

# Guidance for Programme and Module Amendments

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Academic Registry



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## **Glossary**

APFP	Academic Planning and Fees Panel
CMA	The Competition and Markets Authority
PMAP	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
PSRB	Professional Statutory Regulatory Body
VROP	Validation and Review Oversight Panel

## Chapter 1: Introduction

1. In order to ensure that the academic standards and quality of students'/apprentices' learning opportunities remain current and appropriate, it may be necessary to make amendments to programmes and modules before the programme is due to be considered through the Periodic Programme Review process (which normally occurs every five years). The need for amendments may arise from developments in the subject area, or it may be as a direct result of feedback from students/apprentices, External Examiners<sup>1</sup>, or Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).
2. The university must ensure that amendments made to modules and programmes are appropriate. Therefore, amendments, over and above routine administrative updates, are considered through the university's Programme and Module Amendment Panel (PMAP)<sup>2</sup>. PMAP are empowered to make an evidence-based judgement as to when the volume of changes made to a programme, in between formal review points, via the programme and module amendment process, should trigger a Periodic Programme Review to be instigated.
3. The university has a contractual relationship with its students/apprentices, which is governed by Consumer Protection Legislation. To this end, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) have produced guidance<sup>3</sup> to help Higher Education providers understand their responsibilities, under consumer protection law, in their dealings with students/apprentices. The CMA guidance sets out minimum standards for three specific areas of practice in Higher Education:
  - a) The provision of information – information for current and prospective students/apprentices should be up front, clear, accurate, comprehensive, unambiguous and timely.
  - b) Terms and conditions should be fair and balanced
  - c) Complaints handling processes and practices should be clear, accessible, and fair.
4. In-line with condition C1<sup>4</sup> of the Office for Students' conditions of registration, the university's amendment process has been designed to operate in accordance with the requirements of the CMA.

### *Material Changes*

5. The following aspects of a programme of study are considered material to the choices made by students/apprentices at the point of application, and to the contract they enter into with a Higher Education provider during the lifetime of their programme:
  - Programme title and award.
  - Awarding body/institution.
  - Entry requirements<sup>5</sup>.
  - Programme duration.
  - Core modules.

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<sup>1</sup> Also, for apprenticeship programmes, External Verifiers.

<sup>2</sup> See paragraph 21 for instances where amendments are approved by a body other than PMAP.

<sup>3</sup> [Competition and Markets Authority, UK Higher Education Providers – Advice on Consumer Protection Law](#)

<sup>4</sup> "The provider must demonstrate that in developing and implementing its policies, procedures and terms and conditions, it has given due regard to relevant guidance about how to comply with consumer protection law"

<sup>5</sup> For prospective students/apprentices.

- Likely optional modules.
  - Location of study.
  - Details of who a provider is regulated by.
  - PSRB accreditation.
  - The approach to teaching, learning and assessment.
  - Any terms, such as provider's rules and regulations, that apply to the programme that students/apprentices may find particularly surprising.
6. This guidance details the processes for effecting changes to material information, which are categorized as follows:
- Module amendments.
  - Programme amendments.
7. Further advice on making programme and module amendments can be obtained via the Academic Quality and Standards area of the [Academic Registry Helpdesk](#).

## Chapter 2: Administrative amendments

8. Administrative amendments are revisions to a programme(s) and/or module(s), which do not change their nature or outcomes. Amendments of this nature would normally be undertaken in order to:
- Provide additional clarity without changing the meaning of the information or the aims and outcomes.
  - Correct typographical errors.
  - Update module/programme contacts<sup>6</sup> and/or Faculty/School information.
  - Update a module's outline syllabus, overview or additional information with no associated impact on its aims, learning outcomes or assessment.
  - Update information relating to professional accreditation of a programme<sup>7</sup>.

