

**Faculty of Humanities
Postgraduate Taught Programmes**

Guidelines on committees for the management and oversight of programmes

The points below discuss factors which should be considered in the design of the structure of programme committees within schools.

- It is important that for each programme offered within a school there is an identified body that has oversight of the management and development of the programme.
- The relative responsibilities of programme directors and programme committees should be established clearly. Day to day management will normally be under the control of the programme director, but oversight of this management and decisions on matters such as the design of the curriculum, annual review, the future development of the programme and the performance of students should involve a broader programme committee.
- It is not expected that there will be a separate committee for every individual programme. Related programmes or programmes within a single discipline area could be overseen by one committee. While in a small school with a limited number of programmes it may be possible for a single committee to exercise oversight over all programmes, this will not be effective in larger and more diverse schools and those with a large number of programmes.
- Schools should determine the appropriate structures for their portfolio of programmes and the level of aggregation of programmes, but the approach adopted should be consistent with the principles of:
 - reflecting coherent groupings of programmes;
 - ensuring that the body overseeing a programme comprises a membership that is sufficiently close to the delivery of the programme to be able to make informed decisions on its management.
 - having sufficient aggregation to allow efficiency in programme management and to avoid unnecessary proliferation of (“fourth tier”) committee structures.
- Programme committees should be small in size. It is not necessary for all members of the teaching team to also be members of the programme committee (although when student performance is being considered they can be invited to attend), but the committee should include some teaching staff beyond the programme director and the relevant programme administrator.
- Where appropriate, the committee with oversight for a cluster of programmes in a particular discipline may report to a school level committee with overall responsibility for strategy and operation of postgraduate taught programmes.

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