Periodic Review of the Department of History

Introduction

1. An internal review of programmes in the Department of History was held on 1 and 2 May 2014. The members of the Panel were:
   - Dr John McKendrick, Associate Professor, School of Chemistry Food and Pharmacy, University of Reading (chair)
   - Professor Jonathan Phillips, Head of Department of History, Royal Holloway, University of London (external member, subject specialist)
   - Dr Sarah Richardson, Senior Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Warwick (external member, subject specialist)
   - Dr Eileen Hyder, Lecturer in Primary English Education, Institute of Education, University of Reading (internal member)
   - Mr Bryn McGrath, Part 3 BSc Human and Physical Geography, University of Reading (student member)
   - Ms Clare Nukui, Foundation Programme Director, University of Reading Malaysia (internal member)
   - Mrs Breanna Edwards, Senior Quality Support Officer, University of Reading, (secretary)

The Panel met the following:
   - Professor David Stack, Head of Department
   - Dr Matt Broad, Sessional Lecturer
   - Dr Jeremy Burchardt, Associate Professor
   - Professor Christopher Duggan
   - Dr Carolina Escobar-Vargas, Lecturer
   - Professor Joel Felix
   - Dr Rachel Foxley, Lecturer
   - Professor Lindy Grant
   - Mrs Amanda Harvey, School Postgraduate Administrator
   - Professor Richard Hoyle
   - Mrs Deborah King, Part 1 History Subject Officer
   - Dr Anne Lawrence, Associate Professor
   - Ms Harriet Mahood, Sessional Lecturer
   - Professor Patrick Major, Department Director of Teaching and Learning
   - Dr Elizabeth Matthew, Lecturer
   - Dr Esther Mijers, Lecturer
   - Dr Helen Parish, Associate Professor
   - Dr Danielle Park, Sessional Lecturer
The Panel met students who represented the following degree programmes:

- BA History
- BA History and English
- BA History and Archaeology
- BA History and International Relations
- BA History and Economics
- MA (Res) in History

General observations

The Panel was welcomed and given access to a range of teaching and learning and assessment materials. The Panel met with a wide range of staff and wished to express its gratitude to all those who participated in the review process.

It was thankful for the provision of extensive documentation on the Blackboard Organisation, the immediate response to requests for further information and the quality and openness of the discussions throughout the visit.

The Panel met with a large and representative body of students and wished to thank them for their input. These students were a credit to the Department, were confident, articulate and fully supportive of the programmes under review.

The Panel supports the possible outcome from the History Review (a review of the work of the Department undertaken by the University in order to enhance the Department) of increasing the FTE of academic staff by the recruitment of three additional positions, with the assumption that those leaving are replaced. In addition, the Panel was impressed by the level of administrative support provided to staff and students but did not feel that the current FTE allocated for support staff was sufficient to grow the Department in staff or student numbers. The Panel would encourage the Department to carefully consider the strategic direction of its academic provision in the medium to long term and recruitment of academic and support staff should align with meeting these strategic goals [desirable recommendation a].

Academic standards of the programmes

Educational aims of the provision and the learning outcomes

The Panel was provided with evidence in the form of programme specifications, module descriptions, programme handbooks, External Examiners' reports and
samples of students’ work. These, along with meetings with staff and students, enabled the Panel to confirm that the academic standards of the programmes are being met.

6 The Panel reviewed the educational aims and learning outcomes of the programmes. The Panel confirmed that aims and outcomes on all programmes were clearly stated and it was clear that learning outcomes are informed by QAA subject benchmarking statements and by the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. External Examiners’ reports verify that aims and outcomes are being obtained by students.

7 Staff and students alike commented on the difficulty at Part 1 in ensuring students’ achievement of key skills and approaches to the academic study of history. Due to the structure of the curriculum and the use of lectures as the primary teaching method at Part 1, the Department struggled with providing students with an effective overview of history while teaching important content in a meaningful way. Current single honours students are required to undertake forty credits at Part 1 in the modules Landmarks in History 1 and 2. The modules aim to introduce students to some of the major themes and concepts in history from the eleventh century to the present day. The content of these two modules is taught in lecture format with fortnightly seminars. Students and staff agreed on the importance of these modules in laying a foundation for further study into more defined periods and events in history; however, students were not content with the delivery of the material.

