Guidance on Completion of Undergraduate or Postgraduate New Course Proposal Forms (SENAS)

New course proposals are required:-

- where the content being proposed is entirely new or
- where the content of an existing course is being substantially modified such that a student could not reasonably be assessed on it without re-attendance

After scrutiny and approval at the School level, all proposals to offer a new course should be submitted online by way of the SENAS SharePoint site. The proposal will be considered initially by the relevant Head of School, College and, subsequently, by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

In completing the new course proposal, please note the following:-

All boxes must be completed, where appropriate;

Please note that question 29 allows for additional space for the inclusion of information not captured elsewhere; or the continuation of answers where appropriate space is not provided.

2. Course Co-ordinators must be either a member of academic staff or an Honorary member of the academic staff of the relevant School. The Head of School is ultimately responsible for the course. This does not preclude “bought-in”; (including relief) teachers having a major role in organising and delivering a course (but not a programme).

5. Please select Postgraduate or Undergraduate, doing so will determine the questions to be asked on the remainder of the form.

6. Undergraduate: The provision of Sixth Century Courses (6CC) and Sustained Study Programmes (SSP) is determined by UCTL and reviewed on an annual basis.

6. Postgraduate: Please state if the course is a Dissertation or Project Course.

8. An existing course may be replaced by a new course in one of two ways:
   (a) when it is no longer appropriate to offer a course (e.g. when the course content is no longer applicable or if the Course Co-ordinator has left the University) and the School wishes to withdraw the course and replace it by a new course on a different topic;
   (b) when a new course covers similar material to an existing course but the content is sufficiently different to require a different assessment.

9. With regards 8 (a) and (b) above, there may be implications of withdrawing a course in regard to pre- and co-requisites for other courses and to the degree programme(s) associated with the course. While it is not necessary to complete a separate course withdrawal proposal, you should confirm whether a course is to be withdrawn. Please indicate those programmes for which the course being withdrawn is either a compulsory or optional component (the Registry can help to identify those programmes offered by other Schools for which the course is prescribed, if necessary).
10. Although the University’s courses (and programmes) are consistent with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), all of the University’s systems and publications relate to Aberdeen (UoA) levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCQF Level</th>
<th>UoA Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>UG5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>PGT5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a course is to be offered at more than one level i.e. at levels 3 and 4, the teaching and/or assessment must differ between the two levels to recognise the distinction. Details of the enhanced teaching and/or assessment arrangements must be included as appropriate for both levels.

11. Enter the academic year in which the course will be offered for the first time (e.g. 2015-2016).

12a. Enter the half-session during which the course will be offered. The first half-session teaching period runs for 11 teaching weeks, from September to December and the second from, also for 11 teaching weeks, from January to May.

12b. If the course spans both first and second half-sessions, or comprises less than 11 weeks of teaching within either half session, please indicate this.

13a. 1 credit point should equate to 10 hours of notional effort that an “average” student would be expected to devote in order to achieve the learning outcomes. This includes time spent in attending the course, in private study and in revision for the assessment.

13c. The overall grade for each course is used to determine overall GPA degree classification, with the credit values of each course determining their relative weightings. In the case of zero credit-rated courses this would usually be zero, i.e. does not count towards GPA determination. If however Schools wish a particular zero credit-rated course to count towards the overall GPA, the relative weighting of this towards the determination of the overall award must be clearly stated on the SENAS form. This would be given in ‘pseudo’ credits points. For example please see paragraph 7.7.39, example 2, of the Code of Practice on Assessment.

14. Examples of the rationale for a proposal include:-

- in response to feedback (e.g. from students, External Examiners, employers, professional or statutory bodies etc.)
- as a consequence of teaching staff changes
- as a consequence of course review
- as part of programme review
- to meet strategic objectives
15. There are a range of external reference points that exist outside the University, to which courses co-ordinators are directed (see below). Please list in the box provided those to which you have aligned your course.

**Subject Benchmark Statements** are an important point of reference for a new course. These have been generated by panels of expert practitioners in each field represented (lists are provided at the end of each), and provide a framework of topics typically covered in each subject, wherever it is taught in the UK. **They should not be viewed as prescriptive;** rather they provide a snapshot of the broad themes that a subject might be expected to cover. Clearly specific research specialisms are concentrated in particular Schools and areas, and the flavour of the curriculum and the diet of courses developed will quite rightly reflect this. Also to note is that many subjects are cross- and multidisciplinary, hence course co-ordinators are advised to be aware that their course proposal might span more than one of the statements.

