Validation

of New Study Programmes

Guidelines

approved by the Vice-Chancellor
May 8th, 2008. Lund University

I.   Validation of New Study Programmes leading to First and/or Second Cycle Degrees

The validation of new programmes of study is fundamental to the quality assurance objectives of Lund University. A high standard of teaching and resource allocation, both in national and international terms, must be ensured before a programme can be established. This document which describes the process of validation is an application of the European guidelines for quality assurance established in *Standards and Guidelines for the European Higher Education Area* (2005).

The decision to establish a new programme of study rests with the Vice-Chancellor. An application shall be submitted by the relevant Faculty Board or its equivalent. The following guidelines describe the process to be followed before an application is made and a decision taken. The validation process is applicable to programmes leading to a first or second cycle degree.

The stages involved in the validation process are outlined in Part II. The potential of the proposed programme to meet the requirements of quality assurance should be documented with reference to the following six fields of criteria:

1. Rationale
2. Learning outcomes and content
3. Structure
4. Teaching staff
5. Resources
6. Follow-up and evaluation

The documentation required for the application is detailed in Part III. The quality assessment is based on this documentation. The criteria for the quality assessment are stated in Part IV. All six fields of criteria need to be satisfactory fulfilled before a decision to establish the programme can be taken. The documentation is a public document and shall be registered as such at the time of application.

II.   Procedure

The relevant Faculty Board submits an application for the establishment of a programme to the Vice-Chancellor following an assessment that the proposed programme
- is in agreement with the conditions given in the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance
- is financially viable within the current budgetary framework
- conforms to the research and educational orientation of the University and the relevant Faculty.

The validation process is a part of the planning of the new programme at Faculty level. The results are presented in the application submitted to the Vice-Chancellor. The following items need to be included:

- Documentation of the programme
- Quality assessment *and, when appropriate*
- Information on the measures implemented as a result of the quality assessment.

The quality assessment is carried out by a group of independent experts appointed by the Faculty Board. The members of the group may not be employed by Lund University. The group should consist of
- representatives of universities or university colleges in Sweden or abroad with suitable academic and pedagogical qualifications and experience
- undergraduate or postgraduate students with a background in the relevant discipline
- experienced representatives of the relevant professional area.

If the group of experts deems the documentation to be insufficient, they may request additional information. They may also visit the departments/units involved in the programme. Opportunities for the experts to interview the programme management, other staff and students should be provided. The experts must also be given the opportunity to view the facilities for teaching and laboratory work and library and technical resources.

The group's assessment of how well the proposed programme meets the six fields of criteria (that states the conditions for the realization of the study programme) is to be expressed in either of two terms:
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory

These short assessments are to be presented in a written statement. The grounds for the assessment shall be given in each of the six categories and provide a final conclusion on the potential of the programme to correspond to a good national and international standard. If the programme is intended to be offered in different modes, i.e. as a full-time, part-time or online programme, a separate assessment must be made of each mode. If any member of the group disagrees with the majority, a statement of dissent must also be included.

III. Documentation

Basic Information

The description of the programme should begin with information on
-    the name of the programme, including a translation into English;
-    degree title(s), including a translation into English;
-    scope in higher education credits;
-    the main field of study for programmes that lead to general degrees;
-    whether the programme is full-time or part-time, where it will be taught and whether elements of distance studies are included;
-    partner institutions if the programme is offered as a joint programme.

The Assessment of the Faculty Board

The documentation must include information on the Faculty Board's assessment of
-    the rationale of the programme with regard to the research and education orientation of the university and the relevant faculty
-    the needs of the labour market for graduates of the programme
-    the scope for offering the programme in English and thereby recruiting international students
-    the time needed for a comprehensive revision or termination of the programme.

Information Required for the Quality Assessment performed by the Expert Group

1. Rationale

- description of the programme and its focus, compared with other programmes at Lund university or at other institutions of higher education in Sweden and abroad;
- brief description of the relation of the programme to research or artistic development at Lund university;
- information on the relation to doctoral studies and third cycle education environments, for programmes that lead to second cycle degrees;
- an account of the labour market contacts and/or data that support the assessment of employment prospects.

2. Learning outcomes, objectives and content

- description of the learning outcomes that will meet required objectives for a certain degree;
- description of the main content of the programme with regard to knowledge, skills and judgement;
- statement of the admission requirements of the programme.