8 Students expressed an interest in the content being provided as historical themes, for example, a survey of revolutions or terror. They also preferred for the majority of teaching to be done using seminars instead of lectures. Students, while recognising that development of key skills was important, expressed a desire for academic staff to focus on content rather than skills. Students agreed that the modules seemed to lack focus and felt that they were reviewing what they had already learned at A-Level. Students and staff expressed independently that a seminar format would be the most beneficial delivery method of content as it would allow for more in depth discussions that would surpass that which is taught at A-Level. The Panel recommends that the Department review the curriculum and the teaching method in the Landmarks modules and explore a thematic approach to these survey courses that embeds key skill attainment and meets the learning outcomes for history programmes. The Department should ensure that current students are allowed to contribute to the curriculum review of the Landmarks modules [advisable recommendation a].

Curricula and assessment

9 The curriculum is interesting and engaging and both students and staff benefit from staff teaching their research interests. This was evidenced in meetings with key staff as well as students.

10 The Panel noted a lot of mandated choice outside of the department at Part 1. Single Honours students are required to take forty credits outside of the History Department at Part 1. Students were generally not supportive of taking modules outside of the department and expressed a wish to have the choice to take 120 credits of History modules. As some students were taking modules in three different disciplines, they had to learn three different methods of referencing as well as engage with different assessment criteria for each discipline. Some students believed their marks may have been lower as a result. Other students liked taking modules outside of History but agreed that they preferred to have a choice to do so rather than being made to. Therefore the Panel recommends the Department offer single honours students the
option at Part 1 to take 120 credits within the Department. Furthermore, the Department should engage with current students in the development of option modules for Part 1 of the BA History programme [advisable recommendation b].

11 The Department adheres to a two week turnaround time for feedback and the Panel noted this as exceptionally good practice [good practice a]. Students agreed that the quality of feedback was good, was received promptly and sometimes provided information on how to improve their work. The Panel reviewed feedback to students and was pleased to note the majority of feedback was ranging from good to very good in quality. However, some feedback lacked explicit reference to how the work could be improved. The feed-forward element of feedback is critical for providing high quality feedback to students and it is the University’s position that summative feedback should include explicit reference to how the work can be improved. The Panel recommends that the Department ensure that summative feedback includes explicit reference to how the piece of work can be improved [advisable recommendation c].

12 The Panel reviewed assessment materials and noted that the Department does not routinely set formative assessment. Students informed the Panel that formative feedback does occur but often only when solicited by students during office hours with staff. Although this is helpful for those students who attend office hours, not all students are benefiting from this method of providing formative feedback. The Panel recommends that the Department consider implementing a variety of formative assessment (quizzes, journals, oral presentations, posters, etc.) in order to better gauge students’ understanding of and engagement with the course materials [advisable recommendation d].

Use of student management information

13 The Panel was pleased to note that the Department engages well with the National Student Survey (NSS) and actively addresses any issues identified. Despite a good performance in the NSS, the Department uses information gained from the survey to further improve upon its provision to students. For example, the Department noted that scores for Personal Development in 2013 were higher than in 2012, however much lower than in 2011. The Department used this information to support a decision to embed careers education into the Historical Themes in Practice module. Students spoke very highly of this module and praised the varied experiences gained such as oral presentations. The students were very reflective on the skills gained from this module and were able to relate these skills to future employment opportunities.

14 The Department operates an undergraduate Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) and includes student representatives from all years on undergraduate programmes. The Department noted difficulty in filling all the spaces available for student representatives, particularly at Part 1. Students on the SSLC stated they were always listened to and the Department responded positively to feedback. Students noted that they were encouraged to join the Committee but had not necessarily been encouraged to chair. The Panel recommends that in order to strengthen the SSLC, students should be encouraged to chair meetings. Also, it was noted that the History Society was very engaged with students but there existed few formal ties back to the Department. Therefore, the Panel also recommends that a standing invitation be offered to one representative from the History Society to attend SSLC meetings [advisable recommendation e].

15 The Panel was unable to find evidence in the SSLC minutes that the Department includes student feedback on External Examiners’ reports in their response to issues
raised by External Examiners. All External Examiners’ reports should be tabled once per academic year at the SSLC and all students should be provided with access to the reports so they have the opportunity to comment. Additionally a report from the SSLC should be made available to students and clear signposting of these documents as well as the minutes from SSLCs should be provided to all students [advisable recommendation f].

