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**Policy for Consulting with Prospective or Existing Students about Programme and Module Changes**

**Approved by Learning and Teaching Committee on 14 June 2017**

1. **Introduction**

To enable us to enhance our programmes, ensure they remain current and up-to-date, respond to external changes and for a number of practical reasons the University reserves the right to make changes to the programmes and their constituent modules both before students register and over the lifetime of their registration.

The following is a list of the typical reasons why the University might need to make changes to programmes and modules, either before students commence their studies or during their studies:

• Student feedback

• Feedback from external examiners

• Feedback from employers

• Amendments to professional body accreditation requirements

• Enhancement of the curriculum to ensure it reflects the latest developments in

the subject

• Changes to the member of staff teaching the module as a result of decisions

about the most effective deployment of staff

• Departure from the University or temporary non-availability of members of staff

• Low or high demand for particular programmes or modules

• External factors beyond our control

The above is communicated to prospective and current students in the University’s [Terms and Conditions of Study.](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/study/apply/supporting/terms-conditions/)

1. **Major and Minor Changes**

Changes to programmes and modules are categorised as follows:

Major changes: A major change is a change which is considered to be a ‘fundamental’ change to a programme and module. These are changes to a programme or module title, aims, learning outcomes, content, regulations, delivery and assessment methods which:

* (for prospective students) it may reasonably assumed to impact on their ability to make an informed decision to apply for a programme.
* (for existing students) it may reasonably assumed that, if known at the time of application / module choice, may have impacted on their decision to apply for the programme or choose the module.

Minor changes: In cases where there are minor changes to a programme or module the policy to consult with students does not need to be followed, but it is good practice for Schools to keep students informed of these changes. Minor changes include changes to module title, and to programme and module aims, learning outcomes, content, delivery and assessment methods which are not considered to constitute a ‘fundamental’ change. Minor changes include:

* Change to a module title to more accurately reflect module content
* Changes to programme or module aims, learning outcomes or content which do not fundamentally alter the overall nature of the programme or module
* Changes to module delivery or assessment method which do not fundamentally alter the nature of how the module is delivered or assessed (for example, altering the overall balance between coursework and examination by 20 percentage points would be considered minor, but changing from 100% coursework to 100% exam, or vice versa, would be considered a major change).

Minor changes do not include changes to programme title, regulation changes or changes which may be seen to disadvantage students. These are considered to be major changes.

1. **Consulting with existing students about major changes**

Schools should formally consult existing students affected by a proposed major changes via an email to their university email address. It is best practice that student views are also sought at the relevant Staff Student Liaison Committee.

The consultation should include an outline of the proposed changes, the rationale and, if applicable, other study options available.

A non-objection or a nil-response will be considered to be an agreement to the change.

Where students are in agreement with a proposed change then it can be implemented. Schools should communicate the outcome of the consultation to all students and ensure that all programme documentation (prospectus, programme specification, programme handbook) is accurately amended to reflect the change.

Where at least one student is in disagreement with a proposal to make a major change, then a decision about whether to proceed with the proposal should be referred to Curriculum Sub-Committee. In coming to a decision, CSC to take into account:

* whether, if known at the time of application / module choice, the change may have impacted on their decision to apply for the programme or choose a module.
* whether the change is advantageous or disadvantageous to the students
* the timing of the change (for example, whether it is an immediate change or a change for the next academic session, in which case students may have the option to make different study choices)

Schools will be expected to communicate the decision of Curriculum Sub-Committee to students via their university email and relevant SSLC. Schools should to ensure that all programme documentation (prospectus, programme specification, programme handbook) is accurately amended to reflect the change.

1. **Notifying prospective students about major changes**

Prospective students should notified of major changes that will affect the programme they have applied for.

The Admissions Office is responsible for formally notifying major changes to prospective students.

Schools are responsible for identifying the need to notify prospective students and for providing the content of that communication, including an outline of the changes, the rationale and other study options available. This communication should include options for the prospective student to withdraw from the programme and, if required, reasonable support should be made available to transfer to another provider.