The aim of the QA newsletter is to provide:

♦ a summary of changes in QA procedures and processes approved by the Education Board and the Graduate School Board;
♦ an update on external QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) reviews, consultations and developments;
♦ an update on developments in collaborative provision,
♦ a note of KentVision (SITS)-related matters.

More information can be accessed through the relevant weblinks below and any queries should be forwarded to qa@kent.ac.uk.

If you currently do not get this newsletter and would like to be informed when a new QA newsletter is available, please send an email to qa@kent.ac.uk and we will arrange for you to be added to the QA News alert.

Key Quality Assurance weblinks

♦ Code of Practice for Taught Programmes of Study: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/code_taught.html
♦ Annexes to the Taught Code of Practice: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html
♦ Code of Practice for Research Programmes of Study: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/research/code_research.html
♦ Annexes to the Research Code of Practice: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html?tab=research-programmes
♦ Credit Framework: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html
♦ Annexes to the Credit Framework: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html
♦ Academic Regulations – Taught Programmes: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html
♦ Managing Higher Education With Others: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/index.html
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1. Code of Practice for Taught Programmes of Study
   i) Annex B: Approval and Withdrawal of Modules

The following has been inserted:
(a) 9 Modules must state explicitly where an assessment component is pass-compulsory.

The following new sections and amendments have been added to the annex, following recommendations arising from the Programme and Curriculum Design Project:

(b)
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.
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 Authority) 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](https://www.kent.ac.uk/academic/cma/index.html) for details, and should also seek advice from the Faculties Support Office.

### Module Withdrawal

16.1 **Schools** The Faculties will review annually the [portfolio catalogue](https://www.kent.ac.uk/academic/cma/index.html) of modules that they offered by their constituent Schools and will make decisions about the retention and withdrawal of those modules (see Annex E section 3 of the Code of Practice).

Annex B can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexb.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexb.html)

### Annex C: Approval and Withdrawal of Taught Programmes

Annex C has had extensive changes (existing sections have been deleted and new sections added), following recommendations arising from the Programme and Curriculum Design Project.

Annex C can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexc.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexc.html)

### Annex E: Annual Monitoring

The following new sections have been added to the annex, following recommendations arising from the Programme and Curriculum Design Project:

(a)

1 The purpose of annual monitoring is:

   ... 

   - To affirm that programme specifications remain current, sustainable and appropriate.

(b)

**Monitoring of Modules**

3 **Annual Module Portfolio Review**

3.1 Schools should undertake an annual review of their portfolios of undergraduate and postgraduate taught modules. The intention of this review is to ensure that module portfolios remain lean, fit for purpose and wholly supportive of the School objectives and the principles set out in the University Curriculum Policy.
University of Kent  
Quality Assurance Office

3.2 Where a module is determined to be no longer sustainable, withdrawal should be recommended (refer also to Annex B, section 14 of the Code of Practice, on module withdrawal).

3.3 The relevant School should take action where the review indicates any of the following:
   • The module has a high failure rate.
     As stated in subsection 4.2 (iv) below, a failure rate of 15% or more is one of the annual monitoring conditions. It is appreciated that this limit may not support the identification of performance outliers for some modules and, therefore, Schools may wish to set their own failure rate indicator, up to 15% as set out below.
   • The module’s average recruitment is regularly below the School’s acceptable minimum.
     Schools should set an acceptable minimum recruitment for their modules. Modules that fail to meet this minimum should be reviewed, and withdrawn if actions fail to address the poor recruitment.
   • The module is not anticipated to run in the future.
     If the module is not expected to run in the future it should be withdrawn.
   • The module does not contribute to the School’s aims and objectives.
     If the School determines that a module does not/no longer contributes to the achievement of its aims, or is no longer required in order to deliver the learning objectives of its programmes of study, the module should be withdrawn.
   • The module is found to have a point of high risk of non-delivery.
     If the School determines that a module has, or is likely to have, a high risk of non-delivery the School must take steps to ensure this is addressed as quickly as possible.

3.4 Validated Institutions and Partner Colleges are not required to undertake the module portfolio review.

4 Annual Module Monitoring Reports

4.3.3 A reflection on the module programme portfolio review of the previous academic year. The report should set out what actions the School has taken or is planning to take as a result of the portfolio review, including any arising from a formal action plan, if one was agreed with the Dean/their nominee.

5 Monitoring of Programmes

5.1 Schools should undertake an annual review of their portfolios of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes of study, to be carried out in advance of the planning round. The intention of this review is to ensure that the programmes of study remain sustainable, to identify actions to be undertaken to address any areas of concern, and to identify areas of good practice.

5.2 Where a programme of study is determined to be not sustainable, withdrawal should be recommended (refer also to Annex C, section 8 of the Code of Practice, on programme withdrawal).
5.3 The portfolio review should be undertaken in March of each academic year. This will allow time for the review outcomes to be factored into the preparation of School and Faculty plans.

5.4 Schools need not undertake the portfolio review in the academic year that they are subject to Periodic Programme Review.

5.5 The portfolio review should be undertaken by relevant members of School staff and the Dean of the Faculty (or their nominee) plus any other relevant colleague. It should lead to a determination of whether or not each programme of study is sustainable, attractive to prospective students and of educational worth. Such discussions should be informed by:

- an examination of the metrics for each programme (see Appendix A for the metrics);
- consideration of other relevant reporting and monitoring information, for example results and comments from the Undergraduate Student Survey;
- consideration of the results of the School review of its module portfolio (see section 4);
- the University’s Curriculum Policy;
- any other relevant information and factors influencing the delivery of learning and teaching in the School.

5.6 The Faculties Support Office will be responsible for arranging and servicing the reviews. This will include the provision of documentation and compiling an overall report for each Faculty. Faculty reports will be reported to Education Board via the Academic Standards and Quality Committee and Graduate School Board.

5.7 Validated Institutions and Partner Colleges are not required to undertake the programme portfolio review.

6 Annual Programme Monitoring Reports

4.2.4 Be informed by the discussions and outcomes of the programme portfolio review of the previous academic year. The report should set out what actions the School has taken or is planning to take as a result of the portfolio review, including any arising from a formal action plan, if one was agreed with the Dean/their nominee.

(d)

7 School Annual Monitoring Report for Undergraduate Programmes

7.1 School Education Committees should submit an annual monitoring report to the Faculty Education Committee, normally at its first meeting in the Spring term, and after the School’s annual programme portfolio review meetings have been held, to enable the content and outcomes of the review to inform the report. Reports should comprising:

Annex E can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexe.html

The Annual Monitoring Templates have been updated:
Programme Monitoring: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/codes/taught/docs/copt-annexe-prog-template.docx
School Monitoring: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/codes/taught/docs/copt-annexe-school-template.docx

iv) Annex F: Periodic Review

The following new sections have been added to the annex, following recommendations arising from the Programme and Curriculum Design Project:

(a)

7 Review Documentation

...  

- A reflection on the programme portfolio review of the previous academic year and on the actions identified and undertaken as a result of that review, which should go on to inform a reflection of any trends arising from an analysis of the year on year metrics.
- A reflection on the module portfolio review of the previous academic year and on the actions identified and undertaken as a result of that review, which should go on to inform a reflection of any trends arising from an analysis of the year on year metrics.

...  

- Statistical data on entry qualifications, progression and completion rates, student achievement (for example, means and standard deviations for each element of assessment for each module), degree classifications and employability data for the past three years for u/ g and pgt taught students.
- Statistical data on (i) current research student numbers, (ii) research student funding, (iii) entry requirements, (iv) progression (pass, referral and fail rates), (v) withdrawal rates (including reasons for leaving), (vi) submission and completion times and rates (these to be submitted by programme of study and by supervisor) and (vii) employability data for ment destinations of former pgr students for the past three years.

Annex F can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html

v) Annex J: Meetings of Boards of Examiners

The following has been added to the annex to confirm existing practice:

4 Mitigation Committee

4.1 Before each meeting of a Board of Examiners, the Chief Examiner will convene a meeting of a small number of internal members of the Board of Examiners (i.e. normally no more than three members, to include the Chief Examiner, the Senior
Tutor, a third member and, typically, with the Student Support Officer in attendance) to assess the severity of the impact on student performance of relevant extenuating circumstances. The Mitigation Committee will be chaired by the Chief Examiner or by a nominee of the Chief Examiner, drawn from the members of the Mitigation Committee. Any such nominee must also be a member of the relevant Board of Examiners.

Annex J can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexj.html

vi) Annex V: Supervision and Dissertation Support for Postgraduate Taught Master's Students

This is a new annex, recently approved by the Education Board. Please can Schools and Centres ensure that relevant colleagues are familiar with it.

Annex V can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexv.html

2. Credit Framework

i) Credit Framework

The following has been inserted:

6.3 Compensation

The mark on the transcript will not be adjusted. Programme specifications specify modules in which failure cannot be compensated. Students may not be compensated for a module where, as a result of having failed a pass compulsory component of assessment, the overall mark for the module is recorded as one mark below the pass mark e.g. if the pass mark is 40, an overall mark of 39 will be recorded (see 6.1 above).

The Credit Framework is at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html

ii) Annex 2: Qualification Level Descriptors

Table B of the annex has been revised to include additional information following recommendations arising from the Programme and Curriculum Design Project:
### FHEQ Numerical Level Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FHEQ Numerical Level Descriptors</th>
<th>Typical HE Qualifications</th>
<th>Predominant Credit Level Mapped Against Stages of Programmes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pre-certificate level</td>
<td>UG Programme Stage 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>HNC Certificate of HE</td>
<td>UG Programme Stage 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HND Foundation Degree</td>
<td>UG Programme Stage 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma of HE</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bachelor's Degree with Honours</td>
<td>UG Degree Programme Stage 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Batchelor's Degree (non-Honours)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
<td>G. Cert/G Dip Programmes - All Stages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>Integrated Master's – Stage 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>PGT Programmes – All Stages</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Doctorates</td>
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</table>

Annex 2 can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex2.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex2.html)

### iii) Annex 4: Minimum Credit Requirements for Awards

The following new section has been added to the annex, following recommendations arising from the Programme and Curriculum Design Project:

4 With regard to undergraduate programmes of study:

Level 4 modules may be studied in Stages 2, 3 or 4 or Level 5 modules studied in Stages 3 or 4 only where one of the following conditions are met:

(a) the design of the programme of study has incorporated specified modules at these levels into Stages 2, 3 or 4 of the programme of study in question; or

(b) where the optional modules in question are language modules offered by SECL or CEWL; and/or

(c) where the optional modules in question are considered on an exception basis by the student’s School to enhance employability.

Annex 4 can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex4.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex4.html)

### 3 Periodic Programme Review

As per the recent notification:

The decision has been taken to suspend PPRs forthwith for 2019-20. This is in light of the current increased workloads and uncertainty surrounding the anticipated Organising for Success changes,
including the new Divisions and possible changes to the quality management processes at the Division and School level.

It is expected that PPRs will resume in 2020-21, and how this is managed and the form it will take will be confirmed in due course.

4. Collaborative Partnerships Developments

A register of all approved partner institutions can be viewed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/documents/collabprovregister%2031-10-19.pdf