

12 ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP: DEGREE PROGRAMMES AND MODULES

Designation of programme leaders

- 12.1 Degree programme leaders are formally recognised at the point of first approval of a degree programme, on an open-ended basis. HN programme leaders are formally recognised via a Faculty-led process. The programme leader is normally employed by the responsible academic partner.
- 12.2 Where a programme leader demits the role, or indicates their intent to do so, the principal of the responsible academic partner must immediately inform the relevant Dean of Faculty of the situation. Wherever possible, this should be at least one semester before a change in programme leadership needs to take place.
- 12.3 If advance notice cannot be given for a need to change programme leadership, the principal of the responsible academic partner must agree interim measures with the relevant Dean of Faculty until a new programme leader is appointed. In any case, a replacement should be nominated within three months of a programme leader demitting the role (or notifying their employing academic partner of intent to do so).
- 12.4 Normally the responsible academic partner will propose a replacement programme leader, to the Dean of Faculty for consideration by completing a programme leader expression of interest form. The Dean will present the proposal to the Faculty Board, which is responsible for approving the new programme leader.
- 12.5 If approved, the responsible academic partner ensures that the following are informed of the change in programme leadership where appropriate:
- students on the programme
 - programme committee
 - admission and marketing staff at all relevant academic partners and at Executive Office
 - external examiners
 - awarding body (if this is not the university).

Change of responsible academic partner for a degree and HN programme

- 12.6 If an academic partner does not wish to continue as responsible academic partner for a programme, or is unable to propose a replacement programme leader acceptable to the Faculty Board within three months of an existing programme leader demitting the role, the principal must inform the relevant Dean of Faculty of the situation.
- 12.7 The Dean of Faculty will then invite all other academic partners to express an interest in assuming this responsibility. Academic partners who are interested in assuming the role of responsible partner should submit a rationale and provide details of the proposed programme leader using the programme leader expression of interest form.
- 12.8 The Dean of Faculty will present the proposal(s) to the Faculty Board, which will determine which academic partner is the most suited to take over as responsible academic partner.

Members of the Faculty Board who are employed by any of the academic partners who have expressed an interest should not take any part in the decision-making process.

- 12.9 If the Faculty Board does not approve any proposal, or if the Faculty Board cannot reach agreement between nominees, the Deputy Principal, in consultation with the relevant Dean of Faculty, will form a panel to resolve the issue.
- 12.10 Once a change of responsible academic partner has been approved, the outgoing responsible academic partner will ensure that the following are informed of the change in programme leadership where appropriate:
- students on the programme
 - programme committee
 - admission and marketing staff at all relevant academic partners and at Executive Office
 - external examiners
 - awarding body (if this is not the university).

Designation of module leaders

- 12.11 The designation of module leaders will be co-ordinated by the Associate Dean and approved by Joint Faculty Executive.
- 12.12 Module leaders are formally recognised at the point of first approval of the module, on an open-ended basis.
- 12.13 Module leaders are expected to fulfil the tasks specified in the module descriptor.
- 12.14 Where a module leader demits the role, or indicates their intent to do so, they must inform their Associate Dean, line manager within their academic partner and the Programme Leader. Wherever possible, this should be at least one semester before a change in module leadership needs to take place.
- 12.15 If advance notice cannot be given of the need to change module leadership, the line manager within the relevant academic partner must agree interim measures with the relevant Associate Dean and Programme Leader until a new module leader is appointed. In any case, a replacement should be nominated within three months of a module leader demitting the role (or notifying their Associate Dean and line manager of their intent to do so).
- 12.16 The Associate Dean, responsible academic partner and Programme Leader will agree whether the module needs to be continued and a replacement module leader required.
- 12.17 The programme leader and academic partner of the demitting module leader will be invited to propose a replacement module leader to the Associate Dean for endorsement. The expertise required will be reviewed and due consideration will be given to the distribution of module leadership across the university. The Associate Dean will then present the proposal to Joint Faculty Executive for approval.
- 12.18 If no recommendation is made from the academic partner of the demitting module leader or Joint Faculty Executive does not approve the recommendation all other academic partners will be invited to express an interest in assuming the module leadership.

