T2.6 Submission document – guidelines and format

*(see also guidance note G7.2 on additional information requirements for Apprenticeships)*

Purpose of submission document

The submission document, together with the programme specification, module descriptors and student handbook (see other APQO guidance on the production of these documents), forms the information a programme approval panel requires to give proper consideration to a programme proposal (either a new programme, or one being presented for re-validation). It should not duplicate the information presented in the programme specification or handbook, but should provide an overview of the programme, highlighting the rationale behind the design of the curriculum and any distinctive approaches to delivery and assessment, to inform discussions with the panel.

The submission document provides an *evaluative* summary of the programme development process - showing how the proposal meets the criteria for programme approval - with particular reference to how academic standards have been defined, how professional and/or apprenticeship standards have been addressed, and how an inclusive student learning experience (and consideration of graduate outcomes) has been placed at the centre of the programme design.

A well-written submission document should inspire confidence in the programme development team, promote engagement in discussions with the panel, and reduce the necessity for the panel to explore in depth every aspect of the programme approval criteria during the event. Many panels have found good submission documents to be of great value in helping them to understand proposals and in enabling them to have productive and focused discussions with programme teams. It is produced for the purposes of explaining the proposal being considered *at the time of the approval event* - it is not a public document and does not need to be kept up to date following that event.

Approval panels should not require the submission document to be revised or amended – any conditions or recommendations requiring changes to documentation should be confined to the programme specification, module descriptors, student handbook, and, in the case of collaborative arrangements, the operations manual.

Format of submission document

The submission document should be a *concise document* written in order to give the programme approval panel a good understanding of how and why the proposed programme has been designed as presented.

The **title page** should show all named awards to which the proposed programme leads, and also have a section for sign-off by the Head of Department and the Faculty ADESE or Head of QA and Validations. There is no template, but the rest of the document should be structured under the headings set out in the following pages.

A number of prompt questions, to assist teams in reflecting on the design and impact of the learning experience (which may be included in programme documentation as well as informing the evaluative account in the submission document) are included on pages 7-9 of this document.

1. Introductions

**1a. Introduction** (for collaborative arrangements)

Provide an introduction to the partner, to give a *brief* account of the type of organisation, experience of delivering higher education, and the frameworks in place at the partner organisation for managing the quality of the proposed provision. Give the date of the LPAG meeting at which the partnership was approved (you may wish to summarise some of information provided to LPAG in the CPPF to produce this section).

**1b. Programme rationale OR Context for re-validation**

Provide a statement that articulates the reason/context for the programme’s development with reference to internal and external stakeholder requirements and demands (e.g. professional body requirements, employer needs, student needs, discipline expectations). This section should also explain any distinctive features such as online learning, work-based learning, professional practice, or where students have been involved in the development of the curriculum. For Degree/Higher Apprenticeships, including those where an ACP college is the main provider, please give the date of the LPAG meeting at which the proposal was approved.

It would be helpful for the statement to include:

* reasons why the programme is proposed, and its fit with University and Faculty strategy;
* evidence of the regional and national demand for the proposal;
* relationship of the proposal to similar provision offered elsewhere;
* target student group, expected student profile and projected student intake;
* expected career destinations for graduates;
* if the programme replaces one currently offered by the Faculty, an explanation of why this is;
* for revalidations, you may wish to highlight key internal and external drivers for changes in the portfolio, and provide headline statistical data which you feel will assist the panel in understanding the nature of the programme and it’s performance with respect to key measures of quality;
* a brief rationale for the choice of JACS/HECoS codes given in section 1 of the Programme Specification;
* for Apprenticeship provision, please give details of the apprenticeship standard selected and any distinct or unusual features. Please give brief details of how compliance with the standard and apprenticeship funding rules influenced the development of the curriculum (not necessary for apprenticeship provision where an ACP partner is the main provider).
* for proposed collaborative arrangements: if there are any particular national regulations that have informed the proposed programmes, please give brief details of how this has influenced the development of the curriculum.

2. Internal and External Consultation

State the names of people and organisations with whom internal and external consultation took place to inform curriculum design. Indicate the nature and outcomes of this consultation and the impact of this on the proposed programme, providing specific examples. The report/s from the external adviser/s consulted during the programme development stage should be attached (T2.3).

