

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

Paper No ASQEC/21/2j)

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

11 March 2021

Agenda Item 5.4.7

COVER SHEET

EXTENSION OF APPROVAL

Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

Unit 4A1: Planning, Property and Environment

*Presenter: Professor M Keenan*

To consider a proposal for a one-year extension to the period of approval for BSc Environmental Health, BSc Real Estate, BSc/MSci Planning, Regeneration and Development, and MSc Real Estate. This is a second extension request.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

**UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER**

**REQUEST TO EXTEND APPROVAL AND POSTPONE REVALIDATION**

**Form CA6b)**

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**SECTION A: FACULTY REQUEST**

FACULTY: Computing Engineering and the Built Environment

SCHOOL: Belfast School of Architecture and the Built Environment

REVALIDATION UNIT NUMBER AND NAME: 4A1 Planning, Property and Environmental Health

MONTH/YEAR CURRENTLY SCHEDULED: 2021/22

PERIOD OF EXTENSION REQUESTED: One year, 2022/23  
(e.g. one year to include the September 2018 intake)

COURSE(S):  
(Identify specific courses unless the whole unit)

**REASON FOR REQUEST:**

The Faculty seeks an extension of approval for one year for the unit 4A1 Planning, Property and Environmental Health for one year. This one-year extension is sought principally for a suite of undergraduate provision which all display strong metrics within the CAQE framework.

**Undergraduate**

BSc Environmental Health – has been classified as being academically excellent across the last 2 years of CAQE with NSS in 2020 overall satisfaction 93% and attrition 4.3% against a faculty target of 10.5%.

BSc Real Estate and MSci Planning, Regeneration & Development were highly commended under the most recent CAQE exercise (November 2020).

- BSc Real Estate – NSS 2020 overall satisfaction 96% and attrition 3.3% against a faculty target of 10.5%.
- MSci Planning, Regeneration & Development – NSS 2020 overall satisfaction 94% and attrition 0% against a faculty target of 10.5%.

These programmes have undergone review and programmes changes through the CA3 process through the BSABE first year review process now held two years ago. The remainder of the School is undergoing revalidation in 2021-22 and these programmes will also be linked onto that review for potential module updates and curriculum sharing opportunities which may bring forward further programme changes. The MSci Planning, Regeneration and Development is also reviewing level 7 currently. With the CAQE classification of the suite of undergraduate programmes, the strong External Examiner reports and the reflection that has taken place and is ongoing in relation to the provision an extension of one year is requested.

## Postgraduate

The MSc Real Estate provision also sits within this revalidation unit and has direct relationships with the BSc Real Estate provision and therefore an extension of one year for this programme is also sought.

## CURRENCY AND VALIDITY:

(Please confirm that the curriculum remains current and valid and provide evidence of this (eg extract from most recent external examiner reports and those of relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body)

As mentioned above the provision has been part of a review of curriculum within the School.

BSc Environmental Health – extract from 2019-20 External Examiner report

*The course subjects and components are well thought through and organised very well with a coherent and logical progression through the programme. Moving to 20 credit modules (in year one) has worked well, with a few tweaks to re-balance content planned, based on the experience of running this change for the first year. All of the students felt they were sufficiently supported with good access to tutors... The course is extremely well run, and the changes made by the course team this year have been very positive.*

BSc Real Estate - extract from 2019-20 External Examiner report

*The structure and content of the degree programs provide students with knowledge and skills for employment in real estate service providers. The degree content is similar to other well-respected degrees in real estate across the UK. There is evidence of research-informed teaching in both second and third year of the degrees... There is a good mix of modules on real estate development, investment, valuation and market analysis over the whole degree programme. Good overall degree structure.*

BSc/MSci Planning, Regeneration & Development

*The content and structure of the programme is coherent and appropriate to the learning outcomes outlined and the aims of the degree, and these are in line with similar programmes at other universities that I am familiar with. The curriculum, content of the individual modules and range of assessment methods are all excellent, and of very high standing, with direct relevance to both ongoing academic and research debates and the needs of planning practice... The degree of feedback provided by staff, particularly in the context of the difficult circumstances of Covid, the quality and extent of written comments, plus the amount of time the staff give to students virtually has been impressive.*

