Annex B: Approval and Withdrawal of Modules

1. This section of the Code of Practice sets out the requirements which must be met by proposals for new modules and the procedures for consideration and approval of such proposals.

2. Proposals for new modules should include a module specification in the approved format. The module specification will subsequently be used as a source of basic information about the module by students, potential students and internal and external reviewers.

3. Each module must be set out in a separate module specification.

4. Module Approval

   Nb. Following the implementation in 2017/18 of the revised methodology for the approval of new or substantially amended programmes of study, the procedures for module approval differ where (a) the module comes forward as part of a proposal for a new or substantially amended programme of study to be considered by the School/Faculty Programme Development Team; or (b) the module is proposed in isolation and does not form part of a programme proposal, as per 4.1 and 4.2 respectively, below:

4.1 Modules Coming Forward as part of Programme Proposal

   New or amended modules put forward as part of a proposal for a new taught programme or a substantially revised existing taught programme will be considered via the process set out at 3.2.1-3.2.6 or 6.1-6.3 of Annex C: Approval and Withdrawal of Taught Programmes of this Code of Practice.

4.2 Modules Coming Forward Outside of a Programme Proposal

   The formal procedure for the approval of new modules which do not come forward as part of a proposal for a new or substantially revised programme of study is as follows:

   Where intended primarily for use as part of an undergraduate programme:

   4.2.1 Preparation of proposal.

   4.2.2 Consideration of proposal by Board of Studies and School Education Committee; recommendation to Faculty Education Committee.

   4.2.3 Consideration of proposal and recommendation by Faculty Education Committee.

   Where intended primarily for use as part of a taught postgraduate programme:

   4.2.4 Preparation of proposal.

   4.2.5 Consideration of proposal by Board of Studies and School Graduate Studies Committee; recommendation to Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

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1 See https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/codes/taught/docs/annex-b-modspec-coversheet-blank-2017-18.docx

2 For the purposes of this Code integrated Master’s programmes are regarded as undergraduate programmes.

3 For the purposes of this Code Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma programmes are regarded as postgraduate programmes.
4.2.6 Consideration of proposal and recommendation by Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

**Note:** As a condition of approval, Faculty Education Committee or Faculty Graduate Studies Committee should be assured that the proposed new curriculum, as far as can be reasonably anticipated, does not present any non-justifiable disadvantage to students with disabilities.

5 All modules must conform to the criteria as set out in the Kent Credit Framework sections 3.2-3.3. Approval of a module by the relevant Faculty Committee or Programme Development Team confirms that it is satisfied that the module is set at the appropriate level.

6 The module-owning School must state how the introduction of a new module will impact on the learning outcomes of all existing programmes of study in which the module is compulsory and the module-owning School is responsible. Where the introduction of a new module will impact on the programme learning outcomes, a revised programme specification and module mapping must be submitted for re-approval as per Annex C.

7 The module specification must list all possible pre-requisites relating to that module, including where the module is attached to two or more different programmes of study.

8 The module specification must specify which reassessment method will apply, either (a) via the like-for-like reassessment of failed individual component(s) of assessment; or (b) by reassessment instrument (i.e. retrieval by 100% exam, coursework or project). Variation of the method of reassessment stated in the approved module specification will only be considered for students with ILPs or in response to an extraordinary circumstance for an individual student. Such variations will require the prior written agreement of the relevant Faculty Associate Dean.

9 Modules must state explicitly where an assessment component is pass-compulsory.

10 **High Risk of Non-delivery**

10.1 Module specifications must be designed in such a way that a high risk of non-delivery is not created (such a risk might include both a single member of teaching staff and/or a resourcing concern). A high risk of non-delivery creates risk for both student satisfaction and for compliance.

10.2 When a new or revised module is submitted for approval it should include a confirmation that more than one person is available to teach it and/or that the School plan includes consideration of cover and succession planning.

10.3 School/Faculty approval of modules should include consideration of the title and curriculum description in order to confirm these are not overly constraining.

10.4 Consideration should be given as to whether any specialist modules might be delivered intensively across a few weeks rather than a full term, so as to minimise the risk of non-delivery.
11 Changes to Approved Modules

11.1 Schools are authorised to approve minor changes to existing modules. Such changes should not be approved unless a revised module specification has been submitted.

11.2 Where substantial changes to a module are proposed, a revised module specification must be submitted for approval by the School/Faculty Programme Development Team (see 4.1 above), the Faculty Education Committee or the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee, as appropriate.

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12.1 A substantial change to a module includes:

♦ Any amendment resulting in a change to the intended learning outcomes for the module.

♦ A major change to the learning or teaching methods or to the methods of assessment, e.g. a change to the delivery mode from lectures to e-learning.

♦ A change in the level or volume of credit of a module, as this will necessarily involve a change in learning outcomes and assessment.

♦ A combination of minor changes that, when aggregated, can be considered to be a major change.