**3. Programme Design and Delivery**

**3a. Structure and Content**

The programme specification will describe the curriculum structure and content, but this document should give a brief account of *why* the curriculum has been organised in the way it has. Provide an overview of the programme structure in terms of:

* *Progression/stretch:* how the curriculum promotes an organised progression so that the demands on the learner in terms of intellectual challenge, skills, knowledge and learning autonomy increase through the programme.
* *Balance:*the balance within the programme of a number of elements, e.g. academic and practical elements, personal development and academic outcomes, determination of breadth and depth of subject material, the acquisition of core knowledge and/or the development of subject themes that link particular modules within the programme.
* *Coherence and integrity:*the overall coherence and intellectual integrity of the programme that ensures the student experience has a logic and integrity linked to the purpose of the programme.
* *IDEAS*: the approach taken by the programme team to ensure the programme is inclusive and digitally enabled*.*
* *Brookes Attributes:*the approach taken by the programme team in providing learning opportunities to promote the achievement of the Brookes Attributes.

**3b. Subject/Professional Benchmarks**/Apprenticeship standards (if applicable)

Key approval criteria relate to the extent to which a programme meets external subject and professional benchmarks and so this section should provide the validation panel with evidence that relevant reference has been made to these benchmarks and how they have been used in designing the programme. Development teams are free to present this evidence in any format they wish, although in some cases the professional body will require the information to be provided in a prescribed format – please check whether this is the case. In any event, it is essential that it clearly indicates:

* the specific subject benchmark statements/professional standards used;
* where the relevant elements of these benchmarks are reflected in the programme’s curriculum;
* a rationale for the exclusion of any elements of the benchmarks which have not been used;
* how any other qualification benchmarks (e.g. the Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark) are reflected in the proposal.

For apprenticeships Development teams should outline how the proposal meets the requirements of the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan. Development teams should provide an overview of how:

* apprenticeship standard core knowledge, skills and behaviours are met (a detailed mapping of the curriculum to the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours set out on the Apprenticeship standard should be provided);
* requirements for employer involvement (such as mentoring) outlined in the assessment plan have been met;
* required qualifications will be achieved;
* how minimum durations for the standard will be met;
* initial assessment will be delivered;
* 20% off the job training will be delivered;
* end point assessment requirements will be met; and
* how any unusual or challenging aspects of the assessment plan or standard have been addressed *(e.g. the Chartered Surveyor standard requires employers to have RICS-accredited mentors for apprentices).*If the main provider is an ACP the detail outlined above is not required. Instead, please briefly outline:
  + The extent to which the Brookes degree meets the requirements of the standard. *E.G- an Honours Degree in Business is a named qualification required for completion of the standard and successful completion for part of the gateway assessment. As part of the degree, apprentices will complete a work based project which will be presented for the end point assessment. In addition to completion of the degree, apprentices will be supported by the College apprenticeship team to develop a work based portfolio required for end point assessment and with preparation for the end point assessment once the degree has been completed.*
  + How aspects of the apprenticeship which are not covered within degree content will be met by the College. For example: how roles and responsibilities are split between teaching staff delivering the degree and the College apprenticeship team, how employer involvement and work based observations/meetings (if required) will be managed.
  + How apprentices will be supported to complete an end point assessment.
  + How any unusual or challenging aspects of the assessment plan or standard have been addressed

**3c. Learning and Teaching**

This section should describe *why* the particular learning and teaching strategy described in the programme specification has been adopted. It would be helpful to include the following, but there is no need to reproduce information which is also provided in the programme handbook:

* a rationale for the learning and teaching methods outlined in the programme specification and the relationship with key University strategies and policies relating to the student experience and graduate outcomes. Comment on how different learning and teaching methods are adopted at different stages of the programme, to reflect the growing acquisition of knowledge and skills as students progress through the programme.
* a statement explaining the appropriateness of the strategy for different possible delivery modes.
* a comment on the inclusion and relevance of work placements or work-based learning, and the role of employers.
* if the programme is a Degree or Higher Apprenticeship, some commentary should be provided on how apprentices will be prepared for the End Point Assessment (a brief outline should also be provided where an ACP partner is the main provider).
* a comment on strategies and policies employed to address and design out plagiarismand other academic offences – e.g. how Turnitin will be used.
* a statement on how the learning and teaching strategy promotes inclusion.
* a statement on how the learning and teaching strategy promotes inclusion, referencing your engagement with the IDEAS model.

