

Guide to Communication with Students about Modifications



Summary

It is vital that students who are affected by programme and module modifications are consulted, and in some instances, their consent is sought. Effective communication with students ensures that both the student voice is considered and shapes your submitted Modification Proposal where necessary, and also that the University is able to comply with consumer legislation when we amend programmes of study.

It may be that student feedback itself has driven you to make amendments to your programme; however, you should still carry out a full consultation to ensure all students have the opportunity to input, and where you require consent, that all students are invited to respond.

You can view in Appendix 1 of the Modifications Procedure whether you need to just inform students, undertake a consultation or in some cases seek consent from students. In all instances we would encourage you to seek advice from academicpolicy@bathspa.ac.uk about any proposals you are planning so we can support you through the process and the timing for your consultations and submissions; as well as how to respond to concerns or objections.

If you're consulting students; please include the course student representative in this process, to help collate views.

In your communication with students, you need to outline the specifics of what you're proposing, why you'd like to do it, and when it's due to happen/which students will be affected. Be clear and concise in your language and ensure you encourage students to get in touch with concerns or queries.

You should use Minerva to communicate with students, but ensure that your communication also sends a copy to students' email accounts: email communication is the formal method of communication outlined in University regulations and students are required to check their emails regularly.

Once your changes have been approved, you will need to inform students of this using the sample wording included in this Guide.

Sample Wording

This Guide includes sample wording for communicating with current students:

1. Undertaking a student consultation
2. Undertaking a student consultation and seeking student consent
3. Informing students of proposed changes
4. Informing students of approved changes

This Guide also includes sample wording for communicating with applicants:

5. Informing applicants, offer holders and those who have accepted offers of approved changes

Addressing Feedback, Concerns and Objections

When you receive student feedback on your proposed modifications, you need to consider the points raised and revise your proposal accordingly. If you are undertaking a consultation this does not mean that you have to agree with feedback provided by students, just that comments should be carefully considered as part of the development of your proposal.

Where students do raise concerns or object to a proposal; ask them to contact you with the detail of their concern or objection to allow you to check understanding, give further information and respond accordingly. Give them a further opportunity to liaise with you and provide a final deadline for their comments and/or consent if it is required.

Risk must be managed carefully when making modifications to programmes, particularly where the procedure indicates that consent is required.

If students raise concerns or objections to a Modification either through the process of consultation or consent; and you cannot resolve these using the above advice, please contact academicpolicy@bathspa.ac.uk.

Reporting the Responses

You will need to submit a summary of the outcome of your student consultation as part of your Modification Submission. This should summarise any key points emerging from the consultation and how you have taken these into account.

1. Sample Wording - undertaking a student consultation

Dear Students

I am writing to let you know about some planned changes to [*name of programme/module*]. We are proposing to [*one change can be listed here in narrative form*]

- [*Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g removal of Module A as Core and replacement with Module B as Core)*]
- [*Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g change to assessment item)*]

- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g amendment to Intended Learning Outcome)]*

We are introducing these changes because we believe that they *[outline rationale here - enhancement of student experience/better achieving learning outcomes/in response to student or external examiner feedback/to meet external sector guidance on benchmarks/build additional skills into the curriculum]*.

We are planning for these changes to come into effect for the *[academic year 20xx]* for all students in *[levels/list those current students affected. If you are planning to 'teach out' old version of the programme, say this here]*

We welcome your views on these proposals to ensure your degree programme continues to be shaped by the student voice. You can give feedback by sending your comments to the course representative *[name of course rep]* who will collate these and return them to me. *[add anything additional here that you may want specific feedback on/are interested in views on]*. The consultation closes on *[deadline date]*.

Please let me know if you have any questions about these proposals or have any concerns at all.

Best wishes,

[name of programme/subject leader]

2. Sample Wording - Undertaking a student consultation and seeking student consent

Dear Students

I am writing to let you know about some planned changes to *[name of programme]*. We are proposing to *[one change can be listed here in narrative form]*

- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g removal of Module A as Core and replacement with Module B as Core)*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g change to assessment item)]*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g amendment to Intended Learning Outcome)]*

We are introducing these changes because we believe that they *[outline rationale here - enhancement of student experience/better achieving learning outcomes/in response to student or external examiner feedback/to meet external sector guidance on benchmarks/build additional skills into the curriculum]*.

We are planning for these changes to come into effect for the *[academic year 20xx]* for all students in *[levels/list those current students affected. If you are planning to 'teach out' old version of the programme, say this here]*

We are inviting you to share your views on our proposals and provide your agreement to these by completing this form here: *[link to a Google Form]*. The deadline for responses is *[deadline date]*.

Please let me know if you have any questions about these proposals or have any concerns at all.

Best wishes,

[name of programme/subject leader]

3. Sample Wording - Informing students of proposed changes

Dear Students

I am writing to let you know about some planned changes to *[name of programme/module]*. We are proposing to *[one change can be listed here in narrative form]*

- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g removal of Module A as Core and replacement with Module B as Core)*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g change to assessment item)]*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g amendment to Intended Learning Outcome]*

We are introducing these changes because we believe that they *[outline rationale here - enhancement of student experience/better achieving learning outcomes/in response to student or external examiner feedback/to meet external sector guidance on benchmarks/build additional skills into the curriculum]*.

We are planning for these changes to come into effect for the *[academic year 20xx]* for all students in *[levels/list those current students affected]*

Please let me know if you have any questions about these proposals or have any concerns at all.

Best wishes,

[name of programme/subject leader]

4. Sample Wording - Informing students of approved changes

Dear Students

I am writing to let you know that the changes to *[name of programme]* that I wrote to you about on *[date]* have now been approved.

[If you sought student comments, outline here what you did to address these/respond]

In summary, the approved changes are:

- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g removal of Module A as Core and replacement with Module B as Core)*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g change to assessment item)]*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g amendment to Intended Learning Outcome)]*

These changes come into effect for the *[academic year 20xx]* for all students in *[levels/list those current students affected. If you are planning to 'teach out' old version of the programme, say this here]*

You can find your updated 'Definitive Programme Document' (the full details for your programme of study) on the Minerva course page *[link here]*.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

Best wishes,

[name of programme/subject leader]

5. Sample Wording - Informing applicants and offer holders of approved changes

Dear *[name of student]*

I am writing to let you know about some changes we have made to the *[name of programme]* since you applied for the course. These changes have been made to *[outline rationale here - enhancement of student experience/better achieving learning outcomes/in response to student or external examiner feedback/to meet external sector guidance on benchmarks/build additional skills into the curriculum]*.

In summary, the changes to your course are *[one change can be listed here in narrative form]*

- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g removal of Module A as Core and replacement with Module B as Core)*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g change to assessment item)]*
- *[Multiple changes can be listed individually here - use a new line for each change (e.g amendment to Intended Learning Outcome)]*

These changes come into effect for the *[academic year 20xx]*. You can find your full course details on the *[link to DPD section of the website]/ [attached to this email]*

If you have any questions about these proposals or have any concerns at all; please contact *[name of subject leader]*

Best wishes,

[Admissions Team Member]