Global College Malta

Quality and Standards Assurance Manual – Section 2 The Approval, Modification and Discontinuation of the College's Academic Provision

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GLOBAL COLLEGE MALTA

QUALITY ASSURANCE MANUAL (2021)

Section 2   The Approval, Modification and Discontinuation of the College's Academic Provision

1.   This section of the College's *Quality and Standards Assurance Manual* covers the approval, modification and discontinuation of programmes offered by Global College Malta (the College). The procedures and requirements for information shall be periodically reviewed, in the light of the College's own experience, national and international developments in the higher education sector and the advice and requirements of external bodies.

Programme Approval

2.   The College operates a risk-based approach to the development and approval of new programmes. The level of scrutiny applied to a proposed programme development will vary according to the volume of new provision being developed, the level of complexity of what is being proposed, and the resourcing implications for the College. The College's processes for programme development and approval are focussed both on securing academic standards and on seeking to enhance the quality of the student experience wherever possible.

3.   Proposals to develop a new programme for delivery by the College will be considered initially by the College's Senior Management Team. In considering new programme proposals account will be taken of a range of issues including likely student demand, any expressions of interest received from employer organisations and other interested stakeholders, feedback from students studying on any closely related programmes, and the staffing and resource requirements that would be required to deliver a high quality programme. Proposers bringing forward new programme proposals for consideration by the College's Senior Management Team should have regard to the guidance at **Appendix 6** to this *Manual*.

4.   If the College's Senior Management Team determine that the new programme proposal has merit, then approval will be given to allow the programme developers to undertake further development work. This further development work will then be considered by the College's Academic Management Group. If this additional development work also receives support from the Academic Development Group then final stage development work will be undertaken by the programme proposers before the programme proposal is formally considered by the College's Academic Board.

5.	In considering the programme proposal the College Academic Board will consider a draft programme specification, module descriptors for all the modules included in the proposed programme of study; a draft student programme handbook; and any other relevant supporting information about the curriculum, delivery and resourcing of the proposed programme.

6.	Subject to the final formal approval by the College's Academic Board, the College's Academic Management Group will work with the programme development team to secure the appropriate accreditation approvals from the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

7.	Any recommended action points which remain outstanding at the point of approval either by the College Academic Board of the MFHEA, or which relate to aspects which should be developed or monitored once the new programme study commences delivery, will be included in the first programme monitoring report. Progress against those action points will then be tracked through the College's programme monitoring system.

Approval of new modules

8.	If it is considered that the College would benefit from the introduction of a new module(s), offered either on a stand-alone basis or included in an existing programme of study, then the proposer for any such module is required to present the proposal to the College Academic Management Group for outline approval. In presenting a new module proposal, the proposer should complete a new Module Proposal (**Appendix 7** to this *Manual*) together with a draft module descriptor.

9.	If the College Academic Management Group supports the proposal it will then be considered by the College Academic Board. Subject to the final formal approval by the College's Academic Board, the College's Academic Management Group will work with the module proposer to secure the appropriate accreditation approval from the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

College procedures for the modification of academic provision

10.	Where a programme team wishes to modify an existing approved programme or module, any such changes must be approved prior to the academic session in which the changes will be implemented.

11.	All approved modifications to existing College programmes and modules must be reflected in the published programme specification and module descriptors. Changes must also be reflected in publicly available information; specifically, but not exclusively, the College's website and other publicity and marketing information.

12. Where modifications to programmes or modules will affect existing College student cohorts every effort should be made by the programme team to communicate the changes to all students and to seek feedback on the proposed modification(s) prior to implementation. Substantial changes to a programme or to a module may require explicit consent from existing students and/or communication with prospective applicants.

Modification of an approved programme of study

13. Where the proposed modification of a College programme is likely to have significant new resource requirements then a Programme Development Proposal (**Appendix 6** to this *Manual*) accompanied by indicative costings must be completed and submitted to the Academic Management Group for consideration. Following consideration and approval by the Academic Management Group, the procedures detailed below will be applied according to the nature of the proposal.