**3d. Assessment**

This section should describe *why* the particular assessment strategy outlined in the programme specification has been adopted, how it will be effective in implementing the [Assessment & Feedback Policy](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/academic-policies) and how it enables students to demonstrate achievement of the programme learning outcomes. For example, describe the rationale for any predominance of coursework or examinations, the balance between assessment methods, use of formative assessment and the role of feedback in promoting student learning. Indicate how the assessment strategy meets or exceeds the threshold for inclusion set by the IDEAS model.

The document should include reference to any variations from the relevant University assessment regulations and why these are necessary in the context of this proposal.

***3e. [NOTE] Material course information***

*The Competition & Markets Authority (CMA) and sector regulators expect students and prospective students to be provided with the information they need in order to make informed decisions about their programme of study. The* [*CMA guidance to HE providers*](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6475b2f95f7bb7000c7fa14a/Consumer_law_advice_for_higher_education_providers_.pdf) *(see 4.10 iv and v) sets out the type of course-related information students should be provided with – please ensure you are aware of how this might apply to your programme, and that this information is clearly provided on the course information web page.*

1. Programme Management/Learning Environment

**4a. Student Support Arrangements**

It is not intended that the arrangements described in this section should in any way replicate the factual information that is provided in the programme handbook, although inevitably there may be some overlap. It is important that the document conveys the approach taken by the programme team to support students, and how this has been developed taking into account the student profile, engagement with IDEAS, the nature and distinctive features of the proposal, and the intended destinations of graduates. This will be particularly relevant in the context of part-time, online and distributed learning programmes, and collaborative provision.

This section should also explain the development team’s thinking behind any *distinctive arrangements (no need to describe standard University provision)* for:

* Induction
* Academic guidance
* Supervisory arrangements
* Academic tutorial support
* Welfare and pastoral support
* Student with special needs
* Careers information and guidance
* Facilitating student progression towards successful completion of their programmes

Where relevant, reference should be made to the arrangements for work-based learning or work placement support (including the use of work-based mentors) and how this has been developed or existing practice enhanced (*if specific handbooks for WBL are issued to students, please provide a copy with the programme documentation, rather than reproducing information here*). This should include responsibility for obtaining placements, the role of workplace mentors, lines of communications, etc. Where online and/or distributed learning is used, the document should explain the approach taken by the team to support students.

If the programme is a Degree or Higher Apprenticeship, commentary on compliance with the requirement for 20% off the job training should be provided. Details of how employers will be involved in apprentice support and mentoring should be detailed. Where the ACP is a main provider, this can be a short statement explaining how the College manages the 20% off the job rule.

**4b. Quality Management**

This section should explain any *special aspects* of the quality management of the programme in terms of programme leadership, annual review, programme committee arrangements, operation of examination committees and the deployment of external examiners (*no need to describe standard University procedures*). This will be particularly relevant in the context of inter-faculty programmes or collaborative provision. Arrangements for obtaining feedback from students should also be outlined.

For apprenticeships, programme development teams should detail how quality assurance aspects of the apprenticeship funding and performance rules will be met, including the management of subcontractors (if applicable). Where the ACP is the main provider, the following should be provided:

* A statement about how quality management of the degree or foundation degree (as above)
* A contextual statement which confirms:
  + that the College will be responsible for quality assurance and funding management and compliance rather than the College.
  + The College should confirm that they do not intend to involve a subcontractor in delivery of the Oxford Brookes qualification.
  + Confirms that the College is on the RoATP and has no current notices of concern from the ESFA.
  + Outlines the College’s track record of apprenticeship delivery-possible supporting evidence- most recent OfSTED reports, annual performance data (apprenticeships retention and achievement), FE Choices Survey.

5. Learning Resources

Provide information on the physical and human resources that will be made available to deliver the programme. This should include a list of the programme team and staff matched to modules, specific module resources (excluding reading lists as these are provided in the module specifications) and any other physical resources necessary to deliver the programme e.g. workshops, laboratories, studio facilities, software etc. In the case of collaborative provision access entitlements to Brookes resources should also be stated.

