Northern School of Contemporary Dance

Annex C.1 Programme Approval & Revisions Framework

Document	Annex C.1 – Programme Approval & Revisions Framework
Part of	NSCD Quality Code
Purpose	Single reference document setting out how NSCD manages the processes of approving new programmes of study and revisions, review, suspension and withdrawal of existing programmes.
Document owner	Quality Office
Lead contact	Quality & Regulations Manager
Audience	NSCD & Partner Staff
Approving body	Senate
Implementation	September 2026
Review cycle	3 yearly by the Quality Office

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1. Principles

1.1. NSCD is required to have strategic oversight of and to consistently apply effective processes for the design, development, approval, changes and closure of programmes.

1.2. This document provides a structured framework for the approval, review, amendment, suspension, and closure of programmes of study. Its purpose is to ensure that all academic provision is of high quality, academically rigorous, financially sustainable, and aligned with institutional strategy and external expectations.

1.3. The policy applies to staff and students for all new and existing programmes, including collaborative provision, and covers the full programme lifecycle from initial concept through validation, periodic review, amendment, and, where relevant, closure.

1.4. The appendices of this document provide more in-depth guidance on programme design, the completion of paperwork and the management of validation panels.

1.5. **Key Principles**

1.5.1. **Academic Standards and Quality**
All programmes must meet internal academic regulations and relevant national frameworks, including qualification descriptors, subject benchmark statements, and sector quality codes. Programmes must provide coherent learning pathways, robust assessment strategies, and opportunities for students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

1.5.2. **Student-Centred Design**
Students should be actively involved at the earliest practical stage in programme design, development, review, and enhancement. Student feedback should inform decision-making, and programme structures should promote accessibility, inclusivity, and student success.

1.5.3. **Strategic Alignment**
Programme proposals must contribute to institutional priorities, complement the existing portfolio, and demonstrate relevance to employer, industry, or societal needs.

1.5.4. **Sustainability and Resourcing**
Programmes must be supported by appropriate staffing, facilities, technology, student services, and financial planning. Approval should only be granted where sufficient resources are confirmed.

1.5.5. **Transparency and Accountability**
Decision-making processes must be clearly documented, with defined responsibilities, timelines, and approval routes.

2. Definitions & Timescales

2.1. The table below sets out the definitions and timescales for the approval of new programmes and revisions to existing programmes plus standard validation lengths.

2.2. The timescales refer to the maximum time from initial discussions to commencement of programmes, with more detailed timeframes outlined for each process in sections 5-9 of this document.

Term	Definition	Timescale
Validation	The curriculum design and approval of a new programme of study	2 years
Minor Revisions	Changes to an existing programme of study at module level that do not result in changes to the programme specification	6-12 months
Major Revisions	Changes to an existing programme of study that result in changes to the published programme specification	18 months – 2 years
Revalidation	Significant major revisions to a validated programme of study that require a full review of the programme or re-validation at the end of the current validation period	18 months – 2 years
Suspension	The temporary withdrawal of a validated programme of study	6-12 months
Closure	The permanent withdrawal of a validated programme of study	6-12 months
Standard validation period	The length of time that the programme is validated to run before a re-validation is required	5 years

3. Committee Roles in the Approval and Revisions Processes

3.1. Authority is delegated by the school, via the Senate to PASC and LTQAC and where appropriate, to Faculty sub committees to make proposals and decisions regarding programme approval and revisions.

3.2. Multiple committees within the Academic Governance structure are involved in the scrutiny and approval processes, as set out in the table below.

