f)   course documentation (including handbooks) provide a clear, accurate and accessible summary of the course for students and other stakeholders, reflecting the requirements of relevant consumer protection legislation

g)   appropriate staffing

h)   appropriate resourcing (including relevant and up-to-date reading lists, and use of technology-enhanced learning where suitable)

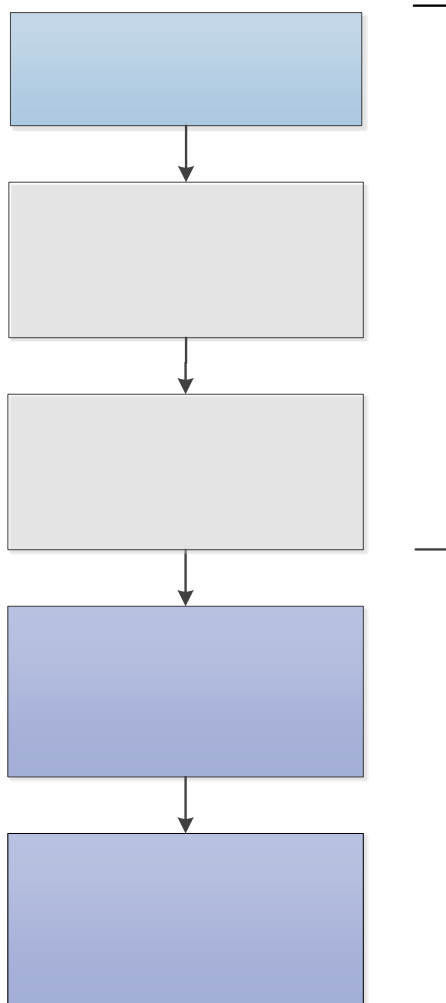i)   compliance with internal academic regulations.

1.5   While the validation process is ultimately designed to ensure that the proposed new course is of an appropriate quality and academic standard to warrant a University of Suffolk award, an important element of the process is enhancement of the proposal through constructive discussion and debate with internal and external experts. All discussions as part of the validation process are therefore expected to be conducted in the spirit of a 'critical friend', with an emphasis on securing ongoing enhancement.

2.   Timescales

2.1   Sufficient time and resource should be allocated to enable thorough scoping of the academic and business case for the proposed new provision, and for subsequent detailed course design and development work. This is vital in terms of ensuring that new courses are viable from both an academic and financial perspective and reflect the principles of good, inclusive course design.

2.2   IQ EMo Tm13(f)-14(l)5(ec)13(t)-4( )]TÆTQq0.000008871 0 595.32 841Q EMo Tgb0008871 0 595.32 8

Validation event	
Response to validation panel conditions or recommendations	6 weeks
Approval of response by validation panel chair	2 weeks

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┌─────────────────────────┐                    ┐  School level
│  New course proposal    │                    │  portfolio planning
│  initiated within School│                    │  and development
└─────────────────────────┘                    │  stage (including
            │                                   │  establishing the
            ▼                                   │  academic and
┌─────────────────────────┐                    │  business case for
│ Course proposal form and│                    │  the planned new
│ accompanying business   │                    │  course in liaison
│ case completed in liaison│                   │  with relevant
│ with relevant           │                    │  external
│ stakeholders            │                    │  stakeholders and
└─────────────────────────┘                    │  internal academic
            │                                   │  and administrative
            ▼                                   │  support teams,
┌─────────────────────────┐                    │  including Registry
│  Proposal submitted to  │                    │  Services and Quality
│                         │                    │  Assurance and
│      for approval       │                    │  Enhancement)
└─────────────────────────┘                    ┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Proposal submitted to  │
│                         │
│     for approval of the │
│       business case     │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Proposal submitted to  │
│                         │
│  for final approval to  │
│  proceed to publicity   │
│  and validation (under  │
│  delegated authority of │
│  Senate)                │
└─────────────────────────┘
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3.5   There are two aspects to the approval process at this stage:

      i)   Approval of the business case by the Portfolio Oversight Committee, based on a recommendation from the School Executive.

      ii)   Approval of the initial proposal from an academic perspective, which is undertaken by the Quality Committee.

3.6

Procedure for the validation of new courses

to identify support that would benefit the course team and how this might be provided

to confirm arrangements for the completion of the documentation and preparation for the validation event.

5.   The course validation process

5.1   For most courses, the validation process involves a validation event where a panel of internal and external experts meet to discuss and approve the proposed new course, based on:

their prior consideration of a standard set of course documentation compiled by the course team; and

meetings with the course team and, where relevant, students during the event.

5.2   This standard course validation process is summarised below. Appendix A outlines differences to standard procedures that apply in certain circumstances, including

where paper-based validations are used as an alternative to a face-to-face event
approving courses involving significant online delivery
approving higher or degree apprenticeships
approvingladiradternative mode of delivery forC q0.000008871 0 595.32 841.92 B;DC q0.00000887

6.7 A final version of all relevant documentation must be submitted to the Validation and Exams team (validation@uos.ac.uk) in an agreed electronic format at least three weeks in advance of the validation event. A longer timescale may be required where PSRBs are involved.