### *Making an administrative amendment*

9. Given the importance of maintaining the accuracy and currency of the university's modules and programme specifications, administrative amendments can be made at any point in the academic year.
10. Due to their nature, administrative amendments do not require formal approval by PMAP. Therefore, in order to action a change of this nature, a Module Leader or Programme Leader is required to:
- a) [Update the applicable module proforma\(s\) and/or programme specification\(s\) within CourseLoop.](#)
  - b) Submit the revised module proforma(s) and/or programme specification(s), via CourseLoop, for approval by an Associate Academic Registrar, clearly detailing within the Outline Summary the details of the change(s) that has been made.

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<sup>6</sup> New collaborative staff appointments require prior approval by the Validation and Review Oversight Panel (VROP).

<sup>7</sup> Where this does not impact on aims, outcomes, curriculum or assessment. Any changes to these as a result of PSRB engagement must be approved by PMAP.

## Chapter 3: Module Amendments

11. Although in most instances modules constitute part of a larger programme of study they also exist as standalone units of learning and, as a result, it is therefore possible to seek to amend the following aspects of an individual module(s). The following table details the locus of consideration for the approval of each type of module amendment:

Amendment	Approved by
Module Code	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Module Title	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Teaching Responsibility	Associate Academic Registrar (Administrative Amendment)
Subject Area	Associate Academic Registrar (Administrative Amendment)
Learning Method Type and associated Hours.	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Module Offerings (e.g. delivery start month from September to January).	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Aims	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Learning Outcomes	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Module Content (e.g. Outline syllabus, Module Overview or Additional Information <sup>8</sup> )	Associate Academic Registrar (Administrative Amendment)
Assessment details.	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Specialist Resources	Programme and Module Amendment Panel
Module Contacts	Associate Academic Registrar (Administrative Amendment)

### *Making a module amendment*

12. For module amendments that require approval by PMAP the following applies:

- a) The Module Leader or Programme Leader establishes whether the proposed amendment(s) affects other cohorts or programmes, including those within other

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<sup>8</sup> As per Chapter 2, changes to a module's outline syllabus, module overview or additional information only requires formal approval if they impact upon the module's aims, learning outcomes or assessment.

Schools and collaborative programmes<sup>9</sup>. If it is the case that the amendment will affect other programmes, prior to progressing the amendment, the proposer will be required to seek confirmation of support from the applicable Programme Leaders and document this within the 'Impact and Consultation' section of the Outline Summary.,

- b) The Module Leader or Programme Leader consults all affected students/apprentices. This should normally be done at a scheduled Board of Study, or via student/apprentice representatives. Consideration and, if applicable, endorsement of the proposed amendment(s) should be clearly documented within the minutes of the relevant Board of Study meeting. In instances where student/apprentice consultation takes place outside of a Board of Study, the consultation process and outcome should be presented, for information, at the next scheduled meeting.
- c) The Module Leader or Programme Leader notifies the External Examiner(s)<sup>10</sup> and invites them to comment on the proposed amendment(s). External Examiners are not required to endorse the proposed module amendments but must be given the opportunity to provide feedback<sup>11</sup>.
- d) If applicable, the Module Leader or Programme Leader notifies the relevant PSRB(s) of the proposed amendment and establishes their involvement.
- e) The Module Leader or Programme Leader prepares a Module Amendment Proposal within CourseLoop<sup>12</sup>. Within this proposal the Module Leader or Programme Leader is required to:
  - Select the applicable module(s).
  - Click into the Outline Summary.
  - Update the proposal title - this should:
    - i. Start with the 3 letter School code (e.g. ENR)
    - ii. Specify the section(s) of the module proforma to which the change(s) applies (e.g. – proposal to update Learning Outcome 1 and Assessment 3)<sup>13</sup>
  - Complete the rationale – this should:
    - i. Clearly and concisely, summarise the proposed amendment(s).
    - ii. Confirm the rationale for the amendment(s) and provide assurances regarding the maintenance of academic rigour.
  - Confirm the proposed date of implementation.
  - Record a summary, in the 'Impact and Consultation' section of the Outline Summary<sup>14</sup>, of the outcomes and how and when consultation took place for steps a – d, detailed above.

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<sup>9</sup> Details of the programmes served by modules can be viewed in Courseloop by using the 'Related Items' button in the module proforma.