For home provision, staff profiles should be provided, together with any plans for relevant research, scholarly activity or development in relation to professional practice, to demonstrate how the programme is underpinned by relevant research and by excellent teaching practice. Indicate how the quality of teaching will be monitored and enhanced.

For collaborative arrangements, staff CVs should be provided, which clearly show the experience of the proposed programme team of teaching and assessing at the level of the proposed award. A full overall staffing plan for the proposed programme/s should also be provided, to include information about the staff currently teaching in the relevant subject area; how teaching quality will be monitored and enhanced; how new/inexperienced staff will be supported and mentored; and a contingency plan to ensure continuity of programme delivery in case of staff absences.

For apprenticeships, staff experience of managing and assessment work based learning for the particular profession should be detailed. Information on how access to relevant learning resource will be supported for apprentices should also be outlined. Where the ACP is the main provider, information about the apprenticeship teams and the split of responsibilities between the teaching team delivering the Brookes qualification and other teams in the College.

6. Implementation/transition arrangements (if relevant)

Provide a brief statement that details the proposed arrangements for the implementation of the programme, indicating the transitional arrangements for a replacement (or re-validated) programme, and the consequences for current students. This information will be incorporated within the programme approval event report.

If the existing programme is to be phased out, give the final date when each stage will cease to be available, or in the case of more complex arrangements, the final date when each module will cease to be available.

This section should also indicate, where relevant, the proposed arrangements at any partner institutions for collaborative or off-campus delivery.

APPENDICES

Submission documentation for the re-validation of existing provision, or approval of new programmes which make use of existing modules, must be accompanied by request for change forms relating to any current modules that will be undergoing change for use in the new/re-validated programme. The template (**T2.13**) can be downloaded from the Quality & Standards Handbook pages on the APQO website.

Closure forms (template **T2.16**, available as above) for any programmes being replaced by the proposed new provision must be included in the submission, in order aid the Student Records & Curriculum Management Team in updating the information held on the University systems.

Prompt questions for writing the Submission Document

You may find these questions useful in putting together an evaluative account and to provide context for the development of the programme (they are based on questions used to assist in writing the SED for the periodic review process which was replaced by the revalidation cycle). They are not provided as a checklist, but simply to help you consider what you might wish to include in your submission document.

Curriculum design

* How does the Subject team ensure their programmes of study reflect current sector expectations, as articulated in reference points such as subject benchmark statements and any professional body requirements?
* How has the curriculum content and design been informed by recent University or externally-funded teaching and learning enhancement initiatives?
* How has the subject team engaged with the IDEAS model to ensure that the curriculum content and design is inclusive and digitally enabled?
* What benchmarking activity, for example, staff engagement with other higher education institutions and professional bodies, has been undertaken by the Subject team since the provision was last reviewed/approved?
* How does the Subject team ensure that curricula have been constructed so that they provide an intellectually stimulating experience and enable the development of the Brookes Attributes? How does the team ensure the programme learning outcomes:
* are appropriate to the level of the module or programme?
* articulate the University’s expectations of higher order learning?
* articulate the Brookes Attributes (at Foundation Degree, Bachelors, or Master’s level, as appropriate) and contextualise the Attributes for the discipline?
* are well understood by students?
* How does the Subject team ensure the curriculum remains relevant with respect to current developments in the academic discipline and in the professions/industries in which their graduates are likely to work?
* How do they ensure that the design and organisation of the curriculum is inclusive, and effective in promoting student learning and enabling them to achieve their full potential in the context of the programme learning outcomes?
* How are students involved in shaping their learning experience? Does the curriculum include collaborative learning activities?
* How does the Subject group ensure that students are provided with information about their programmes of study that is comprehensive, reliable and up to date?

Assessment

* How do assessment strategies support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes of the programmes and enable students to demonstrate their abilities, taking into account the quality of experience achieved through work-based learning and professional practice, where applicable?
* Has any significant action been taken in respect of the design of assessment strategies in response to issues raised by external examiners, or through the internal moderation or other feedback processes?
* How does the Subject team ensure that the assessment strategies employed on their programmes achieve the following objectives…?

