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

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Note: This Annex of the Code of Practice for the Quality Assurance of Taught Courses of Study covers only those aspects of the roles, responsibilities and committees in this area that are relevant to taught postgraduate students and courses. See the Code of Practice for the Quality Assurance of Research Courses for guidance and requirements relating to the oversight and management of PGR provision and students.

# Acronyms used in this Document

DDGSSE Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience

DGSSEC Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee

DDESE Divisional Director of Education and UG Student Experience

DESEC Divisional Education and UG Student Experience Committee

DQSSC Divisional Quality and Standards Sub-committee

CASC University’s Course Approval Sub-committee

**EASC University’s Education and Academic Standards Committee**

ESEB University’s Education and Student Experience Board

GRCB University’s Graduate and Researcher College Board

QACO Quality Assurance and Compliance Office

# Divisional Directors of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience (DDGSSE)

## Overview

The Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and Student Experienceprovides strategic leadership in graduate studies and postgraduate student experience at Divisional level and is the key link between School/ Department/Centre, Divisional and University strategy for graduate studies.

## Responsibilities of a DDGSSE

Directors of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience are responsible for maintaining oversight of taught postgraduate courses of study (Note: Combining this role with oversight of UG taught provision is possible with the permission of the DVC Education and Student Experience and the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College). The post-holder will also be responsible for maintaining oversight of research courses of study except in cases where there is more than one DDGSSE appointed within a Division (e.g. normally one with responsibility for taught courses of study and the other with responsibility for research courses). The responsibilities of the DDGSSE in relation to research provision are outlined in [Annex I of the Code of Practice for Quality Assurance of Research Courses of Study](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-i). This present annex will only define the responsibilities of DDGSSE in relation to taught postgraduate courses of study.

## Selection process for DDGSSE

The Director of Division will appoint a Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience from among the academic staff of the Division.

## Period of appointment for a DDGSSE

The period of appointment of the Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience will normally be three years. The person appointed will be eligible for reappointment at the end of each period of appointment.

## Role of the DDGSSE

The role of the Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience will be relevant to taught postgraduate courses of study[[1]](#footnote-1) with regard to the following responsibilities:

* To chair the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee (DGSSEC).
* To represent the Division at the University’s Graduate and Researcher College Board (GRCB).
* To represent the Division at the University’s Course Approval Sub-committee (CASC).
* Where such exists, to chair or co-chair (where relevant) the Divisional Quality and Standards Sub-Committee (DQSSC).[[2]](#footnote-2)
* To take Chair’s action on such business delegated to them by the DGSSEC.

**In addition, in consultation and partnership with relevant professional services staff in the Division:**

* To advise members of the Division, and in particular lecturers who are new to the University, on the requirements of the University’s Code of Practice for Quality Assurance, as relevant to taught PGT courses of study.
* To ensure the Division’s portfolio of PGT courses is fit for purpose and continues to satisfy the University requirements for success and sustainability.
* To liaise with a wide set of student support services and ensure that all PGT students in the Division are provided with timely information regarding available services (e.g. student wellbeing and support services, placement and employability opportunities, studying abroad, Kent Union).
* To lead and support the development of Divisional strategy/work aimed at addressing employability and graduate outcomes, in order to ensure congruence with the University’s Student Employability Strategy.
* To advise members of the Division on the preparation of proposals for new modules and new PGT courses of study and in particular on academic and curricular aspects of such proposals.
* To advise members of the Division in order to ensure that the Division’s courses of study reflect the requirements of any Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), as applicable.
* To ensure academic staff involved with teaching and supervision have undertaken appropriate training and continuous development, and are appropriately informed about all matters relating to postgraduate education.
* To advise members of the Division on the preparation of proposals for PGT courses of study and relevant new or amended modules and in particular on the academic and curricular aspects of such proposals in order to ensure that:

1. all such curricula reflect the threshold standards required by *The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies* (FHEQ) (See also Kent’s Credit Framework, Annex 2: Qualification Descriptors, which reflect the FHEQ requirements);
2. ensure that level 6 grade criteria map on to and reflect the degree classification descriptions for bachelors’ degrees, in compliance with the University Grade Descriptors and OfS Condition of Registration B5;
3. delivery and assessment practices utilise an appropriate variety of methods that afford students the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level;
4. all such proposals satisfy the University’s procedures and requirements for complying with Consumer Marketing Authority (CMA) legislation.