<sup>10</sup> For amendments to modules that form part of an apprenticeship programme(s), the External Verifier(s) is also required to be notified and invited to comment.

<sup>11</sup> This is also applicable to External Verifiers for apprenticeship programmes.

<sup>12</sup> For guidance on using CourseLoop see <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/staff/how-to/using-courseloop>

<sup>13</sup> NB this section is limited to 100 characters.

<sup>14</sup> Please note a Module Amendment Proposal is unable to proceed to PMAP until these assurances are provided.



- f) Once the Module Amendment Proposal has been completed, it should then be 'Marked As Complete' and submitted, via CourseLoop, for endorsement by the applicable Director(s) of School<sup>15</sup>.
- g) Following endorsement by the relevant Director(s) of School<sup>16</sup>, the Module Amendment Proposal is presented to PMAP for consideration and approval. There are four possible outcomes of PMAP consideration:
- Approval.
  - Approval, subject to conditions.
  - Deferral.
  - Rejection, with associated rationale.
- h) Following consideration by PMAP, Academic Registry will confirm the outcome to the Module Leader and/or Programme Leader and Director of School.
- i) If approved, the new module version will be published via CourseLoop. Previous module versions will still be available to view and will apply to any cohorts not specified in the proposal.
13. If a proposed module amendment relates to **Collaborative Provision**, proposers should assess if the proposed change will impact on any agreed contractual and/or financial arrangements. This assessment **must** take place prior to a proposal being submitted to PMAP. If proposers are unsure as to whether their proposed change will impact on any agreed contractual and/or financial arrangements, in the first instance, advice should be sought from [collaborativeprovision@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:collaborativeprovision@ljmu.ac.uk).
14. For **Apprenticeships**, if the proposed module amendment will impact on any aspect of an approved Learning Plan, an updated Learning Plan, reflecting the proposed change(s), must be included as part of the submission to PMAP. To facilitate this, the updated Learning Plan should be uploaded as an attachment to the proposal. In such instances, in addition to PMAP scrutiny, verification that the revised Learning Plan is compliant with the requirements of external funding and regulatory bodies will be carried out by a representative of the university's Apprenticeship Team.

#### *Timetable for module amendments*

15. The university has agreed the following deadlines for module amendments:
- Amendments to undergraduate modules must be fully approved, and published on the relevant university system, no later than **Friday 28 February 2025**.
  - Amendments to postgraduate-taught modules must be fully approved, and published on the relevant university system, no later than **Friday 27 June 2025**.
16. As a result:
- The last point at which PMAP can consider proposed amendments to undergraduate modules, for implementation in 2025-26, is **5 February 2025**.

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<sup>15</sup> Or nominee.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

- The last point at which PMAP can consider proposed amendments to postgraduate-taught modules, for implementation in 2025-26, is **4 June 2025**.
17. Where modules feature within programmes that have been approved for delivery outside the traditional academic year (for example a January start date as opposed to September), advice on timescales for proposed module amendments should be sought from the [Curriculum Development and Review Team](#).
  18. The specific dates and associated paper deadlines of all meetings of PMAP, during academic year 2024-25, can be found [here](#).
  19. Please note, any amendment proposals submitted to Academic Registry after the applicable PMAP paper deadline, **will only** be considered by the Panel in exceptional circumstances, and at the Chair's discretion.
  20. Should a request for a module amendment be submitted outside of the agreed timescales, the Director of School's<sup>17</sup> decision to endorse the proposal to proceed to PMAP should be fully cognisant of the internal and external implications/requirements of making changes outside of agreed timescales, such as timetabling and CMA requirements.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 4: Programme Amendments

21. Once validated, programmes remain in continuous approval until their next scheduled Periodic Programme Review. The programme amendment process enables established programmes to be refreshed/amended, between formal review points, in order to enhance the student/apprentice experience and/or to maintain alignment with academic subject benchmarks and professional standards.
22. The university has categorised amendments that may be made to a programme during its lifetime on the following basis:

### *Programme amendments*

- Programme title and award.
- The programme's credit value.
- Replacement of a core module(s).
- Removal of an option module(s).
- Mode of study or delivery.
- Addition or removal of alternate target and/or exit awards.
- Introducing, removing or amending cohort intake months.
- Programme aims.
- Programme learning outcomes.
- Entry requirements.
- Addition, removal or restructuring of routes within a programme.
- Programme duration, including the addition of a placement or Study Abroad Year.
- Location of study.
- Inclusion/withdrawal of a variance from the university's Academic Framework Regulations.
- Addition of an option module(s).
- Addition of a Study Abroad or placement that does not affect the programme duration.

### *Making a programme amendment*

23. All programme amendments require approval by PMAP, with the following exceptions (locus of approval identified in parenthesis):
- Changes to a programme's entry requirements (Recruitment Policy Panel)<sup>18</sup>.
  - Removal of an alternative target award (Academic Planning and Fees Panel)<sup>19</sup>.
  - Removal of a cohort entry point (Academic Planning and Fees Panel)<sup>20</sup>.
  - Changes to a programme's start date, prior to completion of its initial validation (Academic Planning and Fees Panel).<sup>21</sup>
  - Removal of a route within a programme (Academic Planning and Fees Panel)<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Details on the requirements, meeting dates and paper deadlines for Recruitment Policy Panel can be obtained from Alison Williams ([A.Williams2@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:A.Williams2@ljmu.ac.uk))

<sup>19</sup> See paragraph 31.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

- Location of Study (Validation and Review Oversight Panel)<sup>23</sup>
- Inclusion/withdrawal of a variance from the university's Academic Framework Regulations (PSRB Oversight Panel)<sup>24</sup>.

24. For the following programme amendments, prior to seeking approval from PMAP, programme teams must first seek endorsement from the Academic Planning and Fees Panel (APFP), who will consider the proposal from a strategic/business perspective:

- Changes to a programme's title and/or award.
- Changes to a programme's credit value.
- Changes to a programme's mode of study and/or introduction of a new mode of study.
- Changes to a programme's mode of delivery.
- The addition of an alternative target award(s).
- The introduction of, or amendment to, a cohort intake month(s).
- The addition of routes within a programme.
- Changes to a programme's duration, including the addition of a placement or Study Abroad Year.

25. To seek APFP endorsement of a proposed change to a programme's title, award, credit value or mode of study, proposers should complete a [Planning Proposal](#). If APFP endorsement is secured, proposers should then prepare a submission for PMAP as per the requirements set out in paragraph 27.

26. For all other changes, which require APFP endorsement, proposers should create a standard [programme amendment proposal](#). To facilitate consideration by APFP, proposers should only provide details of the proposed change and the associated rationale. Details relating to impact and consultation, and any updated/new programme documentation (see paragraph 27), should be added to the same proposal following confirmation it has been endorsed by APFP.

27. In order to obtain approval from PMAP for a programme amendment(s) the following applies:

- a) The Programme Leader establishes whether the proposed amendment(s) affects other programmes, including those within other Schools and collaborative programmes<sup>25</sup>. If it is the case that the amendment will affect other programmes these should be added to the Programme Amendment Proposal and the applicable Programme Leader(s) and Director(s) of School will be required to confirm support prior to the proposed amendment(s) progressing to PMAP.
- b) The Programme Leader consults all affected students/apprentices. This should normally be done at a scheduled Board of Study, or via student/apprentice representatives. Consideration and, if applicable, endorsement of the proposed amendment(s) should be clearly documented within the minutes of the relevant Board of Study meeting. In instances where student/apprentice consultation takes

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<sup>23</sup> See Approval of New Teaching Venues Policy.

<sup>24</sup> See Chapter 2 of the [Guidance for Engagement with PSRBs](#)

<sup>25</sup> If changes to offered modules are proposed, the details of the programmes served by shared modules can be viewed in CourseLoop. However, programme teams also need to be aware of any separate replica modules e.g. for franchise collaborative programmes.

place outside of a Board of Study, the consultation process and outcome should be presented, for information, at the next scheduled meeting.