Quality of learning opportunities offered by the programmes

Teaching and learning

16 The Panel noted the exemplary practice of research-led teaching that was evident throughout the Department. Entire modules were developed around academics’ research interests and this was found to be of substantial benefit to students and staff alike. Students were pleased to have lecturers that were expert in and enthusiastic about the content of the module and also some academics have incorporated assessments to inform on aspects of their own research. The input from students has resulted at times to a change in thinking about the research topic and is therefore mutually beneficial. The Panel was clear that the research-led teaching was positively impacting on students’ learning experience [good practice b]. Despite the clear advantages of a curriculum infused with research interests, the Panel noted the limited arrangements available to staff for effective research leave, in particular their retention of administrative and pastoral functions. The Panel recommends that the School should consider creating opportunities for staff to undertake effective research leave, without administration or student-related responsibilities, while ensuring that a good standard of student support is provided by other means [desirable recommendation b].

17 The Department was considering the best teaching methods for a few of the modules, namely Landmarks in History 1 and 2. Students and staff independently agreed that seminars would be a better method for delivery of the information in the module. However, the Department was often unable to acquire suitable rooms for seminars in the HumSS Building. This is a contributing factor to the lack of identity with the Department that some students expressed. Although the Panel recognised that timetabling is a challenging endeavour and locally operated space is not necessarily used efficiently, the Panel recommends that the University consider, where possible, giving priority to the Department for seminars to be held in the HumSS Building [desirable recommendation c].

18 As mentioned previously, students were complimentary in relation to the Historical Themes in Practice module and in particular enjoyed the variety of assessment used in the module. The students were able to articulate the benefits of gaining broad experience through a variety of assessment methods. In particular they commented positively on the use of oral exams, creation of a CV, group work, oral presentations (although they expressed a desire for this to be formatively or summative assessed). Variety in assessment was evident in other modules and the Panel noted this was particularly cutting edge for the subject area which generally leans toward essay and exams for assessment [good practice c].

19 Module selection for students within the Department is complicated as a result of caps on popular modules. Students must choose two alternatives for each option module selected. The Department administrator spends a number of weeks manually assessing student selections with an aim to provide students with as many of their first choices
as possible. The Department wants to be able to offer students a range of option topics, and so have historically capped the most popular modules in order to facilitate a broad learning experience. The Panel discussed module selection with current students and although a number of students were unable to take their first choice, they were surprised at how much they enjoyed alternative options. The Panel agreed that the module titles and the descriptions of modules could be more dynamic so as to attract students. The Panel recommends the Department explore ways to ‘promote’ option modules to students perhaps through the use of student module blogs or to offer taster lectures prior to module selection [desirable recommendation d].

The Department provides undergraduate students with extensive support for development of dissertation topics as well as support during the writing of the dissertation. Students are encouraged to choose a dissertation topic during the Spring and Summer Terms of Part 2 and the Department has a policy of reading a complete draft of the completed dissertation prior to submission. In the past, the majority of students did not request staff in the Department to read an entire dissertation draft; however, it is now becoming common practice. This, coupled with additional support for students who may change their minds about their topics in the months following their initial idea development, can be very labour intensive for academic staff. The Panel recommends that the Department review the timing of the development of dissertation topics for undergraduates and also to reconsider the policy of reading full drafts of undergraduate dissertations prior to submission. Postgraduate students on the MA (Res) History programme felt as if they were pressured into choosing a dissertation topic too early and wanted more guidance in the choosing of dissertation topics. Therefore, the Panel also recommends that the timing of dissertation topics for postgraduate students should be reviewed [advisable recommendation g].

The Panel met with sessional lecturers and PhD students who teach undergraduate students. The Panel was made aware that sessional lecturers and PhD students were receiving support for the enhancement of their teaching practices but this support was provided on an ad hoc and informal basis. The Department informed the Panel that there previously had been more formal mechanisms for ensuring the quality of teaching by sessional staff and PhDs but this had been lost in competing priorities of time for staff. The Panel recognises that although there are informal quality control measures for sessional staff and PhD students, the support should be formalised in order to strengthen the quality assurance of teaching within the Department. The Department should nominate a member of academic staff to be responsible for supporting sessional and PhD students in the enhancement of their teaching skills [desirable recommendation e].