MSc Real Estate – External Examiner report 2019-20

*The content of the programme is appropriate meeting the expectations of industry and employers. The structure of the programme is logical with clear progression pathways as students proceed through the programme and their knowledge and expertise expands. The programme more than adequately meets the benchmark standards for real estate and planning and development and is fully accredited by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.*

## STANDARDS AND QUALITY:

(Please confirm that quality is high and there are no concerns. Provide evidence of this through external examiner reports and annual monitoring datasets and reports)

BSc Environmental Health - extract from 2019-20 External Examiner report

*The course clearly meets CIEH professional standards and has high academic standards and there is evidence of research and scholarship informing the curriculum. I am particularly impressed with the thoughtful linkages made between subject areas, for example making stronger linkages to planning and public health in the housing module for example... In my experience, as external examiner for other courses and a programme lead, the standards for this course are comparable (and in some areas better) than those at other institutions.*

BSc Real Estate - extract from 2019-20 External Examiner report

*Having taught on real estate degrees at three universities and been external examiner at five other universities, the standards at UU place it in good standing in comparison with other courses.*

Bsc Hons/ MSci Planning, Regeneration & Development - extract from 2019-20 External Examiner report

*The degree meets the expectations of the professional accredited bodies too, in my opinion... The content and standards of the programme are excellent, in relation to other institutions that I am familiar with.*

MSc Real Estate – extract from 2019-20 External Examiner report

*The programme is comparable with similar programmes within the UK and Internationally. Standard of student performance is also similar. It aligns with the national subject benchmark for Land, Construction, Real Estate and Surveying. As noted, it is also accredited by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors... This continues to be an excellent programme. There are no recommendations for academic year 20/21. Worthy mention is the manner in which the staff responded to COVID-19. Their was response was quick and considered and there was no detriment to student performance.*

PSRB (if applicable):

(Please confirm that any deferral will be accommodated by the PSRB and that accreditation will be ongoing for the full duration of the deferral)

PSRBs have been contacted in relation to this proposal and the School awaits responses. Should any matters arise from the related PSRBs the school will review this proposal as needs be.

DEMAND: There is a sustained demand demonstrated for the suite of programmes with an increase of numbers noted particularly in relation to the BSc Environmental Health provision.

FACULTY PARTNERSHIP MANAGER'S ASSESSMENT (for partner institutions only):

**FACULTY CONFIRMATION:**

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: 1.03.2021 \_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Dean (Education)

The completed form should be returned to the Academic Office, Room J410, Tower Building, Coleraine.

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**SECTION B: ACADEMIC OFFICE COMMENTS:**

Course provision in unit 4A1 was last revalidated in 2015/16 and the revalidation scheduled for 2020/21 was postponed as an extension of approval was granted by ASQEC until 2021/22. This request seeks a second one-year extension until 2022/23.

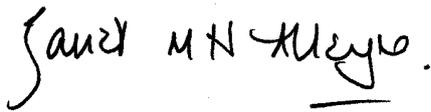
I reviewed the 2019/20 external examiner reports (earlier reports having been reviewed at the time of the previous extension to approval request) and in general the reports affirm the positive information presented above by the Faculty that indicates little risk to quality and standards. The small but significant exception to the overall positive view was identified by the two external examiners for the MSci Planning, Regeneration and Development programme as both raised issues in terms of the treatment of Planning students (albeit these seemed to be associated with a particular module, delivery by research students and a single member of academic staff). The Committee will wish to seek assurance from the Faculty that this matter (which had also been identified previously) is being or has been addressed in an effective manner.



SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Policy and Standards Manager

DATE: 2.3.21

**SECTION C: QUALITY ENHANCEMENT ASSESSMENT (reflecting annual monitoring data)**



4 March 2021

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Head of Quality Enhancement

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION D: ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE  
(delegated authority from Senate)**

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING:

DECISION: Approve (Yes/No)

Late requests (in-year and no imminent Committee meeting) (actioned by Chair on behalf of ASQEC)

DECISION: Approve (Yes/No)

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair ASQEC

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE REPORTED TO ASQEC:

Academic Office  
July 2019