Introduction

Welcome to Kent’s Validation Handbook which is produced by the University of Kent to support its partnership arrangements with Validated Institutions.

The University of Kent defines a Validated Institution as a collaborative partner which, having received approval through the relevant processes set out in its Collaborative Provision Policies and Procedures: Parts 1 & 2, is subject to a formal validation agreement that allows it to offer approved programmes of its own devising for University of Kent credit and academic awards.

The students of Validated Institutions remain registered students of the collaborative partner and are not in any sense students of the University of Kent.

This Handbook aims to signpost, information which Validated Institutions need about the University’s administrative processes and procedures and quality assurance arrangements. It also gives details of services that the University is obliged to provide to the students of Validated Institutions registered on University of Kent awards.

This Handbook is reviewed annually, and as any changes are made to regulations and requirements, it and the University’s Code of Practice and Credit Framework should be regularly considered by all partners.

If you have any comments or questions about the Handbook, or wish to clarify any aspect of procedures for Validated Institutions please contact the Quality Assurance Office (qa@kent.ac.uk).

Section 1 Memorandum of Agreement
Section 2 Annual Timetable
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Section 6 Guidance on Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
Section 7 Guidance on Boards of Examiners Meetings (including guidance on Mitigating Circumstances – previously known as Concessions)
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In addition to the information contained within this Handbook, Validated Institutions should make use of the Code of Practice, Annex L, ‘Quality Assurance Procedures for Programmes of Study at Validated Institutions Leading to University Awards’ which summarises the requirements of all Validated Institutions in relation to quality management of validated programmes.

Institutions should also consider the Collaborative Provision Policies and Procedures which detail requirements of and provide guidance to all collaborative partners, including Validated Institutions:

  [http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html)

  [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/procedures/collabprocedures.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/procedures/collabprocedures.html)

- The Collaborative Provision Policies and Procedures: Part 2 provides partners, including Validated Institutions, with information relating to the day to day management of validated and other collaborative programmes.
  [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/procedures/collabprocedures2.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/procedures/collabprocedures2.html)

If the required information cannot be found either in this Handbook, the Code of Practice, or the Collaborative Provision Policies and Procedures, Validated Institutions should contact the University’s Quality Assurance Office (QAO), qa@kent.ac.uk

Important Issues of Note for 2019/20:

Changes in Regulations and Procedures Being Introduced from 2019/20

Partners are reminded that a series of regulatory and procedural changes will take effect in September 2019.

These changes relate to areas such as the classification of postgraduate awards, and management of mitigating circumstances (previously known as concessions).

Partners have been notified by the QAO of the changes. If you have not received this notification, please contact the QAO via qa@kent.ac.uk

An FAQ document explaining the changes can be found at:


Changes will, where applicable, be reflected in the relevant sections of this handbook.


**Student Voice Committees**

From 2019/20 the University is changing the name of its Staff-Student Liaison Committees, to Student Voice Committees. This term will be used throughout the remainder of this document.

**Programme Time Limit**

An amendment has been made to the time limits for periods of study. This relates to when students have been unable to engage with their studies, due to reasons linked to protected characteristics (Credit Framework Section 5, 5.1.1 [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#timelimits](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#timelimits))

**Deferral**

From 2019/20 the deferral measure has been revised so that in certain circumstances it can be offered for a passed module (Section 7.6 of the Credit Framework [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#progression](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#progression))

**Postgraduate Classification Methodology**

As referenced above Postgraduate Classification Methodology (Section 12 of the Credit Framework) has been amended for those students first registered in 2019/20. This brings PG methodology and rounding in-line with undergraduate classification methodology.

This includes the ending of the ‘two more marks rule’ for students first registered in 2019/20. [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#classification](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#classification)

**Resit Marks**

Partners should note that from 2019/20 changes have been made to Annex 7 of the Credit Framework ([https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex7.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex7.html)) to reflect that where a module has been failed, and is subsequently passed, the minimum pass mark will be used for both award of credit and progression AND classification and transcript.

**Mitigation of Extenuating Circumstances (formerly Concessions)**

Annex 9 of the Credit Framework, Mitigation of Extenuating Circumstances (previously Concessions) has been revised following consideration by a University working group.

