It is important **to Union Theological College (UTC),** and to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Council for Training in Ministry, to ensure that all **Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland (PTFI)** awards are of an appropriate quality, set at the correct level, make use of relevant and up-to-date teaching, learning and assessment methods, and provide learning opportunities which enable students to succeed.

The College ensure that proposals for new and revised programmes are scrutinised closely, new modules are introduced appropriately, and that programmes are reviewed on an annual basis. In addition, it is important that modules are reviewed each time they are taught. It is important that this process is easily understood by students, faculty, staff and all those who are stakeholders in the oversight, review and delivery of UTC programmes.

In the academic year 2018-2019 UTC adopted a more formal role for each Department in the oversight, review, and delivery of programmes and individual modules. The faculty acknowledge the need to maintain appropriate threshold academic standards in this process and the review process is designed to ensure best practice.
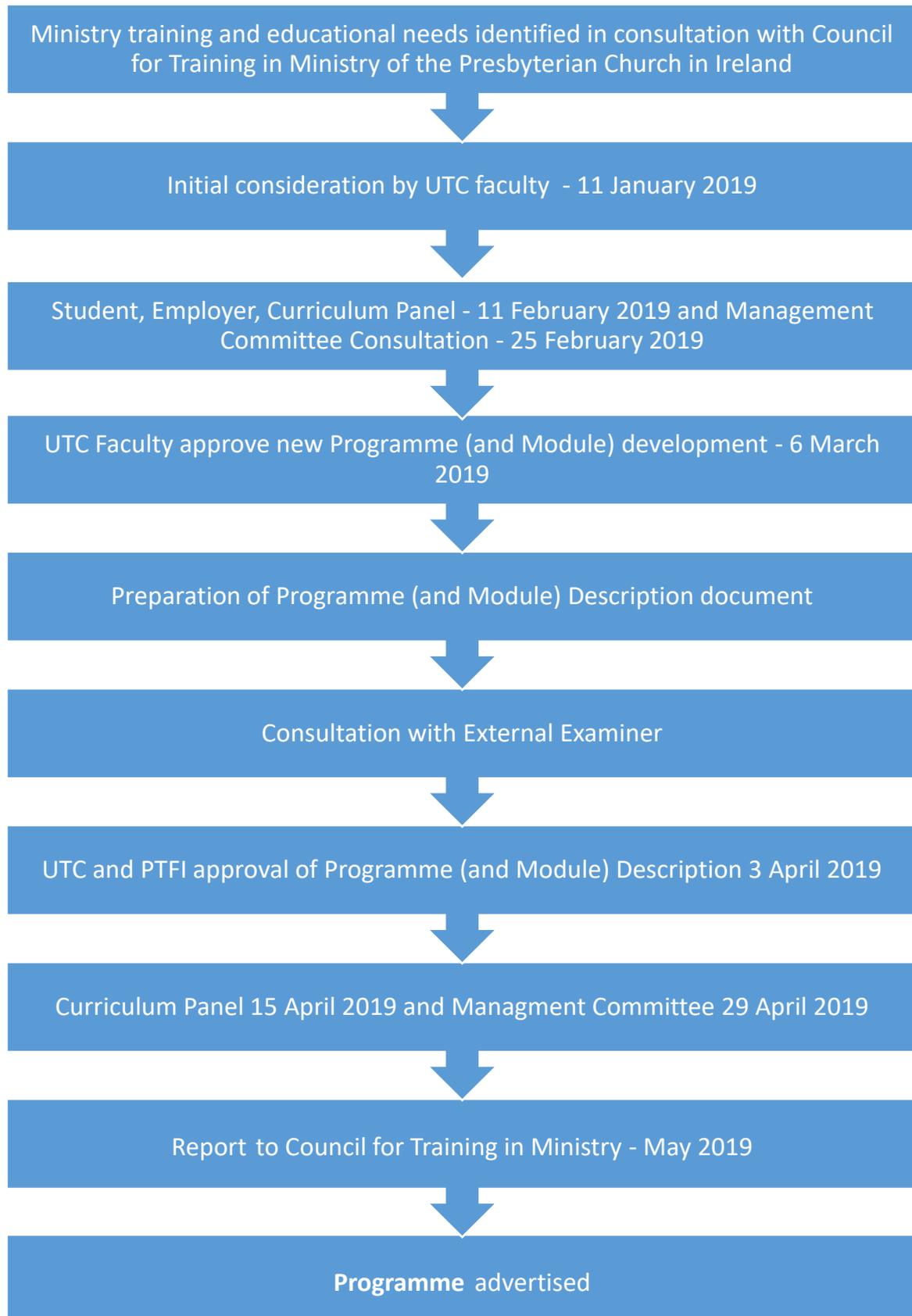
New and Revised Programmes

The **Approval Process for UTC Programmes with a PTFI award** is summarised in the flowchart below. This process will be followed as we design and review the ministry training programme and consider new PTFI awards. Depending on the precise nature of the PTFI award the consultation process may vary slightly.