14. Proposed changes to existing approved College programmes will be considered by the College Academic Board. Such changes may include, by means of example:
    - amending modules already included in the programme of study from compulsory to optional, or vice-versa;
    - adding or removing existing approved modules;
    - replacing existing modules with new modules;
    - changing the mode of study from full-time to part-time, or *vice-versa*; and,
    - amending the normal period of study in which the programme is designed to be completed.

15. When suggesting amendments to a programme of study the Programme Team should submit the following information to the College Academic Board:

    - A completed Programme Modification Proposal (**Appendix 8** to this *Manual*);
    - An updated programme specification.
    - A completed New Module Proposal form for any new modules being proposed (**Appendix 7** to this *Manual*); and,
    - Draft module descriptors for any new modules.

16. Where the programme modification will either only involve the introduction of one new module, or a new module is intended to be included in multiple programmes, the information may be presented on the New Module Proposal form (**Appendix 7** to this *Manual*) without the need for a Programme Modification Proposal (**Appendix 8** to this *Manual*).

17. Where the introduction of a new module will result in the withdrawal of an existing module, a Module Withdrawal Proposal (**Appendix 9** to this *Manual*) should also be presented to the College Academic Board.

18. In considering the proposed programme modification(s), the College Academic Board will satisfy itself that there is a continued alignment between the programme title and its curriculum, and

the programme and intended module learning outcomes. Any new modules should be reviewed to ensure clarity of information and alignment with College policies.

19.   Subject to the approval of the College Academic Board the updated programme specification, and any new module descriptors should then be finalised. The College's Academic Management Group will then work with the programme team to secure the appropriate accreditation approval from the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Minor modification of approved modules

20.   The College requires programme teams and module leaders to regularly review and update module descriptors in order to ensure accuracy and currency of published information. The following are examples of aspects which may require revision:

- Updating key references;
- Changing the Module Leader;
- Minor amendments to module content which do not substantially change the focus of the module (e.g. updates to reflect changes to relevant legislation); and,
- Corrections or clarifications which do not change the meaning of the information and intended outcomes.

Major modification of approved modules

21.   More significant modifications to approved modules should be presented by the Module Leader to the Programme Team and then to the College Academic Board for approval in the academic year before they are to be implemented. Major modifications to modules which require approval may include, by means of example:

- Changes to module content which represents a shift in the focus of the module;
- Changes to the aims and/or learning outcomes;
- Changes to the methods and/or weighting of (re)assessment;
- Changes to the primary mode of delivery (e.g. classroom-based to online);
- Significant changes to contact hours which will may affect the student experience; and,
- Changes which will increase the resources required for the module above normal spending levels.

22.   For modifications of this nature the following documentation should be submitted to the College Academic Board:

- a Module Modification Proposal (**Appendix 10** to this *Manual*); and,
- a revised Module Descriptor.

23.   Subject to the approval of the College Academic Board, the College's Academic Management Group will then work with the programme team to secure the appropriate accreditation approval from the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Procedures for the withdrawal of academic provision

Withdrawal of a College programme of study

24. A proposal to withdraw a programme of study may be made by the College Senior Management Team, the College Academic Board or the Programme Team. The grounds on which a proposal may be made to withdraw a programme of study may include but are not limited to:

- Failure to meet minimum acceptable academic standards;
- Failure to recruit or register sufficient students to ensure viability;
- Failure to recruit to a programme of study for three consecutive years;
- Incompatibility with the College's corporate strategy and plans; and,
- Failure of the curriculum to retain currency or relevancy.

25. Application for the withdrawal of a College programme of study should be made to the Senior Management Team by means of a formal Programme Withdrawal Proposal (**Appendix 11** to this *Manual*). Programmes of study may be withdrawn without the withdrawal of their constituent modules if those modules are being used by other programmes. The proposal for the withdrawal of a programme of study should specify which, if any, modules comprising the programme of study it is also proposed should be withdrawn. In this instance the completion of a Module Withdrawal Proposal for the relevant modules will not be required.