The new Annex can be found at: [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html)
Section 1

Memorandum of Agreement

Legally binding agreements have to be drawn up between Kent and any collaborative partner.

The purpose of the agreement is to set out the collective and individual responsibilities of both parties in relation to the design, delivery, assessment, management and other aspects of the programme(s) during the course of the collaboration.

In order to ensure that agreements remain current, Kent will revise agreements with existing partner institutions following a Periodic Programme Review (PPR). The agreement is valid for a fixed term (normally 5 years) from the effective date and both parties will then review the conditions of the validation arrangement before re-signing the agreement. Agreements may vary depending on the exact nature of the validation. Typically, they will include the following details:

- Responsibilities of the parties
- Financial arrangements
- Personal data and confidentiality
- Quality assurance arrangements
- Intellectual property rights
- Termination arrangements and consequences of termination
- Rights to the University of Kent Trademark

Section 2

Annual Timetable

Below are details of the key activities which take place during each academic year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Action by University</th>
<th>Action by Validated Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>The QAO writes to the Validated Institutions and request that lists of students for registration are sent to the QAO by 5th October</td>
<td>Validated Institutions submit re-sit marks to the QAO following confirmation of them from External Examiners and the Chair of the Board of Examiners. To meet Congregation’s deadline for the November Ceremony (normally the end of September). Re-sit marks must be submitted in good time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pass lists are generated following receipt of re-sit marks from Validated Institutions who have met the deadline for the November congregations ceremony</td>
<td>Postgraduate Boards are held for some institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Congregations notified about the graduating students (winter congregations) via copies of the pass lists produced by the QAO</td>
<td>Validated Institutions prepare the list(s) of students who are registered on programmes validated by the University to meet the deadline of 5th October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Validated Institutions submit Mitigating Circumstances (Concessions) &amp; Compensation Data to the QAO following summer Boards of Examiners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October</strong></td>
<td>The QAO sends out guidance to Validated Institutions regarding completing Annual Monitoring Reports (AMR). The QAO registers students and send out invoices to the Validated Institutions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nov</strong></td>
<td>Winter congregations ceremonies take place where students receive their certificates, and their official transcripts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jan</strong></td>
<td>The annual Partnership Forum is held at the University, the date of which is notified on the QAO website a year in advance (for 2020 this will be the 11th March).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>March</strong></td>
<td>Boards of Examiners for Validated Institution Boards appointed. Training held for new members of Boards of Examiners.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>May</strong></td>
<td>QAO confirm names of finalists with Validated Institutions to ensure accuracy ahead of summer Boards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>June</strong></td>
<td>Summer congregations ceremonies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July</strong></td>
<td>Validated Institution Boards of Examiners meet. Pass lists are produced following Boards of Examiners.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>August</strong></td>
<td>Validated Institutions submit (by the 31st August) published information (handbooks/web</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3
Admissions, APL, Student Registration and Validation Fees

3.1 The Admissions Process

Candidates who meet the requirements for admission to a validated programme of study as set out in the approved programme specification may be admitted to the programme without reference to the University.

It is important that staff at Validated Institutions consider the QAA UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance for Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access, located at:


It is the responsibility of staff at the Validated Institutions to manage all aspects of the recruitment and selection of students.

3.1.1 Admitting under 18’s

The University has a set policy on the admission of applicants under 18. It is recommended that Validated Institutions take this policy into account in the recruitment of students. This policy can be found at: https://www.kent.ac.uk/applicants/policies/minimum_age.html

3.2 Information for applicants and new students

Institutions will benefit from ensuring that applicants have access to up-to-date and accurate information throughout the admission’s process regarding the programmes of study and facilities and support available.

The University of Kent monitors the information provided by Validated Institutions to prospective students through an annual publicity check as per section 8 of this handbook.
It is essential that prospective students understand that they will receive an award from the University of Kent and not the institution that they will be studying at and this should be made clear in all relevant published information.

3.3 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

The Accreditation of Prior Learning (known as APL at Kent) offers potential students the chance to gain recognition for qualifications they have already achieved at other institutions, and to gain recognition for learning from other experiences, for instance, in the workplace.