The **QAA Quality Code for Higher Education** comprises important documentation that all course-co-ordinators need to be aware of. In the context of course design Part B, sections B1, B3 and B7 are of particular relevance. Much of the information contained within the Codes of Practice has informed existing University policy detailed in the relevant section of the **Academic Quality Handbook**.

The **Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework** (QEF) is a unique approach to balancing both quality assurance and enhancement. This replaced the old quality assurance process of Subject Review in 2005, and is unique to Scotland. Course co-ordinators’ attention is drawn here to the **Quality Enhancement Themes**, the outcomes from which provide a range of resources, developed by academic colleagues in Universities across Scotland that can be adapted and used in the course design process.

**Professional & statutory body requirements and/or guidance:** whilst not applicable to all subjects, course-co-ordinators will be aware of their own particular professional and/or statutory body (PSB) requirements. Please indicate which, if any of these have been referred to during the production of the course.

*Notwithstanding all of this information, course co-ordinators will be aware of other external points of reference from their own practice (e.g. from working as an external examiner, from other informal contacts with colleagues etc.) which can also be referred to at this point.*

16c. There should be good and specific reasons to seek permission to cap courses (e.g. maximum number of students). A sound academic case for capping should be included for consideration by the QAC. In the event that permission to cap a course is granted by QAC, it should be noted that the operation of any capping system will be regularly reviewed by the Committee to ensure that students’ choice of curriculum is not being significantly restricted and/or any particular groups of students are not being unfairly disadvantaged.

17. Courses may be designed wholly for delivery on campus, wholly for delivery at a distance, or adopt a blended approach, enhancing the flexibility of traditional delivery modes with eLearning. eLearning includes provision of web based course materials, use of tools for synchronous and asynchronous communication between students and course delivery team, interaction with rich learning objects, and computer aided assessment.

On campus delivery might typically include lectures, tutorials, laboratory practicals etc.
Some activities are clearly off campus, e.g. field trips, site visits, placements etc. However, off campus delivery may be based around eLearning, paper based course materials, video conferencing, lecture recordings, and video or audio media.

18. **Where delivery is to be the responsibility of more than one Discipline**, it is essential that all relevant Heads of School give their approval to the proposal to deliver the course. The information supplied will also be used in the calculation of Student Load.

In regard to the JACS code(s), the Higher Education Statistics Agency on behalf of the Funding Councils also requires the subject classification of each course. Details of the full range of JACS codes available, together with the nationally-agreed descriptors applicable to each, are available on, and can be downloaded from, the HESA website.

Courses can be split between different JACS codes where appropriate; in which case the percentage split between codes as well as providing Disciplines should be indicated i.e.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JACS Code(s)</th>
<th>Providing Discipline/Institution(s)</th>
<th>Extra Load?</th>
<th>% Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B400</td>
<td>School of Medicine and Dentistry</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V400</td>
<td>School of Geosciences</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V600</td>
<td>School of Divinity, History and Philosophy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L360</td>
<td>School of Social Science</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. If bought-in teachers are to be used, details should be provided including an indication of whether or not an individual(s) has given provisional agreement to teach on the course or that potential personnel have been identified. If appropriate, give details of the course and session where an individual has previously taught on a University course(s).

In considering questions 20-27, course coordinators are asked to refer to the Catalogue of Courses and reminded that the information provided will be fed directly to the Catalogue and will therefore be accessible to students and prospective applicants.

20. **Course Descriptions** should provide students with the information they require on a particular course. Descriptions should be as clear but as detailed as possible, to ensure students can make informed decisions on the courses available to them.

21. **Marketing Information**, limited to 100 words, should provide a clear, concise, relevant and helpful summary to allow students to quickly understand the basics about the course and make an informed choice about whether it is the right option for them.
22. **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)** are statements of intended learning that may take the form of acquired knowledge, understanding, or higher level intellectual, practical or transferable skills, intrinsically linked to assessment. ILOs should be clearly and transparently linked to methods of Assessment and Graduate Attributes (question 23 further refers).

Learning outcomes should articulate what the student will have learned or be able to do as a result of successfully completing a particular course and can best be expressed by using the format; **active verb + an object + a qualifying phrase that provides context.**

Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956) provides a useful framework for expressing learning outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Dimension</th>
<th>Cognitive Process Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factual</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. basic</td>
<td>Remember</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terminology, specific details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conceptual</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. principles, theories, models</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Procedural</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. how and when to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metacognitive</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. self-reflection, knowledge of ways of thinking about problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L1: Write original compositions that analyse patterns and relationships of ideas, topics, themes. Create Analyse Conceptual

Course coordinators should carefully consider the Learning Outcomes for their course, using Bloom’s Taxonomy for reference and list accordingly.