- c) The Programme Leader notifies the External Examiner(s)<sup>26</sup> and invites them to comment on the proposed amendment(s). External Examiners are not required to endorse proposed programme amendments but must be given the opportunity to provide feedback<sup>27</sup>. However, when a change to a programme's title is proposed, PMAP requires written confirmation from the programme's External Examiner<sup>28</sup> that, in their view, the programme's existing content is appropriately aligned to the revised title, without the need for amendment.
- d) If applicable, the Programme Leader notifies the relevant PSRB(s) of the proposed amendment and establishes their involvement.
- e) The Programme Leader completes a Programme Amendment Proposal within CourseLoop<sup>29</sup>. Within this proposal the Programme Leader is required to:
  - Select the applicable programme(s).
  - Click into the Outline Summary.
  - Update the proposal title - this should:
    - i. Start with the 3 letter School code (e.g. ENR).
    - ii. Specify the type of amendment<sup>30</sup> – refer to page 11.
  - Complete the rationale – this should:
    - i. Clearly and concisely, summarise the proposed amendment(s).
    - ii. Confirm the rationale for the amendment(s) and provide assurances regarding the maintenance of academic rigour.
  - Confirm the proposed date of implementation.
  - Record a summary, in the 'Impact and Consultation' section of the Outline Summary<sup>31</sup>, of the outcomes and how and when consultation took place for steps a – d, detailed above.
- f) Once the Programme Amendment Proposal has been completed, it should then be 'Marked As Complete' and submitted, via CourseLoop, for endorsement by the applicable Director(s) of School<sup>32</sup>.
- g) Following endorsement by the relevant Director(s) of School<sup>33</sup>, the Programme Amendment Proposal is presented to PMAP for consideration and approval. There are four possible outcomes of PMAP consideration:
  - Approval.
  - Approval, subject to conditions.
  - Deferral.
  - Rejection, with associated rationale.

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<sup>26</sup> For amendments to apprenticeship programme(s), the External Verifier(s) is also required to be notified and invited to comment.

<sup>27</sup> This is also applicable to External Verifiers for apprenticeship programmes.

<sup>28</sup> For apprenticeship programmes, written confirmation from the External Verifier would also be required.

<sup>29</sup> For guidance on using CourseLoop see <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/staff/how-to/using-courseloop>

<sup>30</sup> NB this section is limited to 100 characters.

<sup>31</sup> Please note amendment proposals are unable to proceed to PMAP until these assurances are provided.

<sup>32</sup> Or nominee.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

- h) Following consideration by PMAP, Academic Registry will confirm the outcome to the Programme Leader and Director of School.
28. If approved, the new version of the programme specification(s) will be published via CourseLoop. Previous versions will still be available to view and will apply to relevant cohorts.
29. If a proposed programme amendment relates to **Collaborative Provision**, proposers should assess if the proposed change will impact on any agreed contractual and/or financial arrangements. This assessment **must** take place prior to a proposal being submitted to PMAP. If proposers are unsure as to whether their proposed change will impact on any agreed contractual and/or financial arrangements, in the first instance, advice should be sought from [collaborativeprovision@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:collaborativeprovision@ljmu.ac.uk).
30. For **Apprenticeships**, if the proposed programme amendment will impact on any aspect of an approved Learning Plan, an updated Learning Plan, reflecting the proposed change(s), must be included as part of the submission to PMAP. To facilitate this, the updated Learning Plan should be uploaded as an attachment to the proposal. In such instances, in addition to PMAP scrutiny, verification that the revised Learning Plan is compliant with the requirements of external funding and regulatory bodies will be carried out by a representative of the university's Apprenticeship Team.
31. Where an application is made to APFP to remove an alternative target award, cohort entry point or a route within a programme, proposers should follow the guidance for [making a change to a programme in CourseLoop](#). Following APFP approval, an Associate Academic Registrar will liaise with the proposer to ensure that the necessary updates are made to the programme specification(s). Timely completion of this activity will be monitored via the Panel's action point control register.