**Assessment supports learning:** Assessment should be designed at programme level, integrating module assessment and ensuring that assessment shapes learning in a coherent and holistic fashion, consistent with the aims and learning outcomes of the programme. This ensures that identified knowledge, skills and qualities can be developed and recognised, and validly assessed, whilst accounting for progressive levels of attainment and different modes of study.

* To what extent has assessment been designed at programme level?
* How have you ensured that assessment workload and scheduling is distributed efficiently and effectively across the programme?
* How can you demonstrate that there is progressive development of key knowledge and skills identified in the programme learning outcomes?
* How have you balanced the competing needs of providing varied assessment types and giving students opportunities to improve proficiency in each type?
* What are the students’ views on how well the assessment strategy and the quality of feedback challenges them and supports their learning?
* How does the assessment strategy take account of student diversity, and promote inclusive practice?
* How do assessment tasks enable students to draw on their prior experiences?

**Developing students’ assessment literacy:** There is a need for students to understand the nature of assessment, how they can learn through assessment, the techniques of assessment, how assessment links to the learning outcomes of the module and the programme, the standards of the work they produce, and how assessment relates to their discipline. To develop assessment literacy students need opportunities to engage with assessment processes, such as marking exercises, evaluating exemplars, peer review/assessment, and receiving and responding to feedback on draft work.

* What strategy does the programme use to support students’ development of the above understandings?
* Where in the programme and in what ways do you provide students with opportunities to develop their understanding of assessment standards and enable them to judge the quality of their work and that of others?
* As students progress through levels of the programme, how are they supported in understanding changing standards?

**Relational nature of assessment**: To be effective, assessment strategies need to include tasks that capture students’ interest and provide opportunities for active dialogue between students and staff about task aims, objectives and requirements, feedback on them, and future learning in the subject.

* How does the programme embody the relational nature of assessment?
* What examples of assessment tasks can you identify that are likely to capture enthusiastic student interest?
* Where in the programme do students have an element of choice in their assessments?
* Where in the programme have you embedded activities/opportunities that facilitate student-staff dialogue about assessment and feedback?

**Communities of assessment practice:** For the aims of the Assessment & Feedback Policy to be fully met it is necessary to develop disciplinary communities of assessment practice through, for example, regular peer discussion and student involvement, and co-curricular activity.

* How does the programme seek to nurture learning communities that support understanding of high quality assessment?
* What opportunities are available for students to engage in self and peer assessment?

Student achievement and employability

* How effectively do the programmes prepare students for subsequent employment at the appropriate level? Does the curriculum provide opportunities for students to develop skills that enhance their employability and lead to fulfilling careers?
* How are students’ professional skills and attributes developed through practice placements, work-based learning, fieldwork, etc?
* How are the views of stakeholders, such as employers, professional bodies and alumni, used to inform the development of the programmes?
* What opportunities are there for students to build confidence and strategies to develop networks of career contacts, including employers, alumni and other stakeholders, and to present themselves in person and online?
* How do expectations set from the beginning of the programme match the professional expectations for behaviour, self-management and etiquette expected of a graduate in a diverse range of career roles?

Quality of teaching

* How is the quality of teaching maintained and enhanced through, for example, effective staff development, ‘Challenging Conversations’ inquiry projects, integration of part-time and visiting staff, effective team teaching and induction and mentoring of new staff?
* How effectively do the Subject staff draw upon their research, scholarship or professional activity to inform their teaching?
* How has the ‘Challenging Conversations’ scheme been implemented in the Subject team, and how has this benefited the student learning experience?
* How does the Subject team seek feedback from students on the quality of teaching, and use it to improve the quality of learning opportunities offered?
* How are students engaged in the life of the Department/School, including those on part-time or distance learning programmes?
* How is students’ learning supported? How effective are the academic guidance structures in the Subject group?

Learning environments

* How does the Subject group ensure that high quality, accessible physical and digital learning environments are provided to support learning?
* How effectively are learning resources deployed to support diversity, and a range of teaching strategies and learning styles?
* How does the programme team create a learning culture that facilitates a sense of belonging in all students?
* How effectively has Moodle, or other modern digital learning technology, been adopted across the Subject group?
* How does the Subject group promote effective social learning? e.g. extra-curricular activities; interaction with staff and other students outside the classroom?