23. Having detailed the learning outcomes, the course coordinator should derive by which **assessment method** these will be assessed and in so doing, identify which of the **graduate attributes** will be achieved. It is entirely appropriate for ILOs to be assessment by more than one method.

**Summative assessment** refers to assessed elements of a course that are used to deliver a graded assessment of students’ performance, and that are formally recorded. Course co-
Course co-ordinators are encouraged to consider methods of assessment that test a range of student abilities, in line with the ILOs. All summative assessments are marked using the University’s Common Grading Scale (CGS). Course co-ordinators are alerted to the fact that in determining CGS, Schools may have locally-agreed routines for generating the final CGS score on a student’s work, and are advised to seek clarification on this point from within their own School.

It should be noted that whilst an assessment may be summative, it may also perform a formative role by providing feedback to students on their performance. The use of such feedback will be tempered by the timing of return; returning work once the course has ended will provide little opportunity for a student to act on the feedback provided. Course co-ordinators are alerted to the need for a balance of both summative and formative assessment in providing students with the most effective diet of opportunities to support their learning.

**Formative assessment** refers to assessed elements of a course that are used to provide feedback to students on their progress, rather than being used to deliver a graded assessment of their performance that is formally recorded (i.e. the marks don’t go forward to be counted). Formative assessment can be formal or informal.

It is the expectation that all undergraduate programmes, through their constituent courses, will provide opportunities for students to develop a full set of **Aberdeen Graduate Attributes**. There is **no** expectation that all courses will include all categories, however, where a course does meet some or all of those listed, course coordinators are asked to provide information. It is expected that each ILO will provide opportunity for the achievement of at least one Graduate Attribute.

24. **Resit Methods** should be included for Level 1, 2 and 3 and 5(PGT) courses Although it is not necessary to supply details of the resit arrangements for Level 4 or Level 5 (UG) courses, it may be necessary for resits to be arranged for those students who require to resit for credit accumulation purposes in order to satisfy SCQF requirements. In such cases, the timing and format of the assessment will be determined by the QAC on the recommendation of the head of the relevant school.

25. **Feedback** is an area repeatedly identified by students as an area for enhancement. Effective feedback should be:

- In sufficient time to be able to be used by students to improve their work *(typically within two weeks of hand-in, in line with the University’s guidelines on Assessment [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/registry/quality/section7.shtml]*)
- Appropriate and relevant to helping students understand where they have both gained and lost marks, and how to improve their mark (if appropriate).

The University’s **Feedback Framework** can support staff in adhering to the University’s commitment to students in providing Feedback.
Please note: As students select their own course choices through MyCurriculum, it is vital to ensure that the pre-, co- and anti- requisite information provided for a course is accurate and kept up to date. Students will be entitled to register for any course which they meet the requirements to undertake, providing it timetables with the rest of their Curriculum.

26a. **Pre-requisites** include:

- any course which has to have been studied or passed in order for a student to progress onto the current course;
- any programme a student has to be registered for in order to undertake the course;
- any level of study at which the student must be at in order to undertake the course.

It is important for course co-ordinators to check on an annual basis that pre-requisite courses are running, and that the necessary course elements are still being delivered (e.g. staff changes may lead to changes in individual courses).

26b. **Co-requisites** refer to:

- any parallel courses which need to be undertaken by a student at the same time as following the current course.

As far as possible, care should be taken to ensure that teaching is timed and placed in sequence in order to take advantage of co-requisite elements in parallel courses. It is important for course co-ordinators to check on an annual basis that co-requisite courses are running, that the necessary course elements are still being delivered (e.g. staff changes may lead to changes in individual courses), and are being delivered at an appropriate time.

26c. **Anti-requisites** refer to courses which cannot both be studied by any one student. For example, a student undertaking CM1510 may not register for its anti-requisite, CM1511.

27. **Teaching** This section should include details of the mode of delivery of teaching (e.g. lectures, tutorials, laboratory classes), the indicative time to be spent on each (e.g. 3 one-hour lectures and one three hour practical per week). Please do not enter details of the course content here.
28. All degree programmes to be associated with a course should be identified to ensure that the University Calendar is edited correctly. Also, please state whether the course will be compulsory or an elective for each degree programme.