The Panel was satisfied of the varied and exemplary teaching practices prevalent in the Department and also recognised that there existed in the Department a number of areas of good practice in relation to teaching and learning that other Schools and Departments in the University could benefit from learning about such as the hands on approach to Discovering Archives and Collections [good practice d]. However, the Panel felt that some outward facing promotion was required so the good work being done in the Department could be showcased more widely.

Student admission and progression

Current students reflected positively about their experiences interacting with academic staff in the Department on Open and Visit days. The taster lectures were conducted with enthusiasm and staff were available for informal discussion with applicants after each lecture. Also, the use of current students in the Open and Visit
days allowed applicants to understand from students the experience of the
programmes offered by the History Department. It was noted that current students
were enthusiastic and this encouraged applicants to accept places at Reading. The
ability of the Department to engage prospective applicants academically through
formal and informal staff contact as well as applicant contact with current students at
Open and Visit Days was noted by the Panel as good practice [good practice e].

24 The variety of specialisms within the Department attracted some students while one
applied specifically as a result of the History Education module. Another student
applied because of the option to study abroad. The Panel agreed that the Department
is successful in converting interest to student numbers but lacked the ability to pull in
larger numbers initially to Open and Visit Days.

25 The Panel reviewed the Department’s website in particular relation to recruitment of
students. The website was found to be outdated and most of the information was
relevant for current students rather than potential applicants. The Panel reviewed
module titles and agreed that some of the titles were largely generic and did not fully
or adequately represent the dynamic content of the module. The Panel noted that,
with the very limited administrative support within the Department, the website was
simply maintained instead of enhanced. The Panel recommends that a thorough
review of the website is needed for recruitment purposes as it is not as effective or as
current as it should be. The Panel further recommends that the University provide
support for this review as the Panel believes there is not currently the capacity to
accomplish this recommendation within the Department’s administrative structure
[advisable recommendation h].

26 The Panel met with postgraduate students on the MA (Res) History programme. The
Panel noted that the cohort was very small and admissions to postgraduate
programmes in history had been in decline in recent years. The Department will need
to decide the strategy for postgraduate taught provision, for example, how to increase
recruitment as a way to boost income through increased recruitment of international
students and as a feeder programme to postgraduate research. Currently, students on
the MRes History programme work in relative isolation and did not have a sense of
being part of a larger postgraduate community. In contrast, the students on the MA
(Research) Medieval Studies programme did feel that they were important members of
a larger postgraduate community. They had access to a resource/study room as well as
access to PGR students and staff.

The Panel recommends that if the Department wishes to increase PGT recruitment of
international students, they should conduct some market research into the viability of
recruitment in specific markets given the Department’s current expertise [advisable
recommendation i]. The Panel wished to encourage the Department to review the
viability of the market in North America as a starting point for recruitment of
international students.

27 The Department manages student progression through an ethos of prompt and
thorough staff/student contact that permeates every aspect of teaching and learning.
Students were very complimentary as to the speed and detail with which staff respond
to emails and queries. The students the Panel met with were unable to recall even a
single incident where a member of staff did not respond to an email [good practice f].
Staff are available at set times through ‘office hours’ and this information is displayed
on their office doors. Students felt supported and were fully aware that if they did not
understand either a lecture or feedback on coursework, they knew someone was
always around to help. Furthermore, the Department exudes a sense of warmth and
friendliness as evidenced in the excellent management of the Personal Tutorial
system. Students are informed that they can change their Personal Tutor - no questions asked. This ensures the student/personal tutor relationship is effective. The Panel was impressed by the dedication of staff in their support of the learning of students in the Department [good practice g].

Learning resources
28 Current students praised the quality of provision on Blackboard provided by the Department and module convenors. Students did however wish to have more access to e-books and also indicated that it would be useful for the common/resource room to include an index of the books available. The students agreed that this room would be useful as a reference room for course collections in particular to include books that are not readily available in the Library.

Employer engagement
29 History Themes in Practice was universally praised by students. The module focused on personal development and included talks from people with history qualifications that work in diverse areas. The talks focused on the qualities that history graduates obtain that are useful to potential employers. Students were complimentary about CV training and instruction on writing cover letters. Students are asked to look for jobs that they would like to have and write a report on why they want the job and how they will approach obtaining the job. Staff in the Department are proactive in supporting students’ career development and will approach their own contacts on behalf of students. Employability is actively discussed in personal tutor meetings.

30 The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme is supported by the Department. The Department also sources graduate internships and these opportunities are increasing year on year for students.

31 The Department has developed modules relating directly to employment in particular sectors. For example, the History Education module is designed to test and develop students’ interests in a career in History Education. The module incorporates ten-days of school placements which provides students with the opportunity to gain, and reflect on the practical work experience required for successful application to postgraduate teacher training programmes. The Panel, in particular the external academic specialists, commended the Department on their innovative approach to employability. The Panel was pleased to note that the work being done by the Department in terms of employer engagement was leading edge for the academic discipline [good practice h].

Enhancement of quality and academic provision
32 The Panel was assured of the progress the Department has made in relation to development of its undergraduate programmes. The Department discusses NSS results in the SSLCs and engage with current students in addressing any issues. The Department has recently created a Departmental meeting which deals with general and research-related matters. This allows for more time devoted exclusively to teaching and learning via a Department Board of Studies. The Board of Studies includes one student representative. The Board reviews new module proposals, monitors feedback from students through module feedback forms, examination matters and other Teaching and Learning business. In addition, the Department runs a termly Teaching and Learning Development Committee which informally meets to
discuss new module proposals at the earliest stages as well as takes an overview of
module content and teaching approaches.

33 As highlighted elsewhere in the report, the Department offers a wide range of
modules spanning the breadth of history as an academic discipline. Single honours
programmes have a lot of mandated choice outside of the Department at Part 1 and
this is not viewed particularly favourably by current students. The Department are in
the process of reviewing its module provision and the Panel encourages the
Department to continue to do this in order to establish an identity. The Department
also teach on a large number of joint programmes and the Panel was unclear of the
interdisciplinary benefits.

34 A number of modules in the Department are not being ‘sold’ to students when it
comes to selection of options. A few of the titles of modules do not accurately reflect
the dynamic and interesting content and the Department should consider ways to
promote and market their modules.

35 The Department needs to consider ways to strengthen the formal mechanisms for
quality assuring the programmes and modules. Much is being done in terms of
development of teaching practice for PhD students and sessional lecturers, however
this is largely informal. There are informal quality control mechanisms provided
through advice and support from current and former dissertation supervisors and ad
hoc training but this needs formalisation and the Panel recommends that there is a
nominated academic who is responsible for the development of sessional staff.

36 In order to further enhance the quality of the academic provision, the Panel strongly
supports the recruitment of three additional academic posts with the assumption that
any staff leaving are replaced. In addition the administrative support is not sufficient
to enhance the Department’s efforts in teaching and learning as well as achieve longer
term goals. The Panel recommends that the University review the level of
administrative support to the Department to ensure the Department is capable of
achieving the strategic direction of the academic provision and the effective
recruitment of students over the next three to five years.

Main characteristics of the programmes under review

37 The degree programmes and modules offered by the School undergraduate and
postgraduate level are interesting programmes which are enhanced by enthusiastic
lecturers who are passionate about their areas of research which provides students
with the unique opportunity to contribute to current research projects in the
Department. The warmth and friendliness of the Department is recognised by
students and staff and the students the Panel met with are a testament to the quality
of the academic experience that the Department provides.

Conclusions on innovation and good practice

38 The Panel commends the following as areas where the Department has particular
strengths:

   a) The adherence to a two week turnaround time for feedback;
   b) The positive impact of research-led teaching on students’ learning experience;
c) The variety in assessment as evident in a number of modules was particularly cutting edge for the subject area which generally leans toward essay and exams for assessment;

d) The hands on approach to the module Exploring Archives;

e) The ability of the Department to capture students' minds through formal and informal staff contact as well as contact with current students at Open and Visit Days;

f) The responsiveness by staff to student emails and the availability of staff during set office hours;

g) Effective management of the personal tutor system in supporting student learning; and

h) Employer engagement is very advanced for the academic discipline.

Conclusions on quality and standards

39 The Panel is assured of the quality and standards of the programmes that have been reviewed, that the intended learning outcomes of the programmes are being obtained by students, and that the programme specifications are appropriate.