6.8 For the validation event, a briefing pack is sent to members of the validation panel in hard copy at least two weeks in advance of the event. The validation pack typically includes:

> a list of panel members
> an agenda for the validation event
> guidance notes for panel members
> course validation document and course handbook
> travel information for relevant panel members
> fee claim forms / guidance for external panel members

6.9 All other documentation is provided electronically via a file sharing site.

7. Validation panels

7.1 The validation panel includes a range of representatives who are able to judge the academic integrity of the course in relation to relevant internal and external reference points. Within the panel as a whole there should be sufficient understanding of the subject matter and academic context to enable the panel to make a sound judgement. Panel members should not have been involved in the detailed development of the course. Panel membership is subject to approval by the Chair of the Quality Committee.

7.2 Panel membership for proposed new courses typically comprises:

> Chair (a member of University of Suffolk academic or academic-related staff)
> at least one external academic subject expert (selected by the University in liaison with the relevant academic school)
> at least one employer representative (nominated by, but not closely associated with, the course team)
> PSRB representative(s), where relevant
> at least one member of University of Suffolk academic staff (where possible from a cognate discipline area but outside the relevant academic school)
> student representative (from outside the subject area under consideration and on an equivalent level course, i.e. undergraduate or taught postgraduate)
> Quality Assurance and Enhancement representative
> Learning Services representative.

7.3 All validation panels will be serviced by a member of the Validation and Exams team or a senior University administrator.

7.4 In the absence of any panel members on the day of the event, the decision as to

least half of the panel should be present, including the Chair and the external academic subject expert(s).

7.5   A peer from the University or one of its partner institutions may be invited to attend a validation event as an observer to facilitate the observer's staff development and the sharing of good practice, subject to the agreement of the Chair.

Criteria for the appointment of validation panel chairs

7.6   The University will establish a pool of validation panel chairs. Chairs within the pool should:

a) be a member of University of Suffolk academic or academic-related staff with continuing, substantive involvement in course delivery and/or in the management of learning, teaching and assessment

b) have appropriate experience and demonstrable competence in chairing meetings

c) have knowledge and understanding of University of Suffolk quality assurance and enhancement processes

d) have undergone relevant training on chairing course validation events.

7.7   The Quality Assurance and Enhancement team will liaise with Deans of School to agree potential candidates for inclusion in the pool of validation panel chairs.

7.8   In allocating chairs to particular validation events, independence and impartiality will be a key consideration. The Chair should be from a different academic school to the proposed new course.

Criteria for the appointment of external panel members

7.9   External academic panel members are identified and appointed by the University and should be able to demonstrate:

a) appropriate competence and experience and continuing active involvement in the relevant subject discipline(s)

b) relevant academic and/or professional qualifications, normally to at least the level of the qualification being presented for validation, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate

c) knowledge and understanding of relevant external reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality

d) competence and recent experience relating to the design and delivery of programmes of study within the relevant subject discipline(s) to at least the level of the qualification being presented for validation

e) for higher or degree apprenticeships, preferably familiarity with delivery of apprenticeship programmes.

7.10 Employer representatives on the panel are nominated by the course team and appointed by the University and should:

a) be an employer or professional representative of the sector in which graduates might be expected to work

b) be of an appropriate level of seniority or have significant recent professional experience within the relevant field

c) possess sufficient experience within the sector to be able to comment on the relevance of the course for those wishing to gain employment in the sector.

7.11 Where relevant, external panel members may also need to satisfy additional criteria set by PSRBs.

7.12 The appointment as an external panel member of anyone in the following categories or

decide, under the delegated authority of Senate, whether the proposed course should be validated.

7.14 A checklist setting out guidance for validation panel members (including a separate guide for student panel members) is available on the course approval, modification and review pages on the University website. This guidance is sent out to all panel members with the validation documentation.

8. The validation event

8.1 A course validation event normally takes place over a half day or full day depending on the size and nature of the award(s) being validated. In addition to private meetings of the validation panel, a meeting with the course team is a key part of the event. A meeting with students on related programmes may also be appropriate where there is signao.

aware of its role in judging whether, and the extent to which, the course meets requirements to achieve validation.

Concluding meeting of the panel

8.11 The Chair will normally commence the final private meeting of the validation panel by asking each of the panel members to give a view on whether the proposed course should be:

a) validated outright with no conditions, requirements or recommendations (in which case no further action by the course team is required)

b) validated with conditions and/or requirements and/or recommendations (in which case the course team must provide evidence that the conditions and/or requirements have been met and must respond to any recommendations within the agreed timescales)

c) not approved.

8.12 In exceptional circumstances the

b) a detailed plan for the core module to illustrate the tasks students and staff are expected to complete at various stages in the delivery and assessment of the module

c) an illustrative example of how induction and orientation will occur for the learners

d) a detailed description of the available support for online learners (including tutorial

changes. In doing so the panel will need to be cognisant of the implications for existing courses in which the module is used.

5.4. In exceptional circumstances the panel may decide that it has to set a condition relating to an existing module. Any such outcome will be closely monitored by the Validation and Exams team, in liaison with the Head of Quality Enhancement, in order to ensure that appropriate action is undertaken by the module leader and all leaders of courses in which the module is used through the course modification process.