- 12.19 The Faculty Liaison Coordinator will inform the following of the available module leadership and invite expressions of interest to be submitted to the Associate Dean.
- HR Practitioner Group
 - Academic Planning Committee (APC) representatives
 - Quality Managers
 - Programme Leaders
 - Associate Deans.
- 12.20 Those interested in taking up the module leadership should complete an Expression of Interest Form. Each expression of interest must confirm that the individual has the full support of their academic partner.
- 12.21 Where only one expression of interest has been received the Associate Dean, if endorsed, will make a recommendation to Faculty Executive which is responsible for approving the designation of module leaders.
- 12.22 Where more than one expression of interest has been received the Associate Dean and a second Associate Dean from outwith the faculty will consider the expressions of interest and make a recommendation to Faculty Executive for approval.
- 12.23 The Associate Deans will seek to reach a consensus on the most appropriate module leader and make a recommendation to Joint Faculty Executive. If no consensus can be reached by the Associate Deans or Joint Faculty Executive, the Dean of Faculty is responsible for the final decision.
- 12.24 Internal expressions of interest will be considered in the first instance, with external nominations only being invited if a suitable internal staff member cannot be found.
- 12.25 If an external module leader is chosen, the responsible academic partner must ensure that they comply and engage with university legal and contractual obligations. This may be achieved through the nomination of an internal deputy module leader if necessary. Where an external is chosen, consideration should be given to implementing a buddy system wherever possible.
- 12.26 Once approved, the responsible Associate Dean ensures that the employing academic partners with expressions of interests are informed of the outcome.
- 12.27 The Faculty Liaison Coordinator will forward details of the new module leader to the Student Records Office (SRO). SRO will ensure these details are updated in SITS.
- 12.28 Once approved the programme leader must ensure that the following are informed.
- students on the module
 - relevant programme committee
 - external examiners
 - awarding body (if this is not the university).
- 12.29 An annual summary of all decisions will be sent to Academic Planning Committee for noting so that the volume and trend of such decisions can be monitored.

Allocation of teaching responsibilities within a module team

- 12.30 The module leader, within the context of a programme team, is responsible for determining the mode of delivery for that module and thus how much of it is taught by the module leader and how much is taught by other members of the module team, e.g. 100% face-to-face; 40% online and 60% face-to-face local delivery; 100% online.
- 12.31 All members of the module team will be listed within the relevant module descriptor.

Allocation of students to each of the delivering members of a module team

- 12.32 When the mode of delivery is 100% face-to-face, students will be allocated to the member of the module team delivering at the academic partner where the students are based.
- 12.33 When the mode of delivery is a combination of face-to-face and online delivery, students can be taught by staff located across the partnership.
- 12.34 When the mode of delivery is 100% online, teaching will normally be shared between members of the module team regardless of location. Students will be grouped into cohorts and each cohort allocated to a member of the module team, with the module leader being allocated the first cohort.
- 12.35 It is recognised that a significant number of such allocations will not divide quite so evenly across the network. When such a situation arises, it will be the responsibility of the Associate Dean to lead discussion between the relevant line managers from each of the delivering academic partners to ensure that a solution is reached.
- 12.36 If the mode of delivery and / or suitable allocation of students are disputed by the module team, an arbitration process will apply. An advisory panel comprising the Head of Academic Standards and Enhancement, the relevant Associate Dean and a senior member of academic staff who is not substantively involved in the module, will seek to broker an agreement with the module team. The advisory panel will provide a final decision if an agreement with the module team cannot be brokered.
- 12.37 Timetabling the delivering members of the module team is the responsibility of the appropriate line manager within each employing academic partner.

Creation and identification of new module and programme teams

- 12.38 When new curriculum is proposed, the Associate Dean will circulate a rationale and business case to members of the cognate subject group and Academic Planning Committee representatives, who are responsible for notifying relevant colleagues in their academic partner. Sufficient information on indicative academic content should be included to enable decision-making, but this will not be binding on the final programme structure.
- 12.39 This communication will include an agreed deadline and the appropriate contact details for the submission of any interest in joining the programme development team.

Academic Standards and Quality Regulations 2025-26
Academic leadership: degree programmes and modules

- 12.40 All respondents seeking to be part of the programme development team must confirm that they have the full support of their academic partner in undertaking this role.
- 12.41 During the curriculum development phase, all staff who have expressed interest in joining the programme development team will be advised of outline module titles and proposed module leaders.
- 12.42 When the proposed module leader is unopposed, their designation as module leader will be confirmed at the point of approval of the programme.
- 12.43 Where more than one member of the programme development team is interested in leading a module, or where no module leader can be identified from within the programme development team, then the existing process for appointing a module leader will apply. It is the responsibility of the relevant Associate Dean to oversee this process.