Recommendations

40 The Panel recommends to the Faculty Board for Teaching and Learning for Arts, Humanities and Social Science that the following degree programmes taught by the Department of History should be re-approved to run for a further six years:

- BA History
- BA History and Economics
- BA History and English Literature
- BA History and International Relations
- BA History and Philosophy
- BA History and Politics
- MA (Res) History
- BA French and History
- BA German and History
- BA History of Art and History
- BA Italian and History
- BA Archaeology and History
- BA Ancient History and History
- BA Classical and Medieval Studies

The Panel recommends that the MRes History is renamed in accordance with University policy. Following this, it is recommended that the postgraduate taught programme in History should be re-approved to run for a further six years. The joint
programmes should be approved until such time that the Periodic Review is undertaken for the other subjects.

41 The report will categorise any issues as follows, in order of priority:

- Those areas where the Review Team believes it is necessary for action to be taken urgently to safeguard the standard of provision;
- Those areas where it is advisable that the issues be addressed as soon as possible.
- Those areas where it is desirable that the issue be addressed over a longer time span.

42 The Panel does not consider that any recommendations must be addressed as a condition of re-approval.

The Panel makes the following recommendations to the Department:

**Advisable**

a) The Panel recommends that the Department reviews the curriculum and the teaching method in the Landmarks modules and explore a thematic approach to these survey courses that embeds key skill attainment and meets the learning outcomes for history programmes. The Department should ensure that current students are allowed to contribute to the curriculum review of the Landmarks modules.

b) The Panel recommends the Department offers single honours students the option at Part 1 to take 120 credits within the Department. Furthermore, the Department should engage with current students in the development of option modules for Part 1 of the BA History.

c) The Panel recommends that the Department ensures that summative feedback includes explicit reference as to how the piece of work can be improved.

d) The Panel recommends that the Department consider implementing a variety of formative assessment (quizzes, journals, oral presentations, posters, etc.) in order to better gauge students understanding of and engagement with the course materials.

e) The Panel recommends that in order to strengthen the SSLC, students should be encouraged to chair meetings. Also, it was noted that the History Society was very engaged with students but there existed few formal ties back to the Department. Therefore, the Panel also recommends that a standing invitation be offered to one representative from the History Society to attend SSLC meetings.

f) All External Examiners’ reports should be tabled once per academic year at the SSLC and all students should be provided with access to the reports so they have the opportunity to comment. Additionally a report from the SSLC should be made available to students and clear signposting of these documents as well as the minutes from SSLCs should be provided to all students.

g) The Panel recommends that the Department reviews the timing of the development of dissertation topics for undergraduates and also to reconsider the policy of reading full drafts of undergraduate dissertations prior to submission. Postgraduate students on the MA (Res) History programme felt as if they were pressured into choosing a dissertation topic too early and wanted more guidance in the choosing of dissertation topics. Therefore, the Panel also recommends that the timing of dissertation topics for postgraduate students should be reviewed.
h) The Panel recommends that a thorough review of the website is needed for recruitment purposes as it is not as effective or as current as it should be. The Panel further recommends that the University provide support for this review as the Panel believes there is not currently the capacity to accomplish this recommendation within the Department’s administrative structure.

i) The Panel recommends that if the Department wishes to increase PGT recruitment of international students, they should conduct some market research into the viability of recruitment in specific markets given the Department’s current expertise.

Desirable

a) The Panel would encourage the Department to carefully consider the strategic direction of its academic provision in the medium to long term and recruitment of academic and support staff should align with meeting these strategic goals.

b) The Panel recommends that the School should consider creating opportunities for staff to undertake effective research leave, without administration or student-related responsibilities, while ensuring that a good standard of student support is provided by other means.

c) The Panel recommends that the University consider, where possible, giving priority to the Department for seminars to be held in the HumSS Building.

d) The Panel recommends the Department explores ways to ‘promote’ option modules to students perhaps through the use of student module blogs or to offer taster lectures prior to module selection.

e) The Department should nominate a member of academic staff to be responsible for supporting sessional and PhD students in the enhancement of their teaching skills.

The Panel does not have a recommendation to the Faculty Board for Teaching and Learning for Arts, Humanities and Social Science as to whether any proposal(s) for new degree programmes should be approved as this is not applicable.