



**UNIVERSITY
ACADEMY 92**
MANCHESTER

STUDENT CONSULTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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Student Consultation Policy
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1.1 Outline the commitment of University Academy 92 (UA92) to consider feedback from students who may be affected by changes within UA92.
- 1.2 Outline the consultation process and the categories it will normally fall into:
 - (a) Consultation to determine whether a change should be made;
 - (b) Consultation to determine how to manage the impact of a change.

The consultation process described in this policy should be considered as the minimum consultation required, and consideration should be given to whether additional consultation is appropriate in the circumstances.

- 1.3 Highlight that collated feedback from the consultation should be analysed and UA92 should address the concerns that are raised and, where necessary and possible, adjust plans. The consultation process should take place before final plans are confirmed and final decisions are made, as part of its purpose is to shape those plans and decisions.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to consultation with students at all levels and on all modes of study, including undergraduates and international students. It also applies to applicants who have been offered a place to study at UA92. Prospective students who have applied for and/or been offered a place to study at UA92 will be advised of any changes to allow an informed decision to be made.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2023) requires higher education providers to "actively engage students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience" as a core practice.

- 3.2 UA92 must also comply with consumer protection law in relation to the provision of information to students, taking into account guidance provided by the Competition and Markets Authority: “Consumer protection law will generally apply to the relationship between HE providers and prospective and current undergraduate students. It sets out minimum standards that apply to various aspects of an HE provider’s dealings students, for example in relation to information provision and complaint handling, and the requirement of fairness for terms and conditions. It sits alongside sector-specific regulatory obligations that are relevant to many HE providers.” [CMA consumer law advice for Higher Education (2023)]
- 3.3 Exceptions to this policy will necessarily apply where a change is unavoidable due to factors outside of UA92’s control; for example, changes made by the Home Office regarding visa requirements for international students or changes required to meet updated stipulations of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). In such cases, students will normally be informed of the changes being made rather than consulted on whether those changes should be made.

4. Types of Change

4.1 Changes to programmes and modules

- 4.1.1 The most common changes that students experience are modifications to programmes and modules. Changes can occur for a variety of reasons, including unavoidable changes. Additionally, changes will often arise from a judgement that the change is in the academic interest of students; for example, to meet requirements of an accrediting body or to keep the programme contemporary by updating practices or areas of study.
- 4.1.2 The process and timescales for changes to courses (ie. programme or module content) is outlined in the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy: Course Design, Development, Approval and Modification chapter. The level of consultation required for each of the three types of modifications; routine, minor or major; are detailed in the UA92’s Guidance on Revisions to Programmes and Modules.
- 4.1.3 Routine changes, including updates to bibliographies or changes to syllabus content to ensure currency, do not require consultation, however it is good practice to discuss changes with an appropriate body of students, such as Student Representatives, where appropriate.

- 4.1.4 Minor module changes generally do not affect aims or learning outcomes and require consideration and agreement by an appropriate discussion forum including Student Representatives (normally an Academic Experience Forum). UA92's Academic Committee must also be informed of minor changes.
- 4.1.5 Major module changes generally do affect aims or learning outcomes and require additional consultation. Where these changes affect current cohorts rather than future intakes, consultation with and agreement from all affected cohorts is required. This should be completed following consideration by and agreement from an appropriate discussion forum including Student Representatives (normally an Academic Experience Forum). Major changes must also be considered and approved by Academic Committee.
- 4.1.6 Where major changes affect information that has been provided to current applicants, eg. a module closure or a change to the mode of delivery, applicants should also be advised to allow an informed decision to be made on whether they still wish to apply to study on the programme or not.

4.2 **Programme Withdrawals**

- 4.2.1 The decision to withdraw a programme of study will be made by UA92's Academic Development Group. Such decisions will be based on considerations including, but not limited to, applicant data and course performance metrics. Where a programme withdrawal is confirmed, the guidance for changes to programmes will apply and, if action is required, the primary focus is likely to be managing the impact on the student experience during the course closure period.
- 4.2.2 Unless the circumstances are outside of UA92's control, withdrawn programmes will be taught out to existing cohorts. Where programme withdrawals affect students who have intercalated, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and UA92 will endeavour to deliver the programme of study as expected or offer an alternative course of study where this is not possible.
- 4.2.3 All higher education providers registered with the Office for Students (OfS) must have a student protection plan in place. UA92's student protection plan outlines the primary approach of teaching out withdrawn programmes: "Whenever possible, [UA92] will make arrangements to 'teach out' our current students where we have voluntarily decided to close a programme. This means that we commit to ensuring programmes of study can be completed by all currently enrolled students within existing timeframes determined by

programme and University regulations, even though the programme is being discontinued and we will not be taking on new student cohorts.”