In the design of any new programme and in the review and revision of existing programmes faculty are committed to taking into consideration matters of externality and employability. Thus, with regard to the ministry training pathway, the process involves close co-operation between the College and the church constituency which it seeks to serve. Key questions include: Are we preparing students for effective contemporary ministry? How can we best use our resources to enable the church to fulfil its mission? How effective is the current ministry training pathway? This enables the Faculty in cooperation with the Curriculum Panel and College Management Committee to develop programmes which nurture skills and aptitudes which are relevant and necessary for those offering themselves for ministry in the church.
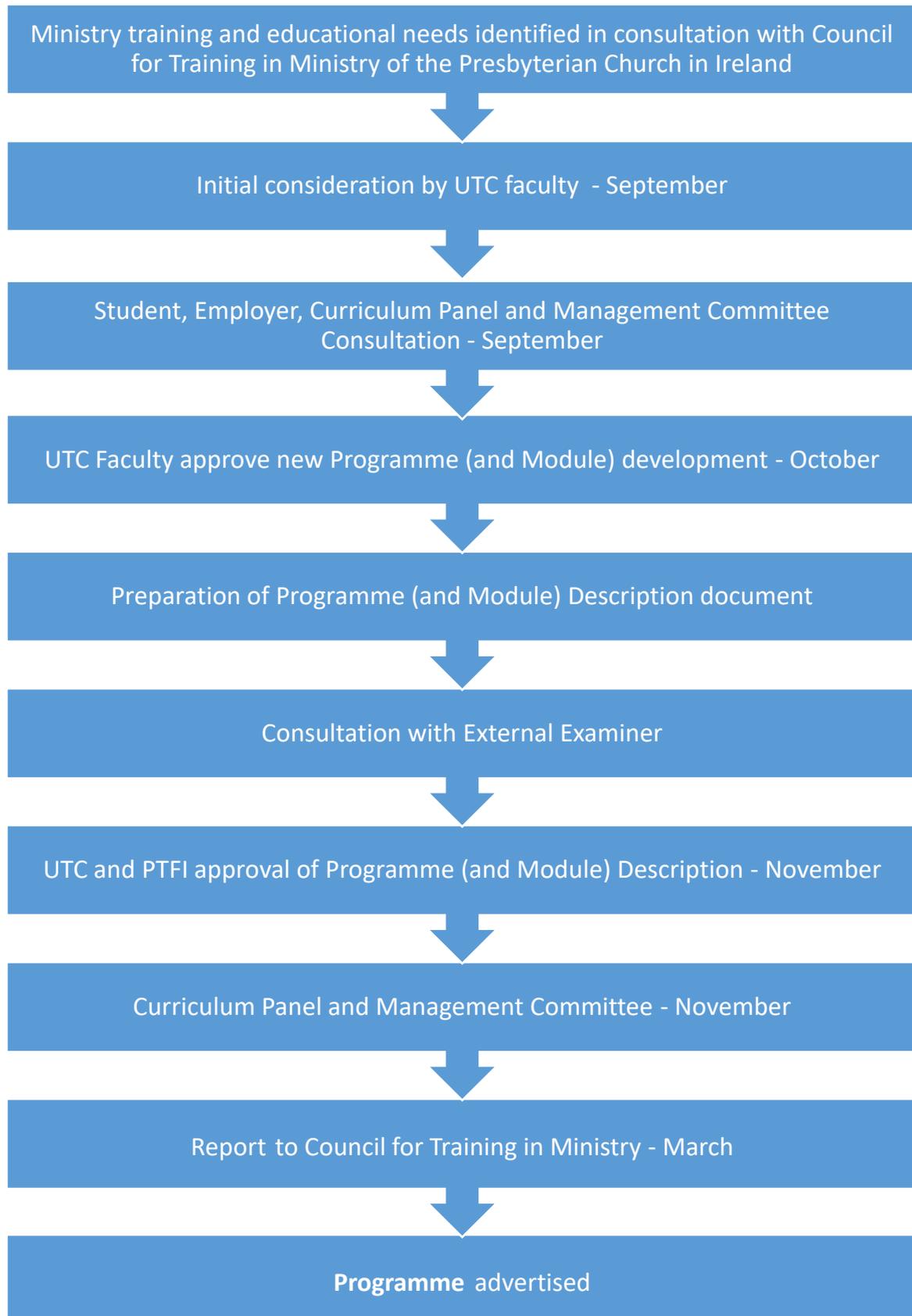
The process also incorporates feedback and advice from external examiners. By mapping the learning outcomes on to the descriptors for the appropriate level in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, and by taking account of the Degree Characteristics Statements and the Subject Benchmark Statement for Theology and RS, the academic standards of the proposed

programme are maintained. This is reinforced by each module co-ordinator demonstrating how the learning experiences and assessment elements of each module contribute to the achievement of the programme's learning outcomes. Care is also taken to ensure consistency with regard to the weightings of various assessment elements across units.