* To advise members of the Division in order to ensure that the Division’s PGT courses of study are mapped to the applicable QAA Benchmark Statement(s), where such a statement exists; and to ensure that when applicable new or revised Benchmark Statements are published by the QAA, the existing courses of study are reviewed and revised as appropriate so that they map to the new/revised Benchmark Statement.
* To consider and make decisions on applications for the award of credit for PGT courses and modules as submitted by the Validated Institutions or Partner Colleges under the University’s requirements for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in line with [Annex R of this Code of Practice.](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-r)
* To play a key role in the academic planning of the Division.
* To work with the DDESE on Divisional strategy and implementing various aspects of student success (retention, attainment gaps, etc.), and contributing to University delivery of the Access and Participation Plan.
* To ensure that, where a PGT course for which the Division has responsibility is delivered or assessed in whole or in part by a partner provider, evidence is available which demonstrates that the arrangement continues to meet the requirements of this Code of Practice and therefore that standards are secure and the student experience is of an appropriately high quality.
* To attend to relevant data and league tables throughout the year (e.g. PTES, Complete University Guide), and prepare strategies, plans, and short reports, as required, to deliver continuous improvement in these areas.
* To liaise with Directors of Studies in the Division in relation to quality management of PGT courses of study and the production of evidence in mitigation of the risk of non-compliance with the requirements of the Code of Practice and, by extension, the relevant OfS Conditions of Registration (i.e., the B-Conditions and Condition C1 [CMA]).

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* To serve as a member of the Directors of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Network in order to identify and disseminate good practice.
* To consult with the Quality Assurance and Compliance Office on the foregoing matters.

# Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committees (DGSSEC)

## Divisional Requirement to have a DGSSEC

Each Division will have a Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee (DGSSEC).

## Membership of the DGSSEC

The membership of the DGSSEC will be determined by the Director of Division, but should include the Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience as Chair, the Directors of Studies for all courses of study or groups of courses for which the Division holds responsibility and at least three student members. Where taught and research postgraduate courses are offered, the DGSSEC should include both taught and research student representatives. As far as is practicable, the student representation on the Committee should reflect the range of subject areas offered by the Division at postgraduate level.

## Appointing a Chair to the DGSSEC

The Chair of the DGSSEC, normally the DDGSSE, will be appointed by the Director of Division.

## Minimum Meeting Requirements

The DGSSEC should meet at least once in each term. Agendas and papers should be circulated to members in advance of meetings and minutes should be made available to all staff and students of the Division.

### 2.5 Overall Area of Responsibility of DGSSEC

The DGSSEC is responsible for ensuring that, with respect to taught postgraduate courses and their component modules, the Division undertakes its responsibilities as set out in this Code of Practice and the Academic Regulations for Taught Courses of Study, as per the list given below.

1. **ESEB Responsibility for Operational Quality Assurance**

It should be noted that, while the Graduate and Researcher College Board (GRCB) has retained responsibility for the ‘student experience’ dimension of PGT courses, the University’s Education and Student Experience Board (ESEB) now holds responsibility for the operational quality assurance of all taught courses, including PGT.

1. **DGSSEC Reporting to ESEB on Areas of Quality Assurance**

Accordingly, the DGSSEC should report on relevant QA areas of its business to the ESEB. Where this is the case, the relevant area of business is marked as ‘Reported to ESEB’ below. Other matters should be reported to the GRCB.

1. **Specific Responsibilities of DGSSEC**

Divisions may seek the permission of the DVC Education and Student Experience and the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College to route all business reportable to the ESEB through the Divisional Education and Student and Experience Committee.