4.3 Other material changes

- 4.3.1 When a change is likely to have a material impact on the educational experience of a cohort of students, information about the change should be circulated by UA92.
- 4.3.2 Information should be circulated by UA92 to the students affected by the change in a timely manner. It may also be appropriate to circulate information to Student Representatives within the relevant academic World or course affected by the change, for onward circulation to affected students through their usual methods of communication. However, this should not be the sole or primary mechanism for the circulation of information. Other methods of communication may include but are not limited to student email, the UA92 website or relevant Teams channel(s).
- 4.3.3 The information provided will make clear who is responsible for student consultation, normally the department within UA92 responsible for making the change. The start of the consultation process or collection of feedback in line with the decision or change made will depend on the proportion of the change.

5. Provision of information and level of detail

- 5.1 It is understood that some information cannot be immediately provided to students due to contractual obligations. In this scenario, appropriate information will be provided to illustrate the scale and implications of a change.

6. Impact of Decisions

- 6.1 UA92 will categorise impact of decisions into four categories: “Inform affected students”, “Minor”, “Moderate”, “Major”.
- 6.2 The example table below (6.4) outlines examples of changes, the impact of the change and what level of consultation is required.

- 6.3 During the process, should student representatives feel the impact of these decisions requires a wider student consultation process, then this will be reviewed by UA92 and if not possible, a written explanation will be provided to the student representatives.
- 6.4 Impact of decisions example table (for guidance only):

	Education	Wellbeing	Operations	People
Routine	Changes to teaching rooms; Changes to reading lists	Availability times for staff	Replacing furniture; network disruptions	Lecturer absence
Minor	Changes of module title; updating of syllabus content	Resources available to students	Short-term closure of a room commonly used by students; significant changes to websites e.g. large restructuring	Changes to working hours or schedules that affect students
Moderate	N/A	Changes to external support offered to students (eg. Student Assistance Programme)	Refurbishing or building accommodation; major changes to software used	Significant expansion or reduction in staff teams that will affect student experience.
Major	Large-scale changes to course structure	Changes to student support services, changes to student funding/bursaries	Change or refurbishing a campus building; introduction of new technologies; change of data sharing policies	Appointment of senior leaders whose roles have a large impact on student experience, eg. modifications to student rep structures

Please Note: this list is indicative and not exhaustive.

7. Consultation Process

- 7.1 A consultation should take place as soon as reasonably possible once a firm proposal for change is set out by UA92 and before a final decision is made. This will allow students to provide feedback in a timely manner, which will inform whether the proposal is carried forward, reviewed, paused or withdrawn.
- 7.2 Consideration should be given to the most appropriate form of consultation to ensure the process is accessible for all students. The table below provides an indicative list of the types of consultation that could be conducted with students:

Routine	Minor	Moderate	Major
In class discussion	Student Representative Forum (eg. Academic Experience Forum, Student Experience Forum)	Open student forum (town hall event open for all students) followed by in-class vote (eg. Mentimeter) or Microsoft Teams survey (eg. Forms or Polly app)	Written proposal with expressed consent required (eg. signed consent form or consent by email response). Non-response to be considered agreement.
Student Representative Forum (eg. Academic Experience Forum, Student Experience Forum)	Meeting with 'World of' Student Representatives or equivalent		Open student forum (town hall event open for all students)

- 7.3 The proposal will be categorised by an appropriate group (eg. academic governance committee or leadership team) as outlined in section 6.1, and the most appropriate type(s) of consultation will be agreed in conjunction with the Student Life and Academic Registry teams. A range of consultation types may be utilised to ensure a holistic and inclusive approach, but the minimum requirements for each category of change must be met.

- 7.4 For each category of consultation, the below table outlines the thresholds for gaining agreement with the proposal(s):

Routine	Minor	Moderate	Major
N/A	Majority agreement by an appropriate student forum (eg. Student Experience Forum or Academic Experience Forum).	Dependant on type of consultation held, but threshold would be a majority of respondents.	<p>Straight majority agreement with proposal (with a minimum threshold of respondents to be agreed).</p> <p>Where the change affects multiple Worlds, a minimum response rate from each World will be set (dependant on student numbers).</p> <p>Non-response to be considered agreement.</p>

8. Concerns

- 8.1 Should a student have concerns about the outcome(s) of a consultation, they should contact Student Life in the first instance.
- 8.2 All students are also entitled to access the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure, which outlines the process for raising a formal complaint to UA92.

9. Related documents

Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

UA92 Student Protection Plan

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Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy: Course Design, Development, Approval and Modification

UA92 Guidance on Revisions to Programmes and Modules

CMA guidance on consumer law for Higher Education Providers

QAA Quality Code for Higher Education