26. If the College Senior Management Team recommends approval of the withdrawal to the College Academic Board, the Programme Withdrawal Proposal should then be received by the Programme Team and the College Quality Assurance Committee who will oversee any student teach-out period. Subject to the approval of the College Academic Board, the College's Academic Management Group will then work with the programme team to make the appropriate withdrawal notifications to the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

27. In terminating recruitment to a programme of study the College Senior Management Team should be given an indication of when the final award may be conferred for that programme. Provision shall be made by the College to ensure that all students already registered for the programme of study are able to complete their studies. Where appropriate, students may be offered the opportunity to transfer to a suitable alternative programme of study at the College.

Withdrawal of modules

28. Where a programme team wishes to withdraw a module from further delivery it should submit a Module Withdrawal Proposal (**Appendix 9** to this *Manual*) to the College Senior Management Team. Where the withdrawal is due to a new module being offered in its place, the withdrawal should be considered in parallel with the approval of the proposed replacement.

29.   Subject to the approval of the College Senior Management Team, the proposal to withdraw a module will then be considered by the College Academic Board. Subject to the approval of the College Academic Board, the College's Academic Management Group will then work with the programme team to make the appropriate withdrawal notification(s) to the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Public information and communication of withdrawal

30.   All information on the withdrawal of modules and programmes of study should be communicated by the Programme Team to the College's Academic Registrar and Marketing Team in order that all relevant public information and internal databases can be updated.

Appendix 6 to accompany Section 2 - The Approval, Modification and Discontinuation of the College's Academic Provision

NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FORM

PART 1

Please complete Part 1 of this form and submit to the Senior Management Team. Please note that there is no need to complete the rest of the Form until the Academic Management Group has confirmed that the proposal can proceed to Part 2.

Purpose of Part 1 of this Form:

- To gain an initial outline understanding of the proposed programme development and how the proposal aligns with the College's development strategy;
- To establish an initial overview of the likely demand for the proposed programme and the associated commercial profile; and,
- To decide whether the proposal may progress to Parts 2 and 3 of this Form.

PART 1 (to be completed by the staff member(s) presenting the proposal)

General

1	Name of person completing this form	
2	Name of proposed Programme	
3	Purpose of the Programme	
4	Fit with the College's development strategy	

5	Are there any opportunities for cross-programme working if the proposed programme was to be introduced?	
6	Mode of study (delete as applicable)	Full-Time / Part-Time / Both
7	Location (delete as applicable)	Smart City Malta / Distance Learning
8	Proposed start date	
9	Expected first intake	
10	Expected additional resources/support requirements	
	• Staff • Teaching space • Equipment • Library resources • Information Systems resources • Registry and Academic Administration • External Liaison and Student Services	

Commercial (summary information)

1	Key commercial reasons for offering the Programme	
2	Anticipated barriers to successful recruitment	
3	Expected student numbers in first year	
4	Expected student numbers in subsequent years	
5	Expected breakdown Full-Time / Part-Time	
6	Expected breakdown Malta home/EU/overseas	
7	Source of funding (student fee or other)	
8	Proposed fee	
9	Assumed fee income for first year	

Senior Management Team decision: CONFIRM THAT THE PROPOSAL CAN MOVE TO PART 2 or REQUEST FURTHER INFORMATION or REJECT (provide details below, if appropriate)

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PROGRAMME APPROVAL FORM

PART 2

Please complete Part 2 of this form and submit to the Academic Management Group. Please note that there is no need to complete the rest of the form until the Academic Management Group has confirmed that the proposal can proceed to Part 3.

Purpose of Part 2:
- To consider detailed market research on medium to long term viability;
- To identify any delivery capability gaps that may need to be addressed by the College;
- To consider the costing for the proposed Programme; and,
- To decide whether the proposal may progress to Part 3 of this Form.