- It enables prior learning/experience to be given an academic credit value which can be used to give exemption from relevant modules or even stages, of a university level programme.

- It enables people to enter a university level programme at the point that best suits their experience and skills, ensuring that learners do not have to repeat learning previously undertaken.

There are three different types of APL:

- Credit Transfer – this is the process; through which previously assessed and certificated learning from a UK HEI is considered and, if appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.

- Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) - this is the process; through which previously assessed and certificated learning not awarded by a UK HEI is considered and, if appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.

- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) this is the process through which prior learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, if appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.

To gain credit for APEL, a portfolio of evidence is developed, (an APEL Portfolio) which includes evidence reflecting on how learning from experience is relevant to the university programme to be taken.

Decisions on whether an individual can have APL is an academic decision based on the fit of prior learning with the module(s) APL is being claimed for - no one is guaranteed APL. The matching of an applicant’s prior learning with the learning outcomes of the module(s) for which they are seeking credit is key to deciding if APL can be claimed.

The University imposes limits on the extent to which a student may be exempted from part of a programme of study via APL; Validated Institutions must adhere to these limits.

The most up-to-date information on these limits is available in Annex 3 of the Credit Framework, which can be accessed via the link below.

Please note these limits reflect the minimum amount of credit which must be obtained through taking ‘new’ learning on the programme concerned.

For example, if a student received 120 credits of APL towards a Foundation Degree, they would then be required to carry out 120 credits of ‘new’ learning on the programme, including at least 90 credits of learning at level 5 or above.
Validated Institutions should refer all Credit Transfer and APCL claims to the University on the appropriate form so that they can be approved. Approval will be carried out by the relevant Associate Dean and reported to the relevant Faculty Committee.

All APEL claims and portfolios should also be referred to the University so that they can be considered and approved by the relevant Faculty Committee. All Credit Transfer, APCL or APEL claims must be made and approved prior to the start of the modules for which credit is being claimed for.

Claims should be submitted to the QAO in the first instance using the appropriate forms.

QAO will inform the Validated Institution and update the student record once a claim has been approved.

Further information on the process for APL and the forms needed can be found in Annexes L and R of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html (section 3)

http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexr.html

In addition, guidance on APL can be found at:

http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexr.html

Where an applicant/student wishes to claim credit via APEL onto a practice based programme, the Validated Institution should contact the QAO in the first instance, to discuss the requirements for the applicant/student's APEL portfolio.

Please Note: The APL process should be used where a student or potential student is using prior learning or experience to claim credit i.e. exemption from modules.

APEL portfolios are sometimes used to consider if an applicant/student has suitable experience to join an academic programme. This type of APEL portfolio is not required to be approved through the APEL procedure as no credit is being awarded, and can be processed without reference to the University - provided that it is part of the Admissions profile on the approved Validated Institution's Programme Specification.

If partners are unsure if a claim should be processed via the APL approval process then the QAO can advise (qa@kent.ac.uk).

3.4 Student Registration

Staff at Validated Institutions must submit the following information, for each programme of study, to the QAO each academic year:

- The full legal name of each student
- The year of study of each student
- The academic status of each student (Registered/Intermit/Repeat/Resit)
- The date of birth of each student
• An institutional e-mail address for each student

A template will be provided to Validated Institutions for them to complete this submission, which must be received by the deadline provided.

The QAO will create a student record for each student. If at any time during the academic year a student’s details change, including their programme of study, the QAO should be promptly notified.

If a student withdraws from a programme of study after registration has taken place the QAO must be notified within **four weeks** of the last date of the student’s attendance. Staff in the QAO will then ensure that the student’s record is withdrawn from Kent’s Student Data System.

**If a newly registered student withdraws from a programme of study after 1st November the Validated Institution will still be charged a validation fee for that student.**

3.5 Validation Fees

Validation fees are levied to recover the direct costs of the validation process and administrative cost.

Such services may change on an annual basis but include student registration, production of Pass Lists and Certificates, QAO support at Board of Examiners meetings and general support and guidance provided from QAO and the Validated Institution’s cognate Academic School at Kent.

The University of Kent does not receive income for students registered on validated programmes of study; therefore, this is the only source of income from those programmes the University validates.

