR MODIFICATIONS TO XJTLU PROGRAMMES

Modifications to validated programmes delivered by XJTLU are categorised as:

- 1) Major modifications, as defined in accordance with XJTLU approval processes; and
- 2) Minor modifications, as defined in accordance with XJTLU approval processes.

XJTLU will be expected to consult with the equivalent subject area within UoL regarding any proposed modifications to a programme validated by UoL, particularly major modifications.

Major modifications to XJTLU programmes

Major modifications do not require Outline Approval, but require revalidation by UoL, following the same approval processes for new XJTLU programmes as outlined below:

- Requirements for external advisors
- Approval of programme proposals by the University Approval Panel via the relevant Curriculum Board and School Scrutiny Panel.

XJTLU will submit documentation to UoL via AQSD who will manage the circulation of documents to appropriate boards and panels. Required documents are as follows:

- Major Programmes Modification Approval Form;
- A programme specification, with tracked changes;
- Module specifications as appropriate (relevant module specifications are for new modules and modules undergoing modifications, shown as tracked changes within the specifications);
- The module overview and programme assessment matrix;
- A commentary on the provision including key differences between the XJTLU programme and its equivalent within UoL, if relevant;
- Reports from the external advisors and responses from the XJTLU programme team;
- XJTLU internal reviewers' comments and responses from the XJTLU programme team;
- An extract from the minutes of the XJTLU Learning and Teaching Committee with details of the outcomes of the approval process and any additional recommendations.

Minor modifications to XJTLU programmes

Minor modifications do not require approval from UoL, although identification of any minor programme modifications to XJTLU programmes in Year 2 (level 4) with potential implications for articulation routes is required. At XJTLU, this forms part of the submission of the outline summary for proposed programme modifications. Where such potential impact has been identified, the relevant UoL department should be consulted to determine whether the proposals could be supported by UoL as well as any action that is necessary in order to mitigate any impact on one or more articulation routes. The evidence of consultation with UoL regarding potential impacts on articulation routes is required for consideration for approval by XJTLU University Learning and Teaching Committee via Academic Quality Sub-Committee (AQSC).

Minor modifications to Years 3 and 4 or to postgraduate taught provision at XJTLU do not require UoL review as they do not impact on articulation routes.

Where UoL consultation is required, the relevant XJTLU schools will provide documents to AQSD as follows:

- An overview of and rationale for the modifications;
- A programme specification with tracked changes;
- Module specifications as appropriate (relevant module specifications are for new modules and modules undergoing modifications, shown as tracked changes within the specifications);
- An extract from the minutes of the XJTLU School Learning and Teaching Committee at which the modifications were approved.

AQSD will facilitate consultation with the relevant UoL department. Following the review of a minor programme modification proposal, the UoL department should confirm one of two outcomes as below:

- 1) The proposal does not impact on any articulation routes and the modifications should be applied to the programme as proposed;
- 2) The modifications will impact on one or more articulation routes and the UoL department should establish and confirm with XJTLU the next steps to progress and implement the proposed changes.

Modifications to existing modules

Many proposals for major modifications to XJTLU modules will be part of a programme proposal and, therefore, the module specifications will be approved by the relevant UoL School Scrutiny Panel. Where a module modification (in Year 2, level 4) does not require a programme modification, identification of potential implications to articulation routes is required in the XJTLU modification application and evidence of consultation with corresponding UoL departments must be presented in order for the consideration of approval by XJTLU AQSC. A record of all online module modifications will be transmitted to AQSD by the end of July for noting and monitoring purposes.

APPENDIX A

PROCESS FLOWCHART FOR NEW XJTLU PROGRAMMES OR MAJOR PROGRAMME MODIFICATIONS