Committee / Department	**Role in programme approval processes**
Audit Committee	Responsible for signing off the due diligence checks on proposed new partnerships prior to PASC.
Programme Approval Sub-Committee (PASC)	PASC is the coordinating sub-committee delegated by Senate to support the process of a programme being suggested for approval, for major revisions and for programme suspension or withdrawal. If a new programme is approved at PASC it triggers the programme design & validation process. The membership and responsibilities of PASC are set out in its Terms of Reference.
Validation Panel	The Validation Panel is the main scrutiny and decision-making panel for new programmes of study or re-validation of existing programmes. Membership and responsibilities of Validation Panel are set out in its Terms of Reference.
Learning, Teaching & Quality Assurance Committee (LTQAC) / Partnerships LTQAC	Considers new programmes and changes to existing programmes of study at various points in the planning process. Is responsible for initial discussions regarding proposals for new programmes and revisions to existing programmes. Is responsible for the scrutiny of programme documentation and approval of final drafts of course changes and proposals to be sent to Senate and/or PASC. Keeps teaching, learning and assessment methodologies under review and offer advice on the school's portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
Senate	Senate sign off is required to confirm the decisions of each PASC and Validation Panel regarding new programmes and major changes, withdrawal and suspension of existing programmes, and for reporting these decisions to the Board of Governors. Senate has sole authority to sign off minor changes to existing programmes of study proposed by LTQAC/PLTQAC.

4. Staff & Department Roles in the Approval and Revisions Processes

4.1. The leadership, through PASC, have responsibility to the school for the oversight of proposals for new courses, and major changes and closure of existing programmes and must have a method of oversight, particularly to ensure that decisions are taken independently of the home subject area of the course.

4.2. However, many departments have input into the processes; the table below sets out the role of specific departments in the validation and revisions processes.

Staff / Department	Role in programme approval processes
Vice Principal	Chair of PASC, Senate and Validation Panels. Responsible for carrying out due diligence checks on proposed new partners and acting as Partner Liaison.
Quality Office	Responsible for the management and documentation of the programme approval & revisions processes, including providing secretariat support for PASC and Validation Panels, and for the formal oversight of programme and course documentation.
Director of Studies / Head of Faculty / Programme Lead	Responsible for the design and planning of new programmes and revisions to existing programmes. The Director of Studies (or equivalent at partner institutions) are the delegated authority from the Vice Principal to make suggestions to PASC for new programmes and major changes to existing programmes.
Faculty staff	Involved in the programme design and revisions proposals alongside the Director of Studies and Head of Faculty, with faculty representation required on validation panels.
Students	Student body: consulted during programme planning process LTQAC & Senate student members: provide student perspective during review at Committees Validation Panel: student panel member reviews rationales and programme documentation and provides comments and questions to the faculty.
External Advisers	At least one external panel member sits on the Validation Panels to review rationales and programme documentation and provide comments and questions to the faculty.

5. Procedures for the validation of new programmes of study

5.1. Overview

5.1.1. Validation is the quality assurance process used to scrutinise a proposed new programme of study. An informed and impartial panel considers a programme(s) in order to confirm it meets (or continues to meet) both institution and external expectations of standards and quality, offers (or continues to offer) high quality learning opportunities for students, and delivers (or continues to deliver) high quality student retention, progression and outcomes.

5.1.2. The validation process provides the programme team(s) with an opportunity to explain how the programme will operate in practice. This process provides the programme team(s) with an opportunity to share experiences and learning from the wider perspective and insight afforded by discussion with colleagues and external peers.

5.1.3. Development of NSCD's validation process has taken account of the Office for Students' (OfS) Conditions of Registration, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

5.1.4. NSCD reserves the right to apply flexibility, within its validation process, to allow agility where required. When doing so NSCD adopts a risk-based approach and ensures continued compliance with relevant national and NSCD policies and requirements. The Quality Office must approve all such arrangements in the first instance.

5.2. Timeline

5.2.1. The table below sets out the ideal timeframe for the validation process; all programmes must usually be fully validated in the summer term or no later than September of the year prior to their intended start date/next intake date; e.g. September 2026 for September 2027 intake.