Approval Process for UTC Programmes 2018/19

Ministry training and educational needs identified in consultation with Council for Training in Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Initial consideration by UTC faculty - 11 January 2019

Student, Employer, Curriculum Panel - 11 February 2019 and Management Committee Consultation - 25 February 2019

UTC Faculty approve new Programme (and Module) development - 6 March 2019

Preparation of Programme (and Module) Description document

Consultation with External Examiner

UTC and PTFI approval of Programme (and Module) Description 3 April 2019

Curriculum Panel 15 April 2019 and Managment Committee 29 April 2019

Report to Council for Training in Ministry - May 2019

Programme advertised

Approval Process for UTC Programmes 2019/20

Ministry training and educational needs identified in consultation with Council for Training in Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

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Initial consideration by UTC faculty - September

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Student, Employer, Curriculum Panel and Management Committee Consultation - September

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UTC Faculty approve new Programme (and Module) development - October

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Preparation of Programme (and Module) Description document

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Consultation with External Examiner

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UTC and PTFI approval of Programme (and Module) Description - November

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Curriculum Panel and Management Committee - November

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Report to Council for Training in Ministry - March

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Programme advertised

Programme Management and Review

New Modules

The process of designing and developing new units or modules is part of the overall programme management and should contribute to the enhancement of the programme. Proposals for new UTC modules should be considered by the relevant Department and an outline proposal should be brought to the Faculty at an early stage. Faculty should consider any proposals in the light of a number of factors.

Factors that should be considered in the development of a new module are:

- The ministry or training needs identified by the Church
- The skills which the student will acquire or develop
- The academic content and level of the unit/module
- The learning outcomes of the proposed unit/module and how it fits with the programme as a whole
- The teaching and learning methods which are in line with the College's Teaching and Learning Policy (initial proposal at Faculty 6 Feb 2019)
- The methods of assessment which are aligned with the College's Assessment Policy
- The resources required, especially faculty time and commitment.

Once provisionally agreed by the Faculty, a module co-ordinator should be appointed by the appropriate Department for developing the module, completing a **New Module Template**, and bringing it to the faculty for approval. [1]Any new compulsory modules for the ministry preparation pathway should be reported to the Curriculum Panel and approved by the Management Committee and the Council for Training in Ministry.

Changes to Existing Modules

Minor changes to existing modules should be reported to the Head of the Department and approved by the Department. Major changes to existing modules must give careful consideration to the impact of the change on the overall programme. Consultation should take place with the entire Faculty, and with other stakeholders, including students, using the normal channels.

Changes to compulsory and core modules will require the approval of Faculty in discussion with the Curriculum Panel of the Management Committee. The process for approving minor changes to compulsory modules, and all changes to optional modules, remains a departmental decision. All changes should be reported to the Faculty.

- Major changes to modules include allocation of CATS points, status (compulsory or optional), level, contact hours, and assessment profile.
- Minor changes to modules include module title, semesters, minimum or maximum number of students, staff involved, course content, and teaching methods which do not have an impact on the learning outcomes. These should be reported to the Faculty.

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[1] In some previous processes this is referred to as a new unit template.

Module withdrawal

The withdrawal of individual modules is part of the process of continual review of the range and viability of modules on offer. Departments may withdraw optional modules but these must be reported to Faculty. Withdrawal of compulsory modules should be approved by Faculty and reported to the Management Committee through the Curriculum Panel. The withdrawal of a module should not adversely affect the learning outcomes of the programme. Faculty should consult with students on the pathways that may be affected by the withdrawal of any module.

Module information

Module co-ordinators are responsible for the module data published in the College Handbook and on the College's website. Each department should ensure that the information on each module is complete, up-to-date and appropriately consistent.

Annual Review Process

The Annual Review Process (ARP) for all UTC programmes and modules involves the following:

- Students' evaluations of modules and teachers
- Faculty evaluation
- External examiners' reports
- Curriculum Panel review and reports
- Departmental self-evaluation document
- Quality Action Team review and reports

Each aspect of the ARP is conducted initially at the departmental level and departmental recommendations are examined and approved by Faculty, taking into account the College's Quality Action Plan.

