|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| New course approvals External input and student consultation |  |

All new course proposals should provide evidence of consultation in line with the [approval category](https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/directories/academic-section/academic-standards-and-quality/course-approval-process-overview.pdf).

New courses and developments benefit from independent and impartial input and advice, by providing a comparison with the quality and standards of similar courses and awards elsewhere, and by offering feedback on the course and module design. Feedback can be sought through a range of external expertise, for example, external academics, employer and industry contacts and professional bodies. Please note ongoing consultation with employers will be vital when designing a new apprenticeship.

# External academic input

The department should identify and approach external expert(s). Use of an external expert for approval purposes does not affect the subsequent eligibility of that individual for nomination as an external examiner.

## Category 1 and 2 new course approvals

* For category 1 new courses, the current External Examiner should be consulted. In most instances review of category 1 new course materials is considered to be a component of an External Examiner's core [roles and responsibilities](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/academic-standards-and-quality/external-examiner-roles-and-responsibilities) and is encompassed within the agreed annual fee. In the rare situations where new course materials are seen to represent a substantial increase in workload for an External Examiner, a discretionary additional payment of may be made. The allocation of an additional fee is to ensure parity of workload and pay for External Examiners across the University of Essex, and its allocation will be determined by QUAD in consultation with the External Examiner's appointing Department.
* For category 2 new courses, an independent external academic expert should be consulted (see [criteria for appointment as an External Examiner](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/quality/external_examiners/criteria_for_nomination.asp)).
* A [template external academic expert report](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/quality/Reports_and_proformas/default.asp#course) is provided as a guide to the questions the external should be asked to comment on.
* The external expert for category 2 new courses is entitled to a fee of £150.00 on completion of their written report. The department should pay the external expert's fee and claim it back via the QUAD team.

## Category 3 new courses (approval via a validation event)

* Members of validation panels are approved by the Chair as part of preparation for validation events.
* The department will be asked to identify external experts who are qualified to join the validation panel.
* A case for nomination, including the external’s CV, should be sent to the QUAD team who will liaise with the Chair to seek approval.

# Professional input

Input from industry contacts and professional bodies helps to design courses which are responsive to the needs of industry, enterprise and employers. The University’s Strategy includes an objective to provide a range of opportunities for students to apply their learning, including the integration of experiential, work-related and entrepreneurial learning in the curriculum.

For more information, including department responsibilities, please refer to the guidance on [professional, statutory and regulatory body recognition](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/quality/monitoring_and_review/psrbs.asp) and on [work-based and placement learning](https://www1.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/WBL.asp).

# Student consultation

Students offer valuable insight into their experience and perception of a course or module. Working in partnership with our students is embedded within the University’s Strategy, which includes objectives for seeking input and ideas from our students, and for supporting staff and students to co-produce relevant, responsive and inclusive curricula and learning opportunities.

Wherever possible, and for all category 1 course proposals, departments should provide evidence of student consultation and how this has been responded to.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Document owner** | Quality and Academic Development |
| **Document author** | Quality and Academic Development |
| **Document last reviewed by** | Aminah Suhail, Quality and Academic Development Manager |
| **Date last reviewed** | August 2024 |
| **Review frequency** | Annually |