#### *Timetable for programme amendments*

32. The university has agreed the following deadlines for programme amendments:
- All programme amendments to undergraduate programmes with a September start date, for implementation in September 2025, will need to be fully approved and published on the relevant university system no later than **31st December 2024**.
  - All programme amendments to postgraduate-taught programmes with a September start date, for implementation in September 2025, will need to be fully approved and published on the relevant university system no later than **31st May 2025**.
33. For programmes that have been approved for delivery outside of the traditional academic year (for example a January start date as opposed to September), advice on timescales for proposed programme amendments should be sought from the [Curriculum Development and Review Team](#).
34. The dates and associated paper deadlines of PMAP can be located [here](#).
35. Please note, any amendment proposals submitted to Academic Registry after the applicable PMAP paper deadline, **will only** be considered by the committee in exceptional circumstances, and at the Chair's discretion.

36. Should a request for a programme amendment be submitted outside of the agreed timescales, the Director of School's<sup>34</sup> decision to endorse the proposal should be fully cognisant of the internal and external implications/requirements of making changes outside of agreed timescales, such as timetabling and CMA requirements.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 5: Consultation with students/apprentices

37. In line with the university's [Student Protection Plan](#), ensuring students/apprentices are fully consulted and engaged in decisions to amend their programme of study is a fundamental feature of the university's amendment process.
38. As stated in Chapters 3 and 4, current students/apprentices, affected by a proposed amendment(s), must be consulted prior to an amendment proposal being presented to PMAP. This consultation will normally be undertaken at a scheduled Board of Study or via the student/apprentice representative system. Appropriate records of all stages in the consultation process must be retained by the programme team for audit purposes.
39. Any amendment proposals that do not confirm students/apprentices have been consulted with regard to a proposed amendment(s) will not be approved by PMAP.
40. Should current students/apprentices be affected by a proposal to amend a programme's title and/or award, to remove an alternative target and/or exit award, or to amend the location of study then **written consent must be obtained from all affected students/apprentices, including those who are currently not engaging or are on a Leave of Absence**<sup>35</sup>. Prior to seeking to apply a change(s) of this nature to existing students/apprentices, the programme team/Programme Leader **must** obtain approval from the Director of School.
41. In instances where consent is required from students/apprentices who are not engaging or on a Leave of Absence, arrangements must be in place to ensure that, when the student/apprentice is re-engaged, their written consent to the change is sought.
42. When seeking student/apprentice consent, students/apprentices must be made aware of the alternative options available to them should they not consent to the proposed change, including the opportunity to withdraw from the programme, to move to another programme and, if required, to move to another institution.
43. In addition to the above options, in the event that **all** affected students/apprentices<sup>36</sup> do not provide written consent to the change, the School may wish to consider offering those students/apprentices the option to continue to the extant version of the programme. **Before** exploring this option with students/apprentices, the programme team/Programme Leader **must** seek support, and confirmation, from the Director of School that such an arrangement can be resourced.
44. Written consent must be obtained by the relevant programme team/Programme Leader, and evidence of consent must be retained by the programme team and presented alongside the amendment proposal.
45. Whilst written consent from students/apprentices will normally only be required in the above circumstances, on occasion, it may be necessary to obtain written consent from all students/apprentices, affected by an amendment, outwith the above. In these instances, advice will be provided by Academic Registry.

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<sup>35</sup> A template letter is available on request from the Curriculum Development and Review Team (curriculum\_development\_and\_review@ljmu.ac.uk).

<sup>36</sup> Including those not engaging or on a Leave of Absence.



46. Where the application cycle has commenced for future cohorts, applicants and those holding offers must be advised of the change(s), in writing, as soon as possible after it has been approved. It is the responsibility of the Student Recruitment Marketing and Admissions Team to manage this correspondence in consultation with the relevant Programme Leader(s). When communicating details of approved changes to prospective students/apprentices, applicants and offer holders the rationale for the change(s) should be clearly articulated. It should be noted that it may be necessary to offer advice about alternative programmes, should this be requested.