

MFHEA COMMUNICATION MFHEA/03/2023

Title: Revision of Accredited Programmes

From: Head Accreditation, Validation and Quality Assurance, MFHEA

Date: 14/06/2023

Note: This communication will come into force with immediate effect.

A licensed provider may wish to revise a programme which has already been accredited by the Malta Further & Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) for a variety of reasons. In this case, the licensee must inform the MFHEA of any changes which deviate from the approved final course description. Any proposed changes by a licensed provider whether 'Major' or 'Minor' must be considered and approved by MFHEA prior to them being implemented.¹ It is the *Reaccreditation Committee* that will consider all requests. The Reaccreditation Committee consists of three members: – CEO of MFHEA, Head of Accreditation, Quality Assurance and Validation, and Manager Accreditation. It is up to the Reaccreditation Committee to confirm if the proposed changes can be considered as 'Minor' or 'Major' on the bases of the following criteria:

- Justification for proposed changes.
- Impact on objective/rationale.
- Impact on the learning outcomes.
- Impact on entry requirements.
- Impact on the mode of assessment.
- Impact on the distribution of hours in terms of contact/self-study/assessment and supervised/placements hours.
- Impact on the mode of delivery.
- Impact on the criteria with which tutors delivering the programme are chosen.
- Impact on other salient aspects of the programme.

The processes by which 'Major' and 'Minor' changes are considered and approved, may vary given that what might constitute a 'Minor' change in one instance, may have a wider impact and implications in another instance and will in such a case, be considered as 'Major'.

¹ Provider is subject to administrative penalties if changes are done to an accredited programme without MFHEA approval (MFHEA O7/2021).

'Minor' changes are alterations to any existing, already accredited programme that do not materially change the programme and / or do not significantly alter the design of the programme and the participation / engagement of students. For instance, if a request for a change in the name of a programme is made, the institution must provide a rationale why this is being requested. It would also need to be made sure that such a change will not impinge on the purpose and rationale of the programme, on admission requirements, and on the learning outcomes.

Instances of what typically can be considered as 'Minor' changes:

- duration of the programme (duration of programme here is referring to the period required for the completion of the programme)
- addition of exit award/qualification from already accredited modules.

When a revision is considered as a 'Major' change, the programme/ modules which are altered would need to go through reaccreditation. Thus, while a minor change will not incur an additional fee, a fee will be charged for the programme reaccreditation when reviewing a 'Major' change. The latest fee structure for programme accreditation can be found on the following link: [Administrative Fee Structure for Accreditation and Licensing of Providers and Programmes - Malta Further & Higher Education Authority \(mfhea.mt\)](https://mfhea.gov.mt/Portals/0/ADMINISTRATIVE_FEE_STRUCTURE_FOR_ACCREDITATION_AND_LICENSING_OF_PROVIDERS_AND_PROGRAMMES_-_MALTA_FURTHER_&_HIGHER_EDUCATION_AUTHORITY.pdf).

Instances of what can typically be considered as 'Major' changes:

- Changes in the number of ECTS,
- Change in the use of different terminology as regards the Learning Outcomes, describing an observable behaviour, or knowledge concept, that the learner will acquire.
- Change from face-face to online/blended provision².

The licensed provider is to submit an updated final course description in track changes to indicate the proposed revisions. It is to be noted that the Reaccreditation Committee will not consider any requests for changes to the content of the originally approved programme if these are done prior to the conclusion of the first cohort of students. For this reason, the applicant is to submit proof confirming that the first cohort has concluded their studies (e.g. by providing results sheets). A justification for what led to the request for change/es is also to be given. For instance, if the proposed changes are being requested following students' feedback, evidence of this should be provided. The Reaccreditation Committee reserve the right to request additional documentation if deemed necessary.

² If the programme will be updated due to changes in the mode of provision and will not impact other aspect of the application, a fee will incur as specified in [Administrative Fee Structure for Accreditation and Licensing of Providers and Programmes - Malta Further & Higher Education Authority \(mfhea.mt\)](https://mfhea.gov.mt/Portals/0/ADMINISTRATIVE_FEE_STRUCTURE_FOR_ACCREDITATION_AND_LICENSING_OF_PROVIDERS_AND_PROGRAMMES_-_MALTA_FURTHER_&_HIGHER_EDUCATION_AUTHORITY.pdf)

Once the requesting documentation is submitted, the Reaccreditation Committee will determine if the programme needs to go through reaccreditation or else be approved internally if the changes done are considered 'Minor'. If the changes made are not clearly marked, the Reaccreditation Committee will not take into consideration such changes. If the programme requires reaccreditation, the provider will be informed accordingly and may be requested to update the application to the latest version, if necessary. Information on the process of accreditation can be found on the following link: [Programme Accreditation – Malta Further & Higher Education Authority \(mfhea.mt\)](https://mfhea.gov.mt/Programme-Accreditation).

A copy of the application form/s, together with the required documentation, would need to be sent to accreditation@mfhea.mt.

Should you have any queries, please contact us on accreditation@mfhea.mt.

Regards,

Mr Lawrence Azzopardi
Head Accreditation, Validation and Quality Assurance

Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA)

A: Triq J Abela Sclaro, Hamrun. HMR 1304 – Malta

T: 00356 2598 1450 **E:** info@mfhea.mt

mfhea.mt