**Introduction**

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# QA Policy Statement

The University requires that there should be a Code of Practice for Quality Assurance that expresses the principles, responsibilities and structures through which it assures academic standards and the continuous improvement of the student academic experience.

This Code came into effect on 1 September 2005, having been approved by the Board for Research and Enterprise on 9 June 2005 and by Senate on 22 June 2005. Institutional oversight of this code (on behalf of Senate) became the responsibility of the Graduate School Board with effect from 31 August 2009 and the Graduate and Researcher College with effect from 1 October 2020. There is a systematic process of review of this Code of Practice on an annual basis.

# Annexes:

**Annex A**: Curriculum Policy

**Annex B:** Approval and Withdrawal of Research Courses

**Annex C**: Approval of Research Candidates and Projects

**Annex D**: Information to Students

**Annex E**: Annual Monitoring

**Annex F**: Periodic Review

**Annex G**: Personal Academic Support System

**Annex H**: Supervision

**Annex I**: Divisional Directors of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience

**Annex J**: Progression and Examination

**Annex K**: External and Internal Examiners

**Annex L:** Student Evaluation

**Annex M**: Practise Research

**Annex N**: deleted

**Annex O**: Researcher Development Programme

**ANNEX P:** Research Student Teachers and Demonstrators

**ANNEX Q:** Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

# Preamble

Senate is responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place that will:

* stimulate, through regular critical self-evaluation, improvement of the quality of the education provided;
* inform and provide assurance to current and potential students, and relevant external agencies and interests, as to the high quality of the education provided.

This Code covers all courses leading to the award by the University of research degrees, including those delivered by other institutions. It does not cover taught courses of study (see the Code of Practice for Quality Assurance for Taught Courses of Study). University Schools and Divisions and institutions with validated courses may, however, introduce requirements additional to these minimum University requirements for quality assurance, for example in relation to accreditation by a professional body.

The Code is reviewed at regular intervals by the Graduate and Researcher College Board and is revised from time to time by the Graduate and Researcher College in order to ensure that it continues to represent best practice and is effective.

# Terms Used

1. A course of study - hereafter "a course" - consists of a defined and approved subject area to which students may propose a research thesis, which leads when successfully completed to an award of the University.
2. Divisions include (a), Academic Centres and Departments with responsibility for delivering courses and (b) institutions or organisations delivering courses under validation or other partnership arrangement. Directors of Division include Directors of these Academic Centres, Departments and Institutions/Organisations.
3. Divisional Directors of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience are responsible for maintaining oversight of research courses of study at a Divisional level.
4. The terms ‘annual monitoring’ and ‘annual reporting’ are used in this Code exclusively to describe quality management functions at a course level. Where procedures are expected to operate for individual students, the term ‘student progress’ will be used.

# Principles

This Code is based on the principles that quality assurance procedures will be simple and effective; will be integrated into the routine management of research courses of study; and will harmonise as far as possible internal University and external agency requirements.

# Responsibilities

This section of the Code summarises where responsibility lies for the various elements of the arrangements for assuring the quality of education provided by the University via research courses. Detailed requirements are set out in a series of Annexes to the Code, as listed in Section 2.

## Divisions

Divisionsare responsible for:

* ensuring that courses submitted for approval conform with the requirements of this Code (see Annex B: Approval and Withdrawal of Research Courses);
* delivering courses as approved;
* providing a research environment which will encourage students to flourish and achieve their potential;
* ensuring that all students are provided in good time with all appropriate information relating to their course and its modules (see Annex D: Information to Students);
* annual monitoring of courses and student progress, determining action to be taken as a consequence and reporting on these matters to Divisional Boards (see Annex E: Annual Monitoring);
* providing academic advice and support for their students (see Annex G: Personal Academic Support System);
* obtaining and considering the views of students on the education which the Division provides (see Annex L: Student Evaluation);
* reflecting critically on the education which they provide, in particular as part of internal periodic review (see Annex F: Periodic Review);
* responding to the reports of internal periodic review panels (see Annex F: Periodic Review);
* acting upon the decisions of Divisional Boards and the Graduate and Researcher College;
* ensuring that students have access to appropriate supervision (see Annex H: Supervision);
* providing reasonable access to space and IT resources and ensuring the provision of research and related skills (e.g. basic IT and data retrieval) training;
* Ensuring student engagement in quality assurance activities (see Annex Q: Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement).

## Divisional Boards

Divisional Boards are responsible for:

* recommending approval of proposed courses, having ensured that no such approval is recommended unless the proposed course conforms to the requirements of this Code (see Annex B: Approval and Withdrawal of Research Courses);
* recommending withdrawal of courses;
* ensuring that Schools' annual monitoring conforms to the requirements of this Code and reviewing the outcome of such monitoring (see Annex E: Annual Monitoring);
* ensuring that all students are provided in good time with all appropriate information relating to their course and any taught modules (see Annex D: Information to Students);
* organising and conducting periodic reviews on behalf of the University (see Annex F: Periodic Review);
* reporting annually to the Graduate and Researcher College Board on the exercise of powers delegated to it by that Board.

## The Graduate and Researcher College Board

The Graduate and Researcher College Board is responsible for:

* approving courses, having ensured that no course is approved unless it conforms to the requirements of this Code (see Annex B: Approval and Withdrawal of Research Courses);
* determining, in the light of reports from review panels, whether courses may continue, may continue on satisfaction of specified conditions or shall be discontinued (see Annex F: Periodic Review );
* approving withdrawal of courses;
* keeping under review this Code and its effectiveness;
* reporting annually to the Senate on the exercise of powers delegated to it by the Senate.

## Examiners

Examiners are responsible for:

* making recommendations for the award of qualifications;
* making recommendations with regard to resubmission examinations and termination of registration (see Annex J: Progression and Examination).
1. **External Examiners**

External Examinersare responsible for:

* ensuring that assessment of students is undertaken fairly and rigorously (see Annex K: External and Internal Examiners).

# Collaborative Provision

1. Collaborative courses of study leading to awards of the University are subject to Kent’s regulations, Codes of Practice for Quality Assurance and Credit Framework conventions, except in so far as these may be varied in a signed Memorandum of Agreement.
2. Institutions offering courses of study leading to University awards are required to have in place a quality assurance system that is consistent with the requirements of the University’s Codes of Practice for Quality Assurance.

# Quality Management Structures for Research Courses of Study

**SENATE**

**Course Approval Sub-Committee**

**Graduate and Researcher College Board**

**Divisional Graduate Studies and Student Experience Board**

**Boards of Studies**

**Module Convenors**

**Student Voice Forum**