3. Structure

- information on possible in-depth studies and specialisations, for programmes that lead to a general degree;
- information on programme content concerning possible scope for studies outside the main field of study and/or any specialisation(s). (For programmes that lead to a general degree, this should be stated for both the main field of study and studies outside the main field);
- description of the educational strategies for implementing and developing the programme;
- description of the progressive stages of the programme and the scope for increasingly in-depth study.

4. Teaching Staff

- description of the lecturers on the programme, including information on their scholarly, artistic and pedagogical qualifications and skills and their professional experience outside higher education;
- information on the number of lecturers that are qualified to supervise degree projects;
- description of the in-service training provided for the teachers;
- the estimated number of teachers (full-time equivalents)/the estimated number of full-time students.

5. Resources

- information on the annual number of students that will be admitted to the programme;
- an account of the resources allocated for information, academic advice and social activities;
- an overview of teaching facilities, equipment, study materials, library and ICT resources and the needs for investment.

6. Follow-up and evaluation

- an account of how evaluation of courses will be carried out and followed up;
- an account of how independent quality assurance will be carried out (e.g. by peer reviews of examination tasks and external assessment of degree projects);
- an account of how graduates and their entry into the labour market will be followed up.

Several of the data described above are to be included in the programme syllabus. Therefore a preliminary syllabus should be attached to the documentation.

IV. Validation Criteria

The group of experts will make an assessment of the potential for implementing the study programme and developing its quality. The assessment concerns the following six fields of criteria and is to be based on the documentation provided by the Faculty Board. The relevant sections of the System of Qualifications and Chapter 1 Section 14 (Course Evaluations) of the Higher Education Ordinance must also be made available to the expert group.

For each area of validation different criteria are given. All of these must be fulfilled for the area to be deemed to be of a *satisfactory* quality. If the group of experts finds the quality to be unsatisfactory, suggestions for improvement should be offered.

1. Rationale

- the programme is related to disciplines in which the university actively conducts research or artistic development;
- a second cycle programme is closely related to one or several third cycle research environments within the university;

- the name of the programme and the decription of its focus provide relevant information on the similarities with and differences from other national and international programmes in the discipline;
- it is possible to offer the programme at Lund University at a good national and international standard.

2. Learning outcomes and content

All programmes:
- the learning outcomes of the programme are in agreement with all the objectives stated in the System of Qualifications (Higher Education Ordinance Appendix 2);
- the admission requirements are suitable with regard to the content and learning outcomes of the programme;
- the content of the programme is linked to the international research or artistic development of the relevant discipline;
- the programme is linked to the current development of the labour market;
- the content of the programme meets the demands for the training of general skills.

Programmes that lead to general degrees:
- the learning outcomes of the programme reflect the specific discipline and its local profile.

3. Structure

All programmes:
- the name of the main field specifies a relevant area in the discipline to which the programme belongs;
- the programme is structured so as to lead to increasingly in-depth acquisition of the knowledge, skills and judgement specified in the objectives for the degree in question.

Programmes that lead to general degrees:
- the programme includes in-depth study in one or several parts of the main field of study;
- the programme provides scope for broadening studies within and/or outside the main field of study.

4. Teaching Staff

- teachers with the required competence are available for all courses within the programme. These teaching resources are sufficient for starting as well as carrying out the programme;

- the number of lecturers with a doctoral degree corresponds to the needs for supervision of degree projects of the number of students admitted to the programme;
- teachers are available with the research or artistic competence required for conducting the continuous development of the various disciplines of the programme;
- in-service training is planned to suit the needs of the current staff.

5. Resources

- the resources for providing information to prospective students and employers are adequate;
- the resources for study counselling and guidance are adequate with regard to the size and diversity of the target group;
- the facilities and equipment are adequate and correspond to established norms for a good standard in the proposed area of education :
- study materials and library and ICT resources are available to the number of students admitted to the programme.

6. Follow-up and evaluation

- the mode of course evaluation is based on the learning outcomes;
- the mode of course evaluation corresponds to the regulations in the Higher Education Ordinance and the Lund University guidelines for the relationship between providers of education and students;
- details are provided of appropriate forms for peer reviews and external and/or other forms for independent quality assurance;
- appropriate forms and an adequate time-frame for following up the employability of alumni are described as is the relevance of the programme for the labour market.

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