Stage	Action	Timeline
Stage 1	Faculty / LTQAC discussion & due diligence (as needed)	September - December
Stage 2	Programme approval	December
Stage 3	PASC & Senate approval - PASC outcome & documentation deadlines issued	January
Stage 4	Programme design & consultation	February - March
Stage 5	Documentation scrutiny & amendments – Validation panel date & final documentation deadlines arranged	March - April
Stage 6	Validation Panel	May
Stage 7	Validation Report & final approval	June
Stage 8	Validation conditions & recommendations	July-Sept
Stage 9	Publication & recruitment	October
Stage 10	Programme commencement	Following September
Timescale:		**Process: 1 year** **To commencement: 2 years**

5.3. Process

Stage 1 - Faculty / LTQAC Discussion & Due Diligence (as needed)

5.3.1. For internal NSCD programmes, stage 1 is the discussion stage that takes place at Faculty alongside market research and student consultation, and initial programme proposals considered at LTQAC.

5.3.2. For partner programmes, initial discussions, market research and student consultation should take place at the partner institution and with the NSCD Partner Liaison, who should carry out due diligence of proposed new partnerships during this stage *(see annex B.1 Collaborative Academic Partnerships Framework*).

Stage 2 - Programme Approval Form

5.3.3. A programme Proposal (PA Form) is submitted to be considered at PAsC, to obtain strategic planning approval for a proposed programme(s). Should LTQAC agree to submit a new NSCD programme of study for approval, the Head of Faculty should submit a Programme Approval form to the Quality Office for consideration at PASC. For partner programmes, once due diligence is complete and signed off by the Audit Committee, the partner should submit a partner programme approval form to the Quality Office for consideration at PASC.

5.3.4. During the development of the Programme Approval Form that will be presented to the PASC, the proposing team should arrange to meet with their Quality Office to identify matters, which may affect the validation process such as any anticipated variance from the Academic Framework see *Annex A.1 Academic Regulations and Credit Framework*.

5.3.5. All proposals for a new programme, at all levels of study, must be accompanied by a business case presented in the PA form. A Business Case should include all forecast student numbers, market research and marketing strategy, strategic planning, costs and income for the first year of the programme and four subsequent years.

5.3.6. Further guidance on completion of the PA form can be found in *Appendix A – Programme Approval & Revisions Guidance*

Stage 3 - PASC & Senate Approval

5.3.7. Before the validation process can begin, strategic planning approval of a proposal is required. Successful completion of this stage confirms support for a proposal from the Executive Leadership team and the governors, Management Team (MT) and NSCD's Academic Planning, fees and approval committee known ad Programme Approval sub committee (PAsC) and then signed off from Senate to go ahead to a Validation panel. Only when all four have approved a proposed programme can it proceed to validation.

5.3.8. PASC will receive the PA form and consider the institutional fit, academic level, internal and external compliance and sustainability of the programme and/or partner, raising any questions to be addressed in the validation process and either approving or rejecting the proposal to move into the validation stage. The full responsibilities and membership of PASC are set out in its terms of reference.

5.3.9. Once a programme has received strategic planning approval from PaSC, submits the decision to Senate for sign off and issues a PASC outcome letter to the faculty/partner, outlining the timescale for submission of documentation.

Stage 4 - Programme Design

5.3.10. Programme and course design and development is carried out at faculty level. Programme design is a creative activity which may result in innovative ideas for higher education provision. It is followed by a process of development which leads to the creation of a programme or course. This is where the content, modes of delivery, structure and components of the programme or course (including assessment and feedback methods and the means by which students will be engaged with the curriculum) are considered and, for programmes, developed into a coherent programme of study.