PART 2 (to be completed by the staff member presenting the proposal and the Dean)

Commercial (detailed information)

1a	Competitor analysis (Malta and internationally)				
	Institution	Programme	Student numbers	Fees	Unique Selling Points of the programme
1b	List below any competitor institutions who are known to have withdrawn similar programmes recently with any known reasons why this might be the case				
	Institution	Programme	Reasons for withdrawal		
2	Evidence of demand from employers				
	Method(s) of gathering evidence	(please attach evidence)			
3	Evidence of demand from students				
	Method(s) of gathering evidence	(please attach evidence)			
4	Statement of support from External Examiner, if appropriate (please attach)				
5	Articulation (list below opportunities for progression from other Global College Malta programmes or other providers in Malta or internationally)				

6	Evidence from any other sources which are considered relevant to the proposal

COSTING TO BE ATTACHED

Please include any notes on the costing that may be of interest to the Academic Management Group below:

Academic Management Group decision: CONFIRM THAT THE PROPOSAL CAN MOVE TO PART 3 or REQUEST FURTHER INFORMATION or REJECT (provide details below, if appropriate)

PROGRAMME APPROVAL FORM

PART 3

Please complete Part 3 of this form and submit to the College's Academic Board. Please note that the Academic Board will receive Parts 1 and 2 of this Form (minus any redacted content) together with Part 3.

It is important to complete Part 3 as fully as possible to allow the Academic Board to make an informed decision and for the Programme to subsequently be marketed as *'subject to approval'*. No information on the Programme can be advertised until such time as the title, core modules, core content, structure and fees have been agreed and the College's Academic Board has confirmed that the Programme can proceed to formal approval. Once that process is complete, the College's Marketing Team can advise on appropriate content of advertising materials, and College Admissions should be consulted on entry requirements.

Purpose of Part 3:

- To consider and provide feedback on the academic proposal;
- To identify opportunities for cross-programme working; and,
- To seek approval from the College's Academic Board so that the proposed programme can proceed to formal approval.

PART 3 (to be completed by the proposed Programme Leader)

Name of proposed Programme	
Subsidiary exit points (if any)	
Proposed Programme Leader	

1	Fit with College's operational plan
2	Philosophy and aims of the proposed programme
3	Outline structure and delivery pattern – core and elective/new and existing modules

4	Learning, teaching and assessment strategy
5	Information on any placement arrangements or work experience opportunities (if applicable)

Academic Board decision: CONFIRM THAT THE PROPOSAL CAN MOVE TO VALIDATION or REQUEST FURTHER INFORMATION or REJECT (Secretary to the Academic Board to insert details below, if appropriate)

Appendix 7 to the Manual

New Module Proposal

This form should be used for proposing new modules for approval. Where the new module is being introduced in order to modify a programme of study and this will be the only change, or where the module will be included across multiple programmes, information on the modifications(s) may be presented on this form without the need for a Programme Modification Proposal in addition.

1. Module Details			
Code	**Module Title**	**Level of Study**	**ECTS Credits**
Module Developer			

2. Module Proposal			
Stand Alone Module	☐	**For inclusion in existing programme**	☐
Please give a brief reason for the introduction of the Module.			
Date of planned first delivery			
Title of module(s) being replaced (if applicable)			
Will the replaced module(s) be withdrawn completely?		Yes ☐	No ☐

3. Programme(s) of Study
If applicable, please list all the programmes in which the new module will be included

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Sections 4 to 7 of this Form do <u>not</u> need to be completed where the new module is being put forward as part of a number of modifications to an existing programme. In such a situation, evidence of consultation and consideration of public information should be captured in a Programme Modification Proposal form (please see **Appendix 8**).

4. Student Consultation		
Modification applies to:	**New cohorts ☐**	**Existing students ☐**
Where the new module/programme modification will affect existing students please confirm that:		
a) **The proposed change has been communicated to all affected students**	**Yes ☐** **No ☐**	**N/A ☐**
b) **An opportunity for students to provide feedback on the new module/programme modification has been provided**	**Yes ☐** **No ☐**	**N/A ☐**
Please summarise below any feedback received from students about the new module/programme modification and how this has been addressed (if necessary)		

5. External Examiner Consultation	
To be completed by the External Examiner	
Name of the External Examiner	
Any comments received from External Examiner:	
Change approved by Examiner ☐	**Change not approved by Examiner** ☐
To be completed by the Module Developer/Programme Leader	
Where appropriate, please respond to any comments made by the External Examiner and indicate whether the proposed module has been amended in the light of any such comments.	

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6. Public Information

Publicly available information relating to the programme(s) affected by the introduction of this module has been checked to ensure continued currency and accuracy in light of this proposed modification	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is it considered that publicly available information will require amendment in light of the introduction of this module?	Yes ☐	No ☐
If yes, please provide details of the amendments to publicly available information which it is considered will be required:		
Is it considered that the introduction of the proposed module will require direct communication with prospective applicants to inform them of the change?	Yes ☐	No ☐
If yes, and subject to College and MFHEA approval, please forward this proposal to the College's Marketing Team		

7. New Module Costing

Start-up Costs	€	Date Required	Funding Source
Capital equipment			
Library Resources			
Initial Marketing and Recruitment			
Total start-up costs			
Recurrent costs	€	Date Required	Funding Source
Staffing			
Teaching materials			
Software and licences			
Staff development			

STUDY WORLD
Global College Malta

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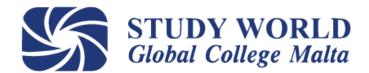
Total recurrent costs			

8. Supporting Documentation

Documentation	Required	Attached	
Module Descriptor	**All new modules**	Yes ☐	
Module Withdrawal Form(s)	**Withdrawn modules**	Yes ☐	N/A ☐
Revised Programme Specification(s)	**Programme modification(s)**	Yes ☐	N/A ☐

9. Endorsement
Completion of this section confirms that the proposed programme modification has been discussed and agreed by the College Senior Management Team and the College Academic Board and is subject to MFHEA approval

Role	Name	Date of Endorsement
College Principal		
College Academic Dean		

10. Approval

Date approved by the MFHEA	

Appendix 8

Programme Modification Proposal

This Form should be used for proposing changes to existing programmes of study at the College. Where a modification involves introducing one new module and this will be the only change, information on the modification may be presented using a New Module Proposal (**Appendix 7**) instead.

All sections must be completed prior to consideration by the College Academic Board.

1. Full title of programme to be modified
Programme Leader	

2. Proposed Modification
Proposed Date of Implementation	
Please provide details of the proposed programme modification(s)
Please describe why the proposed programme modification(s) are being put forward

3. Resources
Will any additional resources be required to support this proposal?	Yes ☐	No ☐
If yes, please indicate what and provide an indicative estimate of costs.

4. Student Consultation
Proposed programme modification applies to:	New cohorts ☐	Existing students ☐

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Where the programme modification will affect existing students please confirm that:			
a) The proposed change has been communicated to all affected students	Yes ☐	No ☐	N/A ☐
b) An opportunity for students to provide feedback on the programme modification has been provided	Yes ☐	No ☐	N/A ☐
Please summarise below any feedback received from students about the programme modification and how this has been addressed (if appropriate)			

5. External Examiner Consultation		
To be completed by External Examiner(s)		
Name of External Examiner(s)		
Comments from External Examiner(s):		
Proposed modification endorsed ☐	**Proposed modification not endorsed** ☐	
To be completed by Programme Leader		
Please respond to the External Examiners' comments (where applicable). Indicate whether the proposed programme modification has been amended in the light of any such comments.		

6. Public Information		
Publicly available information relating to this programme has been checked to ensure continued currency and accuracy in light of this proposed modification	Yes ☐	No ☐
Is it considered that publicly available information will require amendment in light of this proposed modification?	Yes ☐	No ☐

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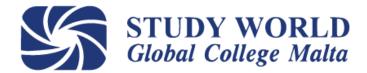| If yes, please provide details of the amendments to publicly available information which will be required:		
Is it considered that the proposed modification will require direct communication with prospective applicants to inform them of the change?	Yes ☐	No ☐
If yes, and subject to College and MFHEA approval, please forward this proposal to the College's Marketing Team		

7. Supporting Documentation

Document	Required	Attached	
Revised Programme Specification	**All programmes**	Yes ☐	
New Module Proposal(s) and supporting information	**Programme modifications involving new modules**	Yes ☐	N/A ☐

8. Endorsement
Completion of this section confirms that the proposed programme modification has been discussed and agreed by the College Senior Management Team and the College Academic Board and is subject to MFHEA approval

Role	Name	Date of Endorsement
College Principal		
College Academic Dean		

9. Approval

Date approved by the MFHEA	

Appendix 9

Module Withdrawal Proposal

This Form should be used to propose the permanent withdrawal of a module. Where the module is being replaced by a new module this Form should be presented alongside the New Module Proposal. Information on modules which are being withdrawn as a consequence of the withdrawal of a programme of study should be captured on the Programme Withdrawal Proposal (**Appendix 11**) instead.

Module title and College code			

Date from which module will no longer be available			

Programme(s) of Study which offered this module			

Proposed Replacement Module (if applicable)			

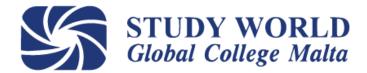| Reason for the proposed withdrawal			
Failure to enrol sufficient students to ensure viability	☐	Incompatible with the College's strategic plans	☐
Curriculum no longer retains currency or relevancy	☐	Other (state below)	☐

Consultation and Endorsement		
Role	Name	Date
Module Leader		
Programme Leader		

Approval	
Date of approval by the College Academic Board	

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Once approved by the College Academic Board and notified to the MFHEA a copy of this form should be sent to the College Registrar

Appendix 10

Module Modification Proposal

This Form should be used for proposing changes to existing modules. Where changes to the title, level of study or credit value are proposed a new module must be created with reference to procedures in the College's *Quality Assurance and Standards Manual.*

1. Module Details			
Code	**Module Title**	**Level of Study**	**ECTS Credits**
Module Leader			

2. Proposed Modification
Proposed date of implementation
Please indicate the nature of the proposed modification by ticking the appropriate categories below.

Module Content ☐	Aims ☐	Learning Outcomes ☐	Assessment ☐
Reassessment ☐	Primary mode of Delivery ☐	Contact Hours ☐	Other ☐

Please specify what changes are being proposed

Please explain why the proposed module modification(s) are being put forward

3. Resources		
Are any additional resources required to support this proposal?	**Yes ☐**	**No ☐**

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If yes, please indicate what and provide an estimation of costs.

4. Student Consultation

Please summarise below any feedback received from students about the proposed module modification and how this has been addressed (if necessary)
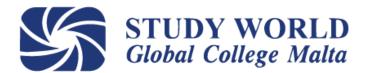

5. Supporting Documentation

Documentation	Required	Attached
Module Descriptor	**All modules**	**Yes** ☐

6. Endorsement
Completion of this section confirms that the proposed programme modification has been discussed and agreed by relevant Heads of Subject

Role	Name	Date of Endorsement
College Principal		
College Academic Dean		

7. Approval

Date approved by the MFHEA	

Appendix 11

Programme Withdrawal Proposal

This Form should be used to propose the permanent withdrawal of a programme of study.

1. Programme of Study
Award and Title of Programme
Proposed year of last intake
Anticipated year of final award conferment
Recent Admissions Profile *Provide the profile for the most recent three years available, including the intake targets and actual recruitment*

2. Rationale for the proposed programme withdrawal

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3. Withdrawal of Modules

List any modules which will be withdrawn as a consequence of the withdrawal of the programme [this should not include any modules which are currently being used within other College programmes of study or which it is intended to use in the development of new College provision] (add more rows to the cable below, as necessary)

Module Code	Module Title

4. Programme management during the Student Teach-Out period

Management of the Students' Programmes
Provide information on the arrangements for the phasing out of the programme with particular reference to the maintenance of the quality and standards of the programme and the academic experience of the remaining College students. The information provided should address how the College might best manage those students who intercalate; withdraw for reasons of ill health and return at a later point in the programme; and those who are required to repeat a year of study for reasons of academic failure

External Examiner(s)
Describe the external examining arrangements to the end of the programme (including to those students referred to in the latter section of the previous header box)

5. Resources

Physical Resources
Give a brief account of any physical resources which will be released as a result of the withdrawal of the programme.

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Staffing Resources
This section should provide an assessment of the impact on the management of the staffing resources and identify staffing resources released on withdrawal of this provision

Learning Resources
This section should assess any impact of the proposed programme withdrawal on the learning resources associated with the programme.

6. Endorsement		
Completion of this section confirms that the proposed programme modification has been discussed and agreed by relevant Heads of Subject		
Role	Name	**Date of Endorsement**
College Principal		
College Academic Dean		