Once the QAO has registered the list of students provided at the end of October Validated Institutions will receive an invoice from the University of Kent.

Validation fees can be paid in one of three ways:

1. by cheque (which should be drawn on a UK bank account and made payable to UNIKENT);  
2. via BACS transfer using the information detailed on the bottom of the invoice (please quote invoice number on payment);  
3. by credit or debit card over the telephone.

If you have any queries in relation to the current Validation Fee, please contact the QAO.

**Section 4**

**The Student Record**

4.1 Student Records

Although Validated Institution Students are students of the Validated Institution, and not Kent, the University still maintains a student record for each registered student.
This record holds limited information (such as personal details, programme, module and module mark information). Each Validated Institution should ensure that it holds a detailed student record for students studying towards a Kent Validated programme.

4.1.1 Accuracy of Information Provided for the Student Record

It is essential that the information provided to Kent for each student’s record is up-to-date and accurate.

As such QAO will routinely contact partners to ensure that information is correct, for example that the full legal name of students is correct prior to a Boards of Examiners meeting.

Partners should ensure that if any information related to student records requires updating, that they contact the QAO immediately.

4.2 Certificates and Transcripts

Under the University licence, Kent is responsible for producing certificates and transcripts relating to all of the programmes of study delivered at Validated Institutions.

The Central Student Administration team (CSAO) produces certificates for finalist students following receipt of a Pass List which the QAO creates after a Board of Examiners meeting.

It is important that the information requested at time of registration is correct to ensure that students receive an accurate certificate detailing their achievement.

Certificates will include a record of the Validated Institution the student studied at.

For details regarding congregation ceremonies please see Section 10.

4.3 Inputting of Module Marks

It is important that the QAO has complete module mark information for every student in order that Kent can produce complete and accurate transcripts.

Institutions should ensure that module marks are input on the web based Kent Student Data System prior to Board of Examiners meetings to avoid delays with pass list and transcript production afterwards.

The Kent Student Data System can be accessed via our website at: http://sds.kent.ac.uk/account

If you do not have access to the Student Data System for the input of marks please contact the QAO (qa@kent.ac.uk) to request this.

As with all information related to the student record it is essential that the mark information provided by partners is accurate at the point of entry.

We therefore ask that institutions have procedures in place for ensuring the accuracy of mark data, prior to inputting this information.

Once data has been entered, in can be amended on the day of entry.
However, after this point amendments can no longer be made by the Partner, potentially delaying the issuing of pass lists and transcripts where errors need to be rectified centrally by the University.

Section 5
Guidance on Programme/Module Approval and Amendment

Partners should initially consult with the QAO when making any programme and module changes, or putting forward new programmes or modules for approval.

5.1 Important – Submission Deadlines

The University sets deadlines for the approval of all new and amended module and programme specifications each year, which align with the approval committees and processes of the University.

A timetable of submission dates for the 2019/20 academic has been published to partners below, with the proposed dates for the following academic year also provided for information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New UG/PG Programmes</th>
<th>For Programmes Commencing in 2020/21</th>
<th>For Programmes Commencing in 2021/22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submission of programme &amp; module specifications for the new programme to the Quality Assurance Office (QAO).¹</td>
<td>06/12/2019</td>
<td>11/12/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of Faculty Panel.²</td>
<td>20/03/2020</td>
<td>26/03/2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amendments to Existing UG/PG Programmes</th>
<th>For Programmes Commencing in 2020/21</th>
<th>For Programmes Commencing in 2021/22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submission of the amended programme &amp; module specifications to the QAO.</td>
<td>24/01/2020</td>
<td>22/01/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of the amended programme &amp; module specifications to relevant Faculty Committee.³</td>
<td>03/04/2020</td>
<td>09/04/2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following Faculty level approval, programmes will either proceed to, or be reported to the Programme Approval Subcommittee (PASC) as appropriate. The timescales indicated above are designed to enable programmes to proceed to a meeting of PASC and for any further amendments required by them to be made and approved at subsequent PASC meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modules Submitted Separately to Programmes</th>
<th>For 2020/21</th>
<th>For 2021/22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submission of new / amended modules to QAO.⁴</td>
<td>24/01/2020</td>
<td>22/01/2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Please note that for new programmes, Executive Group (EG) approval is required. EG approval must be sought and received (via the QAO) prior to specifications going forward to the relevant cognate School for consideration.
² Panels will be organised by the QAO, conjointly where applicable.
³ Specifications will be submitted to the relevant Faculty Committee by the QAO following consideration and approval by the relevant cognate School.
⁴ This relates to new / amended modules being submitted separately to a programme.
If amendments to modules result in a significant change to an established programme of study, this must be approved in line with the timetable stated for existing programmes above.