5.3.11. Areas which should be addressed through the Design to validation stages.

- Purpose, rationale (inc. market research) and overview of the programme, organisational delivery including resources and staffing.
- Business model and costing of the programme with finance director's sign off. (see section 5 below)
- Programme structure (inc. credit framework and level of award)
- Programme Aims which address the purpose of the programme
- Programme Learning Outcomes outline what the student must demonstrate to meet the programme outcomes
- The coherence of the programme, its alignment with NSCD's core values and sector relevance and currency.
- Entry requirements (Qualifications and experiential learning) and how this is assessed upon application stage.
- Student support mechanisms and provision
- Study abroad options (where it is possible for an NSCD to study abroad for credit)
- In terms of collaborative provision, Where other providers are involved and/or impacted: evidence of consultation; consideration; communication of impact; and support for the proposal. Confirmation of primary responsibility should be defined at the outset so that we are clear who owns the programme from the offset.
- Evidence of consultation with relevant external parties (e.g. employers, alumni, business, industry or professional contacts). In programme approval, the involvement of individuals external to the School is required to offer independent insight and objectivity to the decisions taken.
- Accessibility: to show that NSCD can design programmes to be accessible to all students and to demonstrate plans to mitigate barriers through an inclusive approach to curriculum design.
- Student engagement: Students must be proactively involved at the earliest practicable point in programme and course design, development, approval, changes and closure processes. Involvement should be through consultation activities ensuring representation across the student body with relevance to the programme under proposed development. Student voice should be included through

student feedback from QA processes. For further guidance on engagement of students in the validation process refer to *Appendix A – Programme Approval & Revisions Guidance*

5.3.12. Programme proposals should take into consideration internal reference points such as:

- The latest school; institutional strategy document, Learning teaching and assessment strategy, research and scholarly activity strategy, Knowledge exchange strategy.
- Taught degree credit framework and assessment regulations.
- This curriculum policy
- Inclusive cultures strategy
- Graduate attributes framework
- Working with others policy
- Work based learning and placements policy

5.3.13. Programme proposals should take into consideration external reference points such as:

- Relevant and current QAA subject benchmark statements
- QAA Quality Code
- OfS B conditions of registration
- QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications

5.3.14. For detailed guidance on programme design, refer to *Appendix B – Curriculum Design & Programme Writing Guide*

Stage 5 - Documentation Scrutiny & Amendments

5.3.15. Under the direction of the relevant Faculty or institute head arrangements will be put in place to review and endorse draft documentation, at faculty-level, to proceed to institutional validation. This endorsement stage is a technical review of the draft submission. The purpose of this aspect of the process is to ensure the appropriateness of the submission prior to it being received by the panel.

5.3.16. For internal NSCD programmes, documentation should be submitted to LTQAC for scrutiny prior to submission to the Validation Panel.

5.3.17. For partner programmes, scrutiny should take place at the partner institution alongside the NSCD Partner Liaison, with programme and module specifications submitted to the Quality Office for scrutiny prior to submission to the Validation Panel.

5.3.18. School endorsement confirms that:

- The proposal is in line with the expectations of the faculty (or equivalent), as agreed within the planning proposal approved by PAsC (for programmes undergoing validation).
- The submission is aligned with the relevant NSCD regulations and policies.
- A complete submission has been prepared and provided by the programme team.
- As applicable, any convergent activities (i.e., an application for variance) have been fully approved, and appropriate evidence of approval is included within the submission.

- As required, the Quality Office has supported the School-level review and sign-off of the submission through the provision of advice and guidance, particularly with regard to the Academic Framework and relevant Academic Policies.

5.3.19. NSCD's core programme documentation comprises:
- Programme Rationale Document
- Course Overview Diagram
- Programme specification(s)
- Module specifications
- Application for variance to NSCD academic regulations (as required)

5.3.20. For further guidance on the content of each document, refer to *Appendix A – Programme Approval & Revisions Guidance*

5.3.21. Following endorsement by LTQAC and/or the Quality Office, the final documentation submission deadline and Validation Panel will be organised by the Quality Office.

Stage 6 - Validation Panel

5.3.22. Arrangements for validation panel will be agreed in by the Quality Office and Chair of the Validation Panel. Once agreed, the Quality Office will confirm in writing, to all attendees, the agreed approach, the timeline of activity and documentary requirements, and will also provide any applicable templates.

5.3.23. Membership of the panel will be secured by the Quality Office, with the exception of external and student panel members, who should be nominated by the programme team. Information on the role of each panel member can be found in *Appendix A – Programme Approval & Revisions Guidance* and full details of the panel's responsibilities and membership requirements are set out in its terms of reference.

5.3.24. The Quality Office will prepare the documentation for the panel, which will comprise:
- The itinerary for the event and a list of panel members
- The programme documentation as set out in stage 7
- Advance comments form for panel members
- CVs for relevant university or partner staff (academic and key technical staff as appropriate)
- Organisational chart/structure
- Programme approval and revisions guidance
- Fee/expense claim form (external panel members only)

5.3.25. The panel is required to read the full set of documentation and submit advanced comments to the Quality Office prior to the panel, by the set deadline. These comments will be collated by the Validation Panel Chair and will be used to inform the agenda of questions for the meetings. Comments will be shared with the programme team, in advance of the event, to promote transparency and aid preparation.

5.3.26. The panel will be facilitated through a face to face, virtual or hybrid event. Whichever approach is utilised to conduct the validation event, should the panel wish to see physical resources as part of their consideration of a programme, this can be facilitated through mechanisms such as photographs and/or videos of applicable resources. If a programme(s) is moving from an existing site to a new site, a site approval activity must always be completed before teaching at the new site begins.

5.3.27. The panel typically follows this format:

- Private meeting of the validation panel – to identify which questions raised in the advanced comments have been evidenced through the documentation, and which should be raised to the faculty panel. This stage should be completed a week in advance of the main panel where possible, to enable selected questions to be submitted to the faculty to allow for preparation.
- Faculty panel discussion – faculty presents the rationale for the programme and answers questions raised by the validation panel.
- Private meeting of the validation panel – to discuss the faculty panel responses and make a decision regarding the validation outcome.
- Feedback to faculty panel – to deliver the outcome of the validation, this may occur on the same day as the panel meeting, or at a later date if further discussion is required. The feedback to the faculty panel will include a summary of any conditions, and associated deadlines, recommendations and identified good practice.

Stage 7 - Validation Report & Final Approval

5.3.28. To confirm completion of the validation process, a Validation Report is collated by the Validation Panel Chair and Quality Office. The report is regarded as the formal record of the process, and it will be filed by the Quality Office alongside the validation papers. The Validation Report should include:

- Outcome of the validation panel, which may include:
    - Approval/re-approval, with/without conditions and/or recommendations
    - Non-approval, with detailed reasons
- The approved period of validation
- Any compulsory conditions arising from validation will be detailed points of action that must be fulfilled satisfactorily by an agreed date. The panel and the Chair will agree how responses to conditions will be considered.
- Any recommendations that the panel believe would improve the proposal but are not compulsory.
- Areas of good or innovative practice highlighted by the panel.
- A summary of the panel findings in relation to programme design and curriculum content, learning and teaching strategy, student support and resources, admissions and recruitment, and quality and standards.

5.3.29. A positive approval decision confirms that:

- The threshold academic standards of the programme(s) are consistent with the relevant national qualifications framework and any applicable sector-recognised standards.
- The programme(s) provides educational challenge and is coherent.
- The programme(s) is effectively delivered.

- The programme is effectively assessed, contains appropriate assessment opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of the programme learning outcomes, and each assessment is valid and reliable.
- The programme(s) requires students to develop relevant skills.
- The qualification awarded to students is credible and is only awarded to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any sector-recognised standards.
- Where applicable, the programme(s) aligns with relevant subject benchmark statements.
- The programme(s) is up-to-date and valid considering developing knowledge in the discipline and developments in teaching and learning.
- The programme(s) has been designed in line with NSCD's Academic Framework Regulations and relevant NSCD policies. Where applicable, any variances to the Academic Framework have been clearly articulated and these have been approved according to NSCD procedures.
- There are sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources, student support services and appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience and to support students succeeding in and beyond higher education.

5.3.30. The validation report will be circulated to the panel for approval, and final sign-off will be confirmed by the Chair. Once approved by the panel, the Quality Office will submit the report to the Head of Institution/Faculty and will update *Annex C.2 NSCD Programmes Catalogue*.

5.3.31. The validation report received final sign off by NSCD Senate and validation outcomes reported via Senate to the Board of Governors.

5.3.32. Panel members and the programme team will be asked to provide feedback after the validation process has concluded, to identify any suggested enhancements and/or any features of good practice arising from the process.

Stage 8 - Validation conditions & recommendations actioned

5.3.33. All responses to compulsory conditions should be returned to the Quality Office, by the programme team, who will ensure they are approved through the process agreed by the panel. If further action is identified, this will be relayed to the programme team with a new timescale to produce the further information. If a response to the conditions is not received by the relevant deadline, this will be reported to Senate for consideration.

5.3.34. Recommendations are not requirements, but they are suggestions that may necessitate action by the programme team. After the programme's first year of operation, it is expected that programme teams address recommendations via NSCD's Annual Programme Monitoring process. It is expected that the programme team will indicate how the recommendations have been considered and whether (or not) any action is being taken to incorporate them in the programme, outlining this in their school academic action plan.

5.3.35. For collaborative programmes, the Memorandum of Agreement with the partner institution will only be signed once all conditions have been met and the programme has been signed off by Senate.

Stage 9 – Publication & Recruitment

5.3.36. Finalisation and publication of the programme & module specifications will be organised by the Quality Office, and the versions of the specifications considered by the panel will be archived with the panel paperwork. Finalised programme specifications for internal and partner programmes will be published on the NSCD website, at this point the programme is regarded as 'live' and the Admissions Team or partner is able to make offers to applicants. If agreed by the panel, a programme may be advertised as 'subject to validation' but its status must be valid and approved by Senate prior to applications opening in October.

5.3.37. For collaborative provision, the programme specification(s) will not be published until the associated Memorandum has been signed.

5.3.38. For internal programmes, the marketing information will be developed by the recruitment marketing team, in conjunction with the Curriculum Lead.

Stage 10 – Programme commencement

5.3.39. The validated programme must commence no earlier than the date published on the programme specification.

5.3.40. Where a programme has been revalidated, changes apply only to new entrants, continuing students will continue on the version of the programme that they registered on.

6. Procedures for Revisions to Existing Programmes of Study

6.1. Minor Revisions to Existing Programmes

Definition of Minor Revisions

6.1.1. Minor Revisions are changes to module content or administrative aspects of modules, resulting in an amendment to the module specification, but not to the programme specification. As the module specifications are not published publicly, revisions to these can be made in a shorter timeframe, and be implemented in the next academic year, for all cohorts.

6.1.2. Examples of minor changes are:

- Changes to type and allocation of teaching and learning activities
- Changes to assessment weightings
- Change in number of assessments
- Change in assessment mode or length
- Change in teaching and learning strategies
- Changes to the module description and synopsis
- Changes to the wording of student learning outcomes
- Change to the term in which a module is delivered

Timeline for Minor Revisions

Stage	Action	Timeline
Stage 1	Discussion	September - January
Stage 2	Programme Revisions Form	October or January
Stage 3	Documentation scrutiny & amendments	October or January
Stage 4	Senate approval	January or April
Stage 5	Documentation finalised & published	April - August
Stage 6	Implementation of changes	September
Timescale:		**Process: 6 months** **To implementation: 1 year**

Process for Minor Revisions

Stage 1: Discussion

6.1.3. For internal NSCD programmes, initial discussions for minor changes take place at faculty level and LTQAC where necessary.

6.1.4. For partner programmes this stage should take place at the partner institution in consultation with the NSCD Partner Liaison and Quality Office to ensure compliance with regulations.

Stage 2: Programme Revisions Form

6.1.5. Following initial discussion, the Head of Faculty/programme lead should submit a programme revisions form to the Quality Office. This form covers the proposed changes, affected modules, rationale and resource implications. Revised module specifications should be submitted alongside the Programme Revisions Form.

6.1.6. If on review of the form, the Quality Office deems the proposed changes to be major, this will be referred back to the Head of Faculty/programme lead and the Major Changes process initiated.

Stage 3: Documentation scrutiny & amendments

6.1.7. The Programme Revisions Form and accompanying module specifications will be checked by the Quality Office to ensure regulatory compliance and will then be submitted to LTQAC for scrutiny and approval. LTQAC may approve, reject or approve the proposal pending recommended changes.

6.1.8. For partner programmes, the proposed changes will be considered by the Partner Liaison and Quality Office and submitted to Partnerships LTQAC for consideration.

Stage 4: Senate approval

6.1.9. Senate has sole authority to approve minor revisions. Once LTQAC approval has been secured, and programme documentation finalised, the Quality Office will submit the Programme Revisions Form and finalised specifications to Senate for final sign off.

Stage 5: Documentation finalised & published

6.1.10. Following Senate approval, the Quality Office will archive previous versions of module specifications, publish new versions of the module specifications on Teams for staff and Moodle for the applicable cohort of students.

Stage 6: Implementation of changes

6.1.11. As module specifications are not published in the public domain, or made available to students until the year of delivery, minor revisions to modules are immediately applicable to the next cohort of students (i.e. if changes to a module in stage 2 of a BA are approved in June 2026, these changes will be applicable to the cohort taking that module in the 2026/27 academic year).

6.2. Major Revisions to Existing Programmes

Definition of Major Revisions

6.2.1. Major Revisions are changes to modules or programmes that result in changes to the programme specification but are not significant enough to trigger a full revalidation. As the programme specifications are published publicly for applicants, revisions to these must be approved and published prior to the start of the recruitment cycle, therefore the process should begin 18 months – 2 years before the implementation of the changes. Major changes apply only to the new intake of students, with the previous version of the programme specification running out with continuing students.

6.2.2. Changes to any of the following are considered major:

- Name and title of modules
- Credit value of modules
- Programme Learning outcomes
- The overall approach to assessment for the programme
- A change in the balance of credits between different components of the programme (e.g. between core/option modules, modules on different pathways)
- The mode of study – part time, full time
- The place of study/home institution - on NSCD campus or distance learning
- The period of study
- Collaboration or change of partner

Timeline for Major Revisions

Stage	Action	Timeline
Stage 1	Discussion	September - April
Stage 2	Programme Revisions Form	January or April
Stage 3	PASC approval	January or April
Stage 4	Documentation scrutiny & amendments	January or April
Stage 5	Senate approval	April or July
Stage 6	Documentation finalised & published	July - September
Stage 7	Implementation of changes	Following September

Full process timescale:	Process: 6 months To implementation: 2 years

Process for Major Revisions:

Stage 1: Discussion

6.2.3. For internal NSCD programmes, initial discussions for minor changes take place at faculty level and LTQAC and should include student, staff and external consultation.

6.2.4. For partner programmes this stage should take place at the partner institution in consultation with the NSCD Partner Liaison and Quality Office to ensure compliance with regulations.

Stage 2: Programme Revisions Form

6.2.5. Following initial discussion, the Head of Faculty/programme lead should submit a programme revisions form to the Quality Office. This form covers the proposed changes, affected modules, rationale, resource implications and details off staff and student consultation.

6.2.6. Revised programme and module specifications should be submitted alongside the Programme Revisions Form. If relevant, an updated course design map should also be provided (e.g. if there is a change in the balance of credits/delivery structure of modules).

6.2.7. If on review of the form, the Quality Office deems the proposed changes to be significant enough to warrant a revalidation of the programme, this will be referred back to the Head of Faculty/programme lead and the re-validation process initiated.

Stage 3: PASC Approval

6.2.8. Major changes to programmes require approval by PASC. The Quality Office will determine, based on the extent of changes proposed, whether a meeting of PASC is required or whether the proposal can be signed off via Chair's Action (e.g. if there is a significant change in credit structure which may require discussion, as opposed to a simpler change such as module title)

Stage 4: Documentation Scrutiny & Amendments

6.2.9. The Programme Revisions Form and accompanying programme and module specifications, plus an updated course design map, will be checked by the Quality Office to ensure regulatory compliance and will then be submitted to LTQAC for scrutiny and approval. LTQAC may approve, reject or approve the proposal pending recommended changes.

6.2.10. For partner programmes, the proposed changes will be considered by the Partner Liaison and Quality Office and submitted to Partnerships LTQAC for consideration.

Stage 5: Senate Approval

6.2.11. Once PASC and LTQAC approval has been secured, and programme documentation finalised, the Quality Office will submit the Programme Revisions Form and finalised programme documentation to Senate for final sign off.

Stage 6: Documentation Finalised & Published

6.2.12. Following Senate approval, the Quality Office will archive previous versions of programme and module specifications. Finalised programme specifications for internal and partner programmes will be published on the NSCD website, and the Quality Office will publish new versions of the module specifications on Teams for staff and Moodle for the applicable cohort of students.

Stage 7: Implementation of Changes

6.2.13. As major changes alter the programme specification, which is published in the public domain, changes should be signed off before the recruitment cycle begins and changes only apply to new entrants who applied for the revised programme. Continuing students will remain on the version of the programme that they registered on.

7. Procedures for Review of Existing Programmes of Study

7.1. Revalidation:

7.1.1. Revalidation is the full review of a programme and is applicable when:

- significant major changes are proposed or
- when the current period of validation ends

7.1.2. As the programme specifications are published publicly for applicants, revisions to these must be approved and published prior to the start of the recruitment cycle, therefore the process should begin 18 months – 2 years before the implementation of the changes. Revalidated programmes apply only to the new intake of students, with the previous version of the programme specification running out with continuing students.

7.1.3. The following major changes are considered significant and require a full revalidation of the programme:

- The title of the programme (other than to correct spelling or syntax)
- The level of the course
- The addition, closure or major change to modules comprising 20% of the total credit volume of the programme, or at least 50% of the credit volume in any single year of the programme.

7.1.4. Revalidation follows the same process and timeline as a new validation.

7.1.5. For a revalidation due to significant major changes, the Quality Office may recommend a 'light touch' validation process to be agreed with the Validation Panel Chair, for example, when the only change is a change in programme title.

7.2. Suspension or withdrawal of programme:

7.2.1. A decision to suspend or withdraw a programme, either for strategic reasons or due to low recruitment, should be agreed by Senate and reported to the Board of Governors. This applies to internal NSCD and partner programmes of study.

7.2.2. The Head of Faculty/Director of Studies should submit a suspension of programmes or withdrawal of programmes form to the Quality Office, who will submit this to Senate for approval and update Annex C.2 Programmes Catalogue.

7.2.3. If a programme is withdrawn due to exceptional circumstances during active delivery, then the Student Protection Plan will apply to enrolled students on that programme.

7.3. Periodic Programme Review:

7.3.1. Programme Review (PPR) is the periodic (normally every 6 years) appraisal of the quality and validity of taught provision leading to specified Northern School of Contemporary Dance qualifications. It applies to all of the School's credit-bearing provision. For full details refer to *Annex E.2 Periodic Programme Review Policy*

8. Appendices and Related Documents

8.1. Appendices: located on Microsoft Teams

Appendix A: Programme Approval & Revisions Guidance
Appendix B: Curriculum Design & Programme Writing Guide
Appendix C: New Programme Approval Form (PA form NSCD)
Appendix D: New Programme Approval Form (PA form Partners)
Appendix E: PASC outcome letter
Appendix F: Programme Specification Template
Appendix G: Module Specification Template
Appendix H: Academic Staff CV Template
Appendix I: Programme Rationale Template
Appendix J: Validation Panel Advanced Comments Form
Appendix K: Validation Report Template
Appendix L: Validation Panel Feedback Form
Appendix M: Programme Revisions Form (PR form)
Appendix O: Suspension of Programmes Form
Appendix P: Withdrawal of Programme Form
Annex C.2 – Programmes Catalogue

8.2. Related Documents: published on the NSCD website

Annex A.1 – Academic Regulations and Credit Framework
Annex B.1 – Collaborative Academic Partnerships Framework
Annex E.2 – Periodic Programme Review (to be published)