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](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](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](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](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](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](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](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](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/index.html)
- Collaborative Provision: Policies and Procedures: [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/policies.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/policies.html)
- Guidance, Policies and Procedures: [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/index.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/index.html)
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1. Code of Practice for Taught Programmes of Study
   (i) Annex B: Approval and Withdrawal of Modules

The version of the module template with guidance has had the following added to the guidance for section 31.2:

**N.B. In the case of a work-based learning/placement learning module that cannot be resat this must be stated explicitly here (refer to Annex Q section 1.3 for details).**

The module template with guidance can be accessed listed under Annex B at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html
(ii) Annex J: Meetings of Boards of Examiners

The annex has had the following revision:

4 Mitigation Concessionary Committee

Before each meeting of a Board of Examiners, the Chair shall convene a meeting of a small number of internal members of the Board of Examiners (i.e. the Chair and normally no more than three members) to agree recommendations to be made to the Board regarding students about whom medical or other concessionary evidence has been received. The procedures and conventions for considering such applications are set out in Annex 9: Mitigation of Extenuating Circumstances of the Credit Framework. The scale below provides a framework for assessing the impact of concessionary circumstances on a student’s performance and should be used for the purpose of reporting this assessment and the resulting recommendations to the Board. It should be noted that, as per the requirements of the Credit Framework: Annex 9 (Concessions Applications), all such evidence submitted for consideration by students should document matters of illness or other misfortune such as to cause exceptional interference with academic performance over and above the normal difficulties experienced in life.

In addition, all of the previous section 5 has been deleted.

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

Other annexes of the Code of Practice have had wording changed from ‘concessions’ to ‘mitigation’, as appropriate.

(iii) Annex M: Student Evaluation

A recommended template for Student Voice Committee agendas has been provided.


(iv) Annex Q: Work-Based and Placement Learning

The annex has had the following addition:

1.3 A School may deem it appropriate that, for specific work-based learning/placement learning modules, the module cannot be resat in the event that a student does not pass the minimum threshold required. In such cases the module specification must state this explicitly and students must be made aware of it prior to commencing on the module.

1.4 As appropriate, the module handbook should outline the key deadlines for the work-based/placement learning and should set out the processes for the student’s effective
management of the learning. The module handbook may need to provide further detail on acceptable types of work-based or placement activity, as per 1.2 above. If the module cannot be resat in the event of failure, as per 1.3 above, the module handbook must make this clear.

Annex Q can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/ga/codes/taught/annexq.html

2 Credit Framework
(i) Main Credit Framework
Following changes agreed at ASQC and Education Board there are a number of updates:

5. Time Limits
5.1 Programmes of Study
5.1.1 The maximum period of study will exclude interruptions that derive from periods during which students have been unable to engage with their studies due to reasons linked to protected characteristics.

5.1.2 The maximum period for the BMBS will be ten years, except where a student undertakes an intercalated degree. The ten years will exclude interruptions that derive from periods during which students have been unable to engage with their studies due to reasons linked to protected characteristics.

7. Progression
7.5.2 By progressing to the next stage of the programme and simultaneously undertaking such further requirements as the Board of Examiners specifies in relation to the failed modules. This is known as trailing credit. Where credit is trailed, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to repeat the failed module(s) provided it/they are available and the timetable permits; or to take an alternative module as permitted by the programme specification; or may allow reassessment to be undertaken according to the method specified by the module specification in keeping with clause 7.4.1 above, specify assessment to be undertaken satisfactorily for the award of the credits in question. Where a student trails credit in this way and again fails to obtain the credits, the credit may not be trailed to the next stage of the programme e.g. a student will not be permitted to progress to Stage 3 of a programme unless he/she has obtained all Stage 1 credits and met the minimum progression requirements in Stage 2.

12. Conventions for Award and Classification of Qualifications
12.4.2.2 Foundation Degrees and Postgraduate Taught Programmes
For the purpose of classification, modules and/or stages may have different weightings as approved by Faculty Board. With respect to Foundation Degrees, stages will be weighted equally for classification unless a specific differential weighting has been approved.
12.4.2.4 Classification of Honours Degrees

ii) ‘Average’ Method of Classification

A candidate who has met the requirements for the award of an Honours degree will be placed in an Honours class based on the rounded weighted average mark, with modules weighted as agreed by the Faculty Board and calculated to one decimal place two decimal places, over all modules in Stages 2, 3 and, where relevant, 4 of the programme of study according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Type</th>
<th>Mark Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class Honours</td>
<td>70 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class Honours</td>
<td>60 – 69.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class Honours</td>
<td>50 – 59.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class Honours</td>
<td>40 – 49.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Credit Framework can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html)

(ii) Annex 6: Marking

The annex has had the following updates:

**Rounding and Display of Marks**

1. With regard to modules taken as part of an undergraduate programme, and noting the exception to this rule given at point v. below, the aggregated overall mark awarded for the module (the summation of the already rounded different components) should be rounded to the nearest integer;

   v. With regard to modules taken as part of an undergraduate programme, and noting the exception to this rule given at point vi. below, where the aggregated, but as yet unrounded overall mark awarded for the module falls within one mark of the boundary for a higher class band (e.g. a raw mark of 39, 49 [where applicable], 59, or 69), the mark will be rounded up to the nearest integer;

   viii. The aggregated overall rounded mark awarded for the module should be displayed on composite marksheets, student transcripts and to students electronically on the SDS as a whole number after confirmation at the Board of Examiners;

   x. With respect to undergraduate programmes, where the overall weighted average mark for classification purposes falls within 0.5% of the boundary for a higher class band (i.e. a mark that falls in the ranges of 39.5 - 39.9; 49.5 - 49.9; 59.5 - 59.9 or 69.5 - 69.9), it will be rounded up to the nearest integer.

Annex 6 can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex6.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex6.html)
(iii) Annex 8: Viva Voce Examinations
The annex has had the following update:

1. Viva voce examination remains an option that might be used to assist with the classification of students who first registered on a taught postgraduate programme of study prior to 2019-20.

Annex 8 can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex8.html

(iv) Annex 13: Appeals against Recommendations of Boards of Examiners
The annex has had the following addition:

6.3 Faculty Review Panels
6.3.10 Where an appeal results in a change to the recommendation of a Board of Examiners the relevant External Examiner should informed of the decision and the reasons for the decision.

And the following update:

4 Grounds for Appeal
4.2.2 where there is evidence of illness or other circumstances beyond the student’s control that have impacted negatively on academic performance and which the student was, for good reason, unable to submit by the published deadline; and/or

Annex 13 can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex13.html

3. Further Regulatory Changes
The following regulatory and procedural changes have all been made to address the changes that were publicised to staff in March at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/FAQ_Regulations_Changes_Sept_2019.pdf. They have been grouped here for clarity.

(i) Main Credit Framework
7.6 Deferral
Where a student has failed due to circumstances such as illness, and where there is written evidence to support this, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to undertake further assessment for some or all of the failed modules comprising the stage at a later date either (i) as if for the first time, i.e. without incurring the penalty of a capped mark or a reduction in the number of permitted attempts; or (ii) as if for the second time, i.e. with a capped mark but without incurring a further reduction in the
number of permitted attempts. Where the student has met requirements for progression to the next stage of the programme, he/she may be permitted to ‘trail’ the deferred assessment, i.e. to proceed to the next stage and simultaneously undertake the deferred assessment as for the first time or, where appropriate, the second time (see 7.5.2 above).

Deferral: the decision on grounds of mitigation to allow a student to undertake reassessment for a module or modules as if for the first time (i.e. an uncapped retrieval attempt), or as appropriate, as if for the second time.

7.6.1. A student may be deferred on a module or modules for reasons of extenuation under the following scenarios:

(i) where the module(s) have been failed; or

(ii) where the module(s) have been passed, but the final mark(s) achieved for the affected module(s) are significantly out of line with the final marks achieved for the student’s unaffected modules.

7.6.2 Under scenario ii, the final module mark should be judged as ‘significantly out of line’ where it falls in a range that is at least two classification bands below the student’s mean average level of achievement as derived from those modules that were unaffected by the mitigating circumstances reported;

7.6.3 Where a module has been passed it would be inappropriate to defer the student on that module as if for the second time (as the final module mark could not be improved upon under this scenario).

i. Students so affected are to be given the choice whether they will re-sit the assessments concerned or will accept the pass mark already achieved.

ii. Such reassessment opportunities will normally take place in the summer before the next academic year.

iii. Where student performance has been significantly affected in line with the specified conditions specified under 3.3.2 above (while resulting in passes for the affected modules) for 50% or more of the credit required for the stage, students should be allowed the option to repeat these modules in attendance as if for the first time in the following academic year.

iv. Where a student elects to take up the opportunity to re-sit or repeat in attendance a module that they have already passed, the mark achieved at the earlier attempt will be struck from the record. Students will not be given the opportunity to choose between the better of the marks achieved. The mark achieved at the AFT attempt will stand, even where this results in the failure of the module(s) concerned.

7.6.4 Where the student has met requirements for progression to the next stage of the programme, he/she may be permitted to ‘trail’ the deferred assessment, i.e. to proceed to the next stage and simultaneously undertake the deferred assessment as for the first time or, where appropriate, the second time (see 7.5.2 above).

12. Conventions for Award and Classification of Qualifications

12.4.1.8 With respect to students who first registered on a programme leading to a postgraduate taught award\(^1\) prior to 2019-20, Boards of Examiners may …

12.4.1.10 With respect to students who first registered on a programme leading to a postgraduate taught award from 2019-20 onwards, the provision allowed under

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\(^1\) Or students who entered Stages 2, 3 or 4 of their undergraduate programmes of study in 2011-12.
clauses 12.4.1.8 – 12.4.1.9 for raising candidates to a higher classification band may not be applied.

12.4.1.14 All taught programmes will be classified by both the ‘average’ and the ‘preponderance’ methods, with students to benefit from the better result derived from each method.

Following on from the insertion of 12.4.1.14 (above), clause 12.4.2.2 and the first paragraph of 12.4.2.4 have been deleted.

(ii) Annex 7: Resit Marks

The annex has had the following update:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Result</th>
<th>Resit Result</th>
<th>Marks to be used for Award of Credit, Progression and Eligibility for Award</th>
<th>Marks to be used for Classification/Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Best Final Mark</td>
<td>Best Final Mark **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Minimum Pass Mark</td>
<td>Minimum Pass Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Original Final Mark</td>
<td>Original Final Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Original Final Mark</td>
<td>Original Final Mark ***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Where credit for a failed module is awarded via compensation, the mark used for the purposes of progression and classification will be the pass mark for the module (see paragraphs 6.3 and 12.4.1.6 of the Credit Framework). The mark shown on the transcript will not be adjusted to the pass mark, but will show the best final mark achieved by the student.

*** Except where a student is permitted and undertakes a further attempt as if for the first time (‘AFT’) on grounds of extenuation, as per the main Credit Framework, clause 7.6.1 (ii), in which case the overall final mark achieved at the AFT attempt will stand.

Annex 7 can be accessed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex7.html

(iii) Annex 9: Mitigation of Extenuating Circumstances (‘Concessions’)

The annex has been subject to extensive revision to reflect the changes to the concessionary process that was approved by Education Board. In addition, the annex has had a title change; it was previously called Concessions Applications. As the revisions are extensive they have not been set out here and instead Schools are recommended to familiarise themselves with the new version of the document.
Annex 9 can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html)

(iv) **Annex 14: Procedures for Periods of Study Abroad**
This is a new annex, approved by Senate to set out the procedures governing study abroad. Schools are asked to ensure that all relevant staff make themselves familiar with it.


4. **Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study**
   a) The regulations have had the following inserted:

   4. Period and Level of Study
   4.1.1 The maximum period of study will exclude interruptions that derive from periods during which students have been unable to engage with their studies due to reasons linked to protected characteristics.
   4.1.2 The maximum period for the BMBS will be ten years, except where a student undertakes an intercalated degree. The ten years will exclude interruptions that derive from periods during which students have been unable to engage with their studies due to reasons linked to protected characteristics.

   b) The regulations have been updated as follows, to bring the section in line with the Credit Framework:

   11.2 Grounds for Appeal
   11.2.2.2 where there is evidence of illness or other circumstances beyond the student’s control that have impacted negatively on academic performance and which the student was, for good reason, unable to submit by the published deadline; and/or

The Academic Regulations can be accessed at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/taught/regs_taught.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/taught/regs_taught.html)

5. **SARC Standing Orders**
The following has been added:

5.8 Where an appeal results in a change to the recommendation of a Board of Examiners the relevant External Examiner should be informed of the decision and the reasons for the decision.
The Standing Orders can be accessed at
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/taught/sarc.html

6. SARC Appeal Form

Please can Schools ensure that they are directing students to the correct SARC appeal form in student handbooks, Moodle etc. Several appeals have been received recently that have been submitted using an old version of the form.

The correct form is available at:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/regulations/taught/SARC-appeal-proforma.docx

or
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html (listed under ‘Appeals Procedure/Academic Discipline’ at the bottom of the page)

7. Attendance and Engagement Policy

A new Attendance and Engagement Policy has been approved and is available as a PDF at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/guidance/pdf/attendance_engagement_policy.pdf.

Please ensure that all Schools are familiar with it.

8. Turnitin Policy

A new Turnitin Policy has been approved and is available at https://www.kent.ac.uk/uelt/strategies/hta.html and as a PDF at https://www.kent.ac.uk/uelt/strategies/UoK%20Turnitin%20Policy%202019.pdf.

Please ensure that all Schools are familiar with it.

9. Intermission Form for Postgraduate Research Students

The form has been updated in respect of Tier 4 Visa students. It is available as a Word document at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/index.html?tab=procedures.

10. Staff-Student Liaison Committee

The SSLC has had a name change to ‘Student Voice Committee from 2019-20. Schools should ensure that they use this name when communicating about it with students and staff. The Codes of Practice have been amended accordingly.
11. Collaborative Partnerships Developments

A register of all approved partner institutions can be viewed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/documents/collabprovregister14-08-19.pdf