12.2 Where there is doubt as to whether a proposed change to a module constitutes a minor or substantial change, advice should be sought from the Faculties Support Officer (fso@kent.ac.uk) or the Quality Assurance Office (qa@kent.ac.uk).

Note: Where a new or revised programme specification is to be submitted to PASC for approval, new and/or major revisions to module specifications must be approved by Faculty first. It is necessary, therefore, to take account of the annual deadline for submissions to PASC when planning new modules or major changes to existing modules. Please refer to Annex C, 2.1 and 2.3.1 (vi-vii) for further guidance.

13 Whether a change to a module is regarded as either minor or substantial, the School must give proper consideration as to whether the proposed change is compliant with CMA (Competition and Markets Authority4) guidance and in particular whether it represents a change to ‘material information’. Schools should refer to the CMA information and guidance pages at https://www.kent.ac.uk/academic/cma/index.html for details, and should also seek advice from the Faculties Support Office.

14 Other interested Schools should be consulted as appropriate with regard to changes to modules.

15 The module-owning School must state how any change to an existing module (whether a minor or substantial change) will impact on the learning outcomes of all existing programmes of study in which the module is compulsory and the module-owning School is responsible. Where a change to a module will impact on the programme learning outcomes, a revised programme specification and module mapping must be submitted for re-approval as per Annex C.

4 See https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority
16 Module Withdrawal

16.1 Schools will review annually the portfolio of modules that they offer and will make decisions about the retention and withdrawal of those modules (see Annex E section 3 of the Code of Practice).

16.1.1 Any module that does not register any students for a period of three consecutive academic years will be considered for withdrawal. To facilitate this process, the Faculties Support Office will present each School in the Autumn Term with a list of modules that have not recorded any student registrations over a three-year period. Schools will be required to annotate and return the list by a stated deadline, indicating which if any of the modules should be retained. Any modules not identified by the School for retention within the deadline set will be withdrawn by the Faculty on the authority of the relevant Associate Dean. Where a non-recruiting module is marked by a School for retention, a rationale for doing so must be provided. In such cases, the relevant Associate Dean of the Faculty will take the rationale into account before reaching a decision. If the Associate Dean is satisfied by the rationale, s/he will sanction the retention of the module for a further academic year. Where the Associate Dean is not satisfied, the module will be withdrawn. Where module(s) not owned by a School contribute to programme(s) offered by that School, the School in question must check the list for such modules and must annotate the list to indicate such modules should be retained.

16.1.2 Modules withdrawn through this exercise by the Associate Deans will be reported as such to the relevant Faculty Committee (either the Faculty Education Committee or the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee, as appropriate), which will formally record the withdrawal. The Faculties Support Office will report these decisions to the relevant School and the Central Student Administration Office (CSAO).

16.2 Other than via the annual exercise set out at 16.1 above, where a School wishes to propose the withdrawal of a module, it should submit a request to the appropriate Faculty Education Committee or Graduate Studies Committee via the system used for module approval. The request should be accompanied by the following:

♦ a statement confirming that no students are registered for the module or will be required to take it, including resitting and intermitting students. If there are students still registered on the module the statement should set out how those students will be properly taught and supported;

♦ a statement that the module is either not a component of any other Schools’ programmes, or, if the module is a component of a programme belonging to another School a statement that the School(s) have been advised. Evidence in the form of responses from the other School(s) must be provided with the withdrawal request.

16.3 Where withdrawals are part of a programme restructure the withdrawal request should be submitted at the same time as the revised programme specification and the withdrawal submission should indicate that it is part of a programme restructure.

16.4 Where a module to be withdrawn is subject to an existing Articulation Agreement, the Faculties Support Office (FSO) will notify the School and the Quality Assurance Office (QAO).

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5 Such lists to be requested from the Data Quality Team.
6 The QAO will provide the FSO with an up to date list of all modules that are subject to an Articulation Agreement.
17 Alternative Assessment

17.1 Occasionally it is necessary to create an alternative assessment, for example for students with ILPs or in response to an exceptional circumstance for an individual student. The process for approval of alternative assessment is as follows:

17.1.1 The relevant School will draw up a rationale that sets out why the alternative assessment is required, details of the form that it will take, which student/s will undertake the assessment and confirmation that the alternative assessment meets the required Module Learning Outcomes.

17.1.2 The School will submit the rationale to the Faculties Support Office, which will seek approval from the appropriate Associate Dean (Education) or Associate Dean (Graduate Studies).

17.1.3 Once approval has been granted the FSO will inform the School.

17.2 Validated Institutions will be required to have their own internal procedure in place for the approval of alternative assessments, including a process to ensure that the relevant External Examiner is satisfied with the alternative assessment. The Validated Institution must inform the Quality Assurance Office of any alternative assessments once approved.

Further Guidance:

Please refer to the module and programme specification approval risk table, which may be viewed in ‘Guidance.'