29. Course content and structure are elements that are under the close scrutiny of the course co-ordinator at all times. Within this overarching scheme, however, it can be possible to involve the students themselves in contributing to the content or structure of a course in some way. The most obvious examples of this are during the production of a project or dissertation, when students can choose the topic that they wish to study and the methods to be employed to carry it out.

However other opportunities may lend themselves to providing opportunities for student involvement in the content and structure of a course element, examples including:

- Fieldwork projects
- Course delivery through student-led seminars
- Student-selected presentations
- Poster presentations on selected topics

30. Each course is assigned credit points in terms of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) (question 13 refers) in which full-time undergraduate students (including PGDE) would normally be expected to register for 120 credit points and full-time postgraduate taught students would normally be expected to register for 180 credit points.

Thus, the notional student effort (which includes the revision and assessment period, in addition to that required during the 11 week teaching period) required to complete a course should comply with the following framework, irrespective of level:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Credit Points</th>
<th>Notional Effort (hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 credit course</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 credit course</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 credit annual load</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180 credit annual load</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For information, Private Study is the estimated time required to complete (a) in-course assignments e.g. writing-up practicals/essays/projects, (b) Self-Directed Learning, i.e. work which is part of the course syllabus and which may include time spent on tasks undertaken (including group work) for discussion at a timetabled session e.g. tutorial or time to be spent in researching a topic, (c) other work, including library work, which a student would need to undertake in order to achieve the course learning outcomes and (d) time that students are expected to devote to revision for end-of-course examinations and the acquisition, development and enhancement of knowledge, which will vary between individuals.

31. Employability is much wider than graduates securing employment on completion of their degree programme or providing careers advice to students. Employability spans issues such as:

- Enhancing students’ subject specific skills, generic skills and career management skills through different styles of teaching (e.g. problem-based learning) and provision (e.g. work placements);
- Developing students through personal development planning; introducing creativity and enterprise, facilitating students to taking control of their learning and future plans;
- Engaging employers and professional bodies in meaningful contributions to the undergraduate curriculum, for example through employer-hosted projects, work shadowing opportunities etc.

32. **Work-related learning involves students learning about themselves and the world of work in order to empower them to enter and succeed in employment and includes:**

- Work Placements (paid or unpaid), where the learning outcomes are intended as part of a student’s degree programme. Credit is not awarded for undertaking work, but for the learning and skills achieved and demonstrated as a result of the experience. Work placements vary in length from 6 weeks to 12 months and also location and can be local, national and international.
- Professional mandatory placements or attachments, for example in primary or secondary schools to fulfil professional body requirements.
- Work shadowing where a student observes a member of staff working in an organisation, and gains an increased understanding of what a particular job entails.
- Work simulations such as role play, business games and work-based problem solving exercises carried out in the classroom.

Further information regarding establishing a work placement provision as part of a course/programme is available from the University’s Careers Service.

**Study Abroad Opportunities include:**

- [Erasmus](#), an EU-funded programme which gives students an opportunity to study in another European country without lengthening their degree.
- [North American exchange](#) opportunities.

33. Students who are required as part of their course of study to be in unsupervised contact with persons aged under 18, will be subject to a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check. Students admitted to programmes which already have compulsory elements requiring contact with persons under the age of 18 are routinely subject to a PVG check as part of the admissions process.

34. If there are components of the course, including methods of delivery and assessment, that may be inaccessible to students with disabilities or which they may find difficult or impossible to complete, please detail the alternative arrangements that would be made to allow such students to complete the course successfully [only in exceptional circumstances should the nature of a course be such as to make it impossible for alternative arrangements to be made for students with disabilities: in these circumstances, full details must be provided]. Course Coordinators are strongly advised to consult Student Support Services in completing this information.

35. Assess the course and assessment methods in terms of race, religion and belief, disability, sexual orientation, age and gender. If you believe that there may be an adverse impact for one or more of the equality groups you may need to reconsider elements of the course. The University has a legal duty to ‘promote equality of opportunity’ in relation to race, gender and disability (although the University’s policies also cover age, sexual orientation and religion and belief). This means that we need to look proactively at the content, delivery
and assessment of our courses to ascertain opportunities to promote equality. If you have any queries or would like further guidance please contact the Equality and Diversity Adviser.

37. Use this box to provide any additional information requested elsewhere.