The Faculty are currently considering a proposal for an annual departmental self-evaluation as an efficient way to engage in an annual review process.

For UTC modules and courses, the following process is followed each year:

- Module coordinators prepare examinations and assignments for each unit/course. The coordinator has responsibility for following the Assessment Policy which includes the alignment of assessments with learning outcomes described for the particular module.

- External Examiners approve examinations and assignments for each module before the beginning of each semester.

- The UTC faculty meets to approve the examinations and assignments for each module for inclusion in course description given to students on the first day of class.

- Upon completion of the examination or assessments, an internal moderation process, which includes second marking, is applied. The Chair of each department sends selected assignments and examination scripts to the External Examiner for comment.

- The Assessment Policy is followed taking into consideration the External Examiners' comments and marks and classifications for each student are confirmed.

- Each department meets to carry out a module review and on the basis of external examiners' reports, student evaluations of both module and teacher, recommends changes and adjustments to modules. Good practice is noted and shared by the Faculty.

- The UTC faculty reports to Curriculum Panel of the Management Committee on the review process, identifying good practice and reporting changes and enhancements to modules. Curriculum Panel comments and recommendations are reported back to the Faculty.

Periodic Review of Governance and Programmes

It is helpful if, alongside annual monitoring of programmes, there is a periodic review of governance and programmes to ascertain the continuing effectiveness of the programmes offered and the management of those programmes. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, through its Council for Training in Ministry, has initiated a review of theological education on a number of occasions in recent years.

The most recent review of the work of Union Theological College reported to the General Assembly in June 2009, and in the intervening period the recommendations of that review have been implemented. The recommendations included:

- The creation of a new permanent post of Executive Principal;
- A new management structure for Union Theological College;
- A new faculty departmental structure.

This review enabled a holistic and strategic view to be taken of the work of the College, including comparisons with the work of similar colleges. This report also included a review of course requirements for those training for ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

At its February 2019 meeting, the Curriculum Panel recommended to the Management Committee that a regular three-year review take place of the work of Union Theological College. It is proposed that the next review will take place in 2021 and a review methodology is to be drafted and approved.

The 2017 meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland affirmed five priorities for the work of its Councils and in the next period each Council, including the Council for Training in Ministry, will demonstrate how it will reflect these priorities in its work. These priorities relate to leadership, fruitfulness, discipleship, mission and community. This will have implications for the training of people for ministry and for the work of Union Theological College and PTFI.

Review Timetable for 2019

Action	Date
Quality Action Team meeting to approve Internal Action Plan and monitor progress	5 December 2018
Management Committee External Examiners appointed QAA Revised Action Plan approved	17 December 2018
Upon completion of exams and assignments, the Chair of each department sends selected assignments from UTC modules to the External examiner for comment.	January 2019
Faculty meets to approve exams and assignments for inclusion in both QUB and PTFI course descriptions given to students on first day of class of second semester	11 January 2019
Faculty reviews first semester courses including student evaluations and External Examiner reports and prepares report for Curriculum Panel and Quality Action Team	6 February 2019
Curriculum Panel Receives Faculty Report and makes recommendations to Management Committee	11 February 2019
Quality Action Team Receives Faculty Report and CPL comments and reports on compliance with expectations of the Quality Code	21 February 2019
Management Committee Receives CPL and QAT report	25 February 2019
Faculty Meeting to review Ministry Students' progress Reports to MSDC	6 March 2019
Council for Training in Ministry Meeting Receives MC and MSDC reports	19 March 2019

General Council Meeting (acts on behalf of General Assembly)	21 March 2019
Faculty Meeting Consideration of UG Dissertations proposals for 2019-20	3 April 2019
Curriculum Panel	15 April 2019
Management Committee	29 April 2019
Upon completion of exams and assignments, the Chair of each department sends selected assignments and exam scripts to the External examiner for comment.	Early May 2019
PTFI meets to confirm marks and classifications for each student. Marks are released to students.	16 May 2019
Faculty reviews all courses including student evaluations and External examiner reports and prepares report for Curriculum Panel and Quality Action Team	5 June 2019
The Quality Action Team considers Faculty and CPL Reports and reports to Faculty and Curriculum Panel on compliance with expectations of the Quality Code	12 June 2019
Each Department carries out a self-evaluation process and submits report to Faculty and Curriculum Panel	Late June/Early July
The Faculty prepares an Annual College Report which includes comments on the review process, identification of good practice and changes and enhancements to courses.	July/August 2019
Curriculum Panel Receives Faculty Report and makes recommendations to Management Committee	September 2019
The Annual College Report is considered by College Management Committee and recommendations are reported back to Faculty	September 2019