* Receiving and scrutinising the recommendations of Boards of Examiners in the Division for taught postgraduate academic awards and recommending these awards to the Education and Student Experience Board on behalf of Senate (while this responsibility for recommending awards to ESEB may be delegated to the DGSSEC Chair, the formal record should be kept by the Committee).
* Ensuring new and amended modules and PGT courses comply with the University’s policies on meeting [Consumer Marketing Authority (CMA) requirements](https://www.kent.ac.uk/academic/cma/index.html)); Reported to ESEB.
* Approving new and amended level 7 modules and recommending the approval of new and amended PGT courses to CASC; Reported to ESEB.
* Ensuring the delivery of modules and courses as approved; Reported to ESEB.
* Monitoring and responding to assessment and feedback matters, making reference to the [Assessment Regulations](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/assessment/afpolicy.html) Framework; Reported to ESEB.
* Monitoring assessment return rates in line with University requirements and setting deadlines for action and compliance where this is not the case (see the [Credit Framework Annex 6: *Marking*, section 27](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/credit-framework#annex-6)); Reported to ESEB.
* Maintaining oversight of the standards and quality of modules and courses delivered and/ or assessed wholly or in part by associated partner providers through the provision of appropriate academic liaison, the consideration of relevant reports and setting targets for action and compliance where deficiencies are identified; Reported to ESEB.
* Providing an environment which will encourage all students in the Division to flourish and achieve their potential.
* Monitoring performance in relevant data and league tables throughout the year (e.g. PTES, Complete University Guide), gauging the effectiveness of strategies, plans, and short reports for delivering continuous improvement in these areas, and setting targets for action and compliance where deficiencies are identified; Reported to ESEB – to be referred by ESEB on to GRCB as relevant).
* Ensuring that all students in the Division are provided in good time with all appropriate information relating to their courses and modules (see [Annex D: *Information to Students*](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-d)).
* Overseeing the annual monitoring of modules, PGT courses and student progress, determining action to be taken as a consequence and reporting on these matters to EASQC (see [Annex E: *Annual Monitoring*](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-e)); Reported to ESEB.
* Ensuring the Division’s portfolio of PGT courses is fit for purpose and continues to satisfy the University requirements for success and sustainability, and setting targets for action and compliance where deficiencies are identified; Reported to ESEB and GRCB.
* Agreeing responses as proposed by Boards of Studies to the annual reports of external examiners (see Annex E: *Annual Monitoring* and [Annex K: *External Examiners*](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-k)); Reported to ESEB.
* providing academic advice and support for their students (see [Annex G: *Personal Academic Support System*](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-g)); Reported to ESEB.
* obtaining and considering the views of students on the education which the Division provides (see [Annex M: *Student Evaluation*](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-m)).
* reflecting critically on the education which they provide, in particular as part of internal periodic review (see Annex F: *Periodic Review*) and of external review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), in order to support quality enhancement and the dissemination of good practice; Reported to ESEB and GRCB.
* responding to the reports of internal periodic course review panels (see Annex F: *Periodic Review*); Reported to ESEB and GRCB
* to note the outcome of applications for the award of credit by the Chair (for the courses of partners) or by Boards of Studies (for their courses) under the University’s arrangements for the [Recognition of Prior Learning (Annex R)](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-r) and report on these annually in the Autumn Term to the University’s Education and Academic Standards Committee; Reported to ESEB and GRCB.
* hearing serious quality concerns and appropriately escalating them to the relevant departments/individuals within the University.
* acting upon the decisions of Divisional Boards, the Graduate and Researcher College Board and the Education and UG Student Experience Board. Reported to ESEB and GRCB.

## Divisional Quality and Standards Sub-committee (DQSSC)

Divisions may establish a DQSSC of the DGSSEC to which are remitted some of the operational quality assurance tasks set out at 2.5 above to be carried out on behalf of the DGSSEC. Where this happens, the following protocols must be observed:

* The Divisional Quality and Standards Sub-Committee (DQSSC) has a set of terms of reference, agreed by the DGSSEC, which state the tasks that it will undertake on the senior committees’ behalf.
* The Chair of the DGSSEC will also be Chair of the DQSSC.
* The DQSQC will report to the DGSSEC on all of the matters that it has considered on its behalf and will make recommendations for action as appropriate.
* The DGSSEC retains responsibility and accountability for all of the matters considered by the DQSSC on its behalf.
* Membership of the DQSSC will be drawn from relevant Boards of Studies within the Division, student support managers and student representatives from the courses that fall under its remit. A member of QACO should be invited to attend meeting of the Board of Studies in an advisory capacity.

### Options to Form a DQSSC to Cover Both UG and PGT

Divisions may elect to establish a single DQSSC to which are remitted operational tasks relevant to the quality assurance of the student experience of both UG and PGT courses. Where this is the case the extent of the sub-committee’s remit will be clearly stated in the terms of reference. The role of Chair may be shared by the Chair of the DESEC and the Chair of the DGSSEC, or may be assigned to either one. Membership should be drawn representatively from the same constituencies as for the UG and PGT committees but will be sufficient in number to ensure that academic representation covers both the UG and PGT course portfolios. The sub-committee will report the appropriate Divisional parent committee on all relevant business.

# Directors of Studies and Boards of Studies

## Divisional Responsibilities

For each PGT course or group of PGT courses[[3]](#footnote-3) , there will be a Director of Studies with responsibility for day-to-day quality management of such courses or groups of courses and to consider and report on the matters set out at 3.6 below. Where all of the PGT courses offered by a Division constitute a single group of courses, there may be a single Director of Studies for the Division.[[4]](#footnote-4) Where a Division holds responsibility for teaching in a number of disparate subjects, it may be appropriate for there to be several Directors of Studies whose purview is to carry out the responsibilities attached to the role by this annex. In addition, where a Division considers it appropriate, for example, with regard to large courses, it may decide to appoint separate Director of Studies to one or more stages of the course. Divisions may decide to appoint one of more Boards of Studies to support the work of the Director(s) of Studies, as appropriate. Where Boards of Studies are appointed they will operate as per 3.4 – 3.6 below.

## Appointing a Director of Studies

Directors of Studies will be appointed by the Director of Division, normally for a period of three years, and will be eligible for reappointment at the end of each period of appointment.

## Role of the Director of Studies

The role of the Director of Studies in relation to the course(s) or for the stage(s) of the course for which they hold responsibility will be:

* To ensure that delivery of the course(s) or stage(s) is in accordance with the course proposal as approved by the Course Approval Sub-Committee of the Education and Student Experience Board.
* To lead on the development of new or revised curricula; relevant to the courses or stages for which the Director of Studies holds responsibility.
* to ensure that students, lecturers and others as relevant receive detailed information about all aspects of the course(s) (see [Annex D: *Information to Students*](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-d)).
* to arrange appropriate induction of new lecturers in order to ensure that lecturers who have not previously contributed to the course(s) are fully aware of the aims and intended learning outcomes of the course(s) and of the contribution to the course(s) that is expected of them.
* to ensure that students have ready access to advice about the options available to them within the course(s).
* to monitor the progress of students on the course(s).
* to report on assessment return rates in line with University requirements (see the [Credit Framework Annex 6: *Marking*, section 27](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/credit-framework#annex-6)).
* to report on these matters to the DDGSSE or, where such exists, to the relevant Board of Studies.
* to prepare an Annual Report on the course(s) for consideration by the DDGSSE or, where such exists, to the relevant Board of Studies (see [Annex E: *Annual Monitoring*](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-taught-courses#annex-e)).
* to lead on the provision of responses to matters raised by external examiners in their annual reports.
* to participate in any preparations for the TEF, as required.
* Where the Division has appointed Boards of Studies, the Director of Studies will act as Chair of the Board of Studies relevant to their remit and will manage the responsibilities of the Board as set out in 3.6 below.
* Where the Division has not appointed Boards of Studies, the Director of Studies will ensure that the matters set out in 3.6 below are taken forward via other routes within the Division.

The above responsibilities may be undertaken in consultation and partnership with relevant professional services staff within the Division.

## Appointing Boards of Studies

The Division may elect to appoint Boards of Studies. Where one or more Board of Studies is appointed, the Chair will be the Director of Studies for the relevant course(s) or stage(s) and the membership will normally include the convenor of each relevant module offered by the Division and a number of student members which is sufficient to ensure that these members between them have reasonable knowledge of each stage of the course(s). The membership may also include lecturers from other contributing subject areas/Schools/ Departments.

## Minimum Meeting Arrangements

Where appointed, Boards of Studies should meet regularly and at least on a sufficient basis to manage the volume of business for which it is responsible: once in each term is recommended. Agendas and papers should be circulated to members in advance of meetings and minutes should be made available to all staff and students of the Division.

## Role of Board of Studies

The role of a Board of Studies will be to oversee the delivery of the course(s) or stage(s) concerned and reflect and report on relevant areas relating to the quality and standards of the provision, in particular:

* to receive and consider regular reports from the Director of Studies on the matters listed in 3.3 above.
* to review the progress of students on the course(s), both generally and with regard to various aspects of student success (retention, attainment gaps, etc.).
* To reflect on grade criteria used for marking on the courses and ensure that these map on to the degree classification descriptions for bachelors’ degrees adopted by the University Grade Descriptors and OfS (Condition B5);
* to reflect and report to the DGSSEC on the effectiveness of its contribution to the Divisional strategy for addressing various aspects of student success (retention, attainment gaps, etc.) and to propose how this contribution may be enhanced.
* to consider and take action as appropriate in response to the views of external examiners, students and any other stakeholders (e.g. employers) and report on these to the DGSSEC.
* to prepare and submit an Annual Report on the modules and course(s) to the Divisional Education and Student Experience Committee (see Annex E: *Annual Monitoring*).
* to reflect on how satisfactorily the courses and modules it delivers meet the University requirements for success and sustainability, and report on this to the Divisional Graduate Studies and Student Experience Committee (see Annex E: *Annual Monitoring*).
* to reflect and report on the performance of the courses as disaggregated in relevant data and league tables throughout the year (e.g. PTES, Complete University Guide, TEF metrics, OfS Condition of Registration B3).
* to consider how the modules and course(s) might be enhanced and to prepare proposals accordingly.
* to propose new and amended PGT courses and modules and recommend these for consideration by the DGSSEC.
* to consider and make decisions on applications for the award of credit for those PGT modules and courses which the Board of Studies delivers, as submitted under the University’s requirements for the Recognition of Prior Learning (Annex R) and report these for note by the DESEC.

1. For the purposes of this Code, Integrated Master’s Degrees, Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas are regarded as undergraduate courses. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. To co-chair with the Divisional Director of Education and UG Student Experience where the DQSSC holds responsibility for the QA of UG and PGT courses. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Courses may be grouped according to the local needs of the Division. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. There will be separate Boards of Studies for UG and PGT courses [↑](#footnote-ref-4)