Validated Institutions will be required to adhere to the timetable when submitting any new or amended module or programme and it is not possible to guarantee approval of any submissions if the timetable is not observed.

Partners should note that this timetable is applicable to Validated Institutions only, and is the only timetable of submission dates that should be considered when seeking approval for a new programmes/modules or programme/module changes.

5.2 Approval of New or Significantly Amended Programmes

5.2.1 When should I begin preparing a new or significantly amended programme of study?

It is recommended that programme proposals enter the programme approval process at least a year in advance of when it is planned to commence.

5.2.2 What are the stages in approving a new or significantly amended programme at Kent?

The following are the stages of approval for new or significantly amended Validated programmes:

- Initial development
- Submission of an initial proposal and business plan to the Executive Group (for New Programmes only)
- School consideration of the programme by the School Academic Liaison Officer (ASLO)
- Faculty consideration of the programme by a Faculty panel
- University level consideration of the programme by the Programme Approval Sub-Committee (PASC)

5.2.3 Submission and Approval of a New or Significantly Amended Programme Proposal

The full process for submission and approval of new or significantly amended programmes of study is detailed within Annex L: Quality Assurance Procedures for Programmes of Study at Validated Institutions Leading to University Awards sections 2.1-2.4.5:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#approval

The QAO are able to offer advice and guidance at each stage of the process, and remain the first point of contact for submission of new or significantly amended programme proposals.

5.2.4 Stages of Approval

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5 Specifications will be submitted by the QAO to the School for minor changes, and to the School and relevant Faculty committee for major changes.
5.2.4.1 Executive Group Stage (for new programmes only)

The first stage in submitting a new programme proposal is to receive confirmation from the University’s Executive Group that there is broad support for the proposal to be developed. This involves the submission of standard set of documentation, via the QAO, which will be considered by the Executive Group.

The documentation required at this point is:

An **outline proposal**, along with the **business plan** approved within the partner institution, indicating that the partner will be solely responsible for providing resources and facilities sufficient to staging the programme.

The outline proposal should take account of the following requirements:

i. Evidence of need and demand for the programme as suggested by market research, to include projected student numbers

ii. How it is proposed that the programme will be resourced. The internally approved business plan should be provided;

iii. Any special resources required (e.g. staff, space, library, IT, learning technologies, training, timetable), and the implications for the partner of putting these in place;

iv. The cover available in the partner institution if key parts of the programme depend on an individual member of staff for their delivery;

v. A statement of which existing programmes, if any, will be withdrawn as a result of the new proposal.

The outline proposal should first have been approved within the Validated Institution and should be passed directly to the QAO, which will liaise with the Faculties Support Office (FSO) in order to ensure that the proposal is submitted to EG.

**Please Note:** Validated Institutions and Academic School Liaison Officers should ensure that the Head of the relevant cognate academic School at Kent is consulted during discussion regarding the initial development of a new programme of study, and prior to EG submission.

The full requirements for this stage of the programme approval process for new programmes can be found in *Annex L of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes* section 2.2:

[https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#submission](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#submission)

5.2.4.2 School Stage of Approval

Cognate Schools will consider proposals for new programmes (following EG approval of the outline proposal) and significantly amended programmes of study.

The assessment of programme proposals is carried out by the relevant ASLO, and is based on the documentation required within *Annex L: Quality Assurance Procedures*
for Programmes of Study at Validated Institutions Leading to University Awards section 2.3

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#school

All required documentation should be submitted to the ASLO via the QAO. Once the ASLO is satisfied, the proposal will proceed for consideration by a Faculty panel.

5.2.4.3 Faculty Stage Approval

A Faculty panel will be appointed to visit the Validated Institution and scrutinise required documentation as well as the facilities to be used for the delivery of the validated programme.

Details of the requirements of this stage of the process can be found within Annex L: Quality Assurance Procedures for Programmes of Study at Validated Institutions Leading to University Awards section 2.4,

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#faculty

Panels are constituted and work within the terms of reference as laid down in Appendix A to Annex L: Quality Assurance Procedures for Programmes of Study at Validated Institutions Leading to University Awards, the full details of which are available at:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl-appendix-a.html

Such Faculty panels will normally include at least two members from the University, one of whom shall be appointed as Chair, and at least one member external to the University. The Faculty panel is responsible for making a detailed assessment of the design, level, coherence and currency of the curriculum under review and of the capacity of the prospective Validated Institution to assure the standards of the provision under review and to provide learning opportunities sufficient for students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Based on its assessment, the Faculty panel is empowered to make one of a number of recommendations to PASC on the Faculty’s behalf:

i) that the proposal be given permission to proceed for consideration by the Programme Approval Sub-committee (PASC) of the University, along with the panel’s report of the approval event;

ii) that the proposal be given permission to proceed for consideration by PASC subject to the prior satisfaction of specified conditions along with the panel’s report of the approval event. These conditions might include revisions to the proposal or provision of additional resources. The submission to PASC should include a statement from the prospective Validated Institution as to the steps it has taken to meet the Faculty panel’s conditions;

iii) that the proposal be resubmitted in a revised form for further consideration by the Faculty panel;

iv) that the proposal be rejected.
Once the Chair of the Faculty panel is satisfied all requirements have been met the programme will proceed to PASC for consideration. The modules associated with the programme proposal will considered approved, once the Faculty panel process has been completed and any conditions set for modules have been met.

5.2.4.4 Conjoint Faculty Panels

Where new or significantly amended programmes of study are subject to third party approval, the Faculty may consider establishing a conjoint panel.

The conditions and requirements attached to such panels are detailed within Annex L: Quality Assurance Procedures for Programmes of Study at Validated Institutions Leading to University Awards section 2.4.4:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#faculty

AND:

Appendix A to Annex L: Quality Assurance Procedures for Programmes of Study at Validated Institutions Leading to University Awards

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl-appendix-a.html

If you believe you may require a conjoint Faculty panel, please contact the QAO who will be able to advise further.

5.2.4.5 University Stage Approval

Once the Faculty panel is satisfied that all requirements and conditions of Faculty level approval have been met, new or significantly amended programme proposals and the report of the panel will proceed to the University’s Programme Approval Subcommittee (PASC) for consideration.

PASC will recommend approval or approval subject to the satisfaction of identified conditions of both new and amended undergraduate / postgraduate programmes of study.

Please Note: A new programme may only be advertised and applicants offered places once the programme has been fully approved by the Programme Approval Subcommittee.

In exceptional circumstances it may be possible for the University’s Executive Group to authorise a proposed new programme to be advertised as subject to approval. However, exceptional permission to advertise is not permission to recruit to a yet unapproved programme, rather permission to make people aware of that programme.

Once all conditions of PASC approval have been met the new or significantly amended programme proposal will be approved.

Where relevant the new or amended proposal will be set up within the University’s student data system, and for new programmes, a schedule to the MoA between the Validated Institution and University will be drafted and signed by both parties.
5.3 Approval of New Modules

Modules which are submitted separately to new or significantly amended programmes will be considered for approval by both the relevant cognate Academic School, and the relevant Faculty committee (Education for undergraduate programmes, Graduate Studies for postgraduate programmes).

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#module

5.3.1 School Stage Approval

Any new or substantially amended module(s) proposed separately to a new programme should be submitted, via the QAO, to the ASLO of the Validated Institution’s cognate School. If the ASLO considers the module(s) to be satisfactory they will recommend them for approval by the Faculty.

5.3.2 Faculty Stage Approval

Once the ASLO is satisfied that a new or amended module submitted separately to a programme can proceed to the Faculty, the QAO will submit the paperwork (i.e. module specifications and supporting rationale for changes) to the relevant Faculty Committee via the Programme and Module Approval System (PMAS).

The QAO will liaise with the Validated Institution directly on any queries or amendments required by the Faculty Committee.

Where relevant the new or amended module(s) will be set up within the University’s student data system.

5.3.3 Inclusive Module Design

The University has provided specific guidance on ensuring inclusive module design, as referenced in Annex A, of Appendix B of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

This guidance should be considered when developing new or amended modules that come forward either separately or as part of a programme proposal:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexb-appendixa.html

5.4 Programme and Module Amendment

The QAO should be consulted in advance about all programme and module changes.

5.4.1 Substantial amendments to a programme will require approval via School, Faculty panel and PASC as detailed in this Handbook.

Any substantial amendments should be submitted, via the QAO, in line with the process set out at 2.3 and 2.4 of Annex L of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#school

5.4.2 Minor Amendments to existing modules can be agreed by the relevant ASLO.
Such amendments should be submitted via the QAO in order to ensure they are aware of changes, and so that they can publish the most up-to-date version of the module specification on the QAO website:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#module

5.4.3 Minor Amendments to existing programmes can be agreed by the relevant ASLO.

Such amendments should be submitted via the QAO in order to ensure they are aware of changes, and so that they can publish the most up-to-date version of the programme specification on the QAO website:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexl.html#programme

5.4.4 For guidance on what constitutes major or minor amendments reference can be found in the module and programme specification approval risk table, which can be viewed at http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/guidance/pdf/approvalrisktable.pdf

5.4.5 Withdrawal and Suspension of Programmes

The requirements for the withdrawal and suspension of programmes are detailed within Annex C of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes - Approval and Withdrawal of Taught Programmes 8.2 and 8.4

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexc.html#programme-withdrawal

If you have any queries in relation to the withdrawal or suspension of a programme, please contact the QAO.

5.4.6 Withdrawal of Modules

The requirements for the withdrawal of modules are detailed within Annex B of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes - Approval and Withdrawal of Modules 14.2-14.3

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexb.html

If you have any queries in relation to the withdrawal of modules, please contact the QAO.

5.5 Other Relevant Matters of Note

The following are other areas to note when submitting programme or module specifications:

5.5.1 Appointment of an External Examiner

All new programmes will require the appointment of an External Examiner, in line with the process outlined in Section 13 of this Handbook.

5.5.2 Minimum Credit Requirements for Awards

Before submission, Validated Institutions must ensure that programme proposals meet the relevant minimum credit requirements of the award being proposed.
The up-to-date list of these requirements can be found in Annex 4 of the Credit Framework:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex4.html

5.5.3 Modules with Placements

Where a module includes a placement the module specification should be set at Level 5 or Level 6.

Further information on the requirements for modules including placements can be found in Annex Q of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes - http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexq.html

Partners must ensure that they have the correct procedures in place for any placements on their programmes.

5.5.4 Approval of ‘non-cognate’ modules

Where a new module is non-cognate to the University (i.e. not in a mainstream University subject area) and submitted separately to a new programme proposal, a supporting statement on the module from a suitably qualified external expert must be provided by the Validated Institution.

The QAO can advise on this.

5.5.5 Engagement with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements

In the development and operation of validated programmes of study, Institutions should where applicable make themselves aware of the University’s guidelines on engagement with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

In addition, Validated Institutions should also ensure that due consideration is given to the University’s guidelines on engagement with Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements.

The University provides further information on both of these areas within the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, Annex S: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexs.html

Section 6

Guidance on Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review

6.1 Annual Monitoring

6.1.1 What is Annual Monitoring?

Annual monitoring is the formal reporting of, and response to, actions taken as a result of the ongoing review and evaluation of provision, aimed at enhancing the student learning process.
Validated Institutions are responsible for annual monitoring of modules, programmes and student progress, determining action to be taken as a consequence and reporting on these matters.

Annex E of Code of Practice ([https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexe.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexe.html)) sets out detailed requirements in relation to such annual monitoring.

6.1.2 Annual Monitoring Process for Validated Institutions

Validated Institutions are required to complete the same Annual Monitoring process as Kent Schools as laid down within Annex E of the Code of Practice.

To support this Validated Institutions will be notified of any specific requirements of Annual Monitoring each year at the start of the Autumn Term via an Annual Monitoring Overview Document.

This document draws out both the general requirements for Annual Monitoring contained in Annex E, and any specific requirements of Validated Institutions. It explains the reporting requirements and the information that should be provided along with reports.

Along with the Overview Document, partners will be sent the most up-to-date versions of the Annual Monitoring pro-formas for the monitoring of modules and programmes.

6.1.3 What type of information will we be required to submit?

Validated Institutions are required to submit a pro-forma for each of their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (proformas will be provided annually in the Autumn Term)

Partners are also required to submit pro-formas for any modules that meet certain criteria.

This criterion is detailed in Annex E, and currently a module pro-forma should be submitted where:

- i. the module is new, or has been significantly changed since previously delivered (possibly as the result of a previous report);
- ii. significant issues have been raised at the Board of Examiners, or by external examiners, or by review panels (e.g. internal periodic review, or professional/statutory bodies), including any indication that academic standards are not being met;
- iii. significant issues have been raised by students (e.g. through module evaluation or at Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings);
- iv. There is a poor progression or completion rate (i.e. when, after an initial resit attempt where permitted, 15% or more of the students taking a module fail to achieve the pass mark required for the module);
- v. Where otherwise requested by the Director of Studies (or, as appropriate to the module, the School Director of Education or School Director of Graduate Studies).

(proformas for module reports are provided annually in the Autumn Term)
The University also requires Partners to provide specific statistical data, as a separate document to the programme and module reports. Details of the data required is provided annually in the Autumn Term, an indicative list has been provided below:

- Module assessment results
- Student progression and achievement (including enrolments, transfers, intermissions, withdrawals, resitters/repeaters, fails, results).
- Applications and admissions.
- Employment of former students.

Alongside the Annual Monitoring Data, Validated Institutions are required to provide details of any academic and non-academic complaints made by students registered on programmes of study leading to a Kent award.

And finally Institutions are asked to comment on the management of any risks identified at the approval stage of any partnership/programme, or since

If you require information on Annual Monitoring prior to the Annual Monitoring Overview Document send out, then please contact the QAO.

6.1.4 Deadlines for Submissions

Staff at Validated Institutions should note that the deadline for submission of Annual Monitoring reports is the 30th November.

6.15 What happens to the Annual Monitoring Information Provided?

The Annual Monitoring Submissions from Validated Institutions are considered by their cognate School at Kent.

These considerations are then submitted to the relevant Faculty Level Committees (Education Committee for Undergraduate programmes/modules, Graduate Studies Committee for Postgraduate programmes/modules).

These committees then report on the Annual Monitoring of programmes and modules to the relevant University level Committees - Academic Quality and Standards Committee (ASQC) and Education Board for Undergraduate programmes/modules and Graduate School Board (GSB) for Postgraduate programmes/modules.

6.2 Periodic Programme Review

6.2.1 What is a Periodic Programme Review?

Programmes designed and delivered at Validated Institutions will be subject to Periodic Programme Review (PPR) every five years, in accordance with the requirements of the University Code of Practice for Quality Assurance Annex F - http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html

PPR is an external process which provides an opportunity for in depth scrutiny and quality enhancement of all aspects of a Validated Institution’s Kent awarded provision, including

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6 To commence in academic year 2019-20. Prior to that, the previous review cycle of six years will remain in operation.
addressing whether UK threshold academic standards are being achieved and whether Kent's academic standards are being maintained.

Following PPR a recommendation is made regarding the continuation of the validation of the institution and its programmes of study for a further period of five years.

6.2.2 Who is on a Review Panel?

PPR panels consist of the following members:

- **Chair** - a chair will normally be an academic member of staff from within the Faculty that the Validated Institution is linked to, but who will not be a member of the partner’s Cognate University School;
- **Academic Member of Kent Staff** - this will be a staff member from outside the Faculty that the Validated Institution belongs to;
- **Externals** – this will be two academics who are external to Kent and the partner, who have sufficient status and academic expertise to command authority in the educational provision under consideration;
- **Student Member** – this will be a student who is not a member of the Validated Institution under review, normally this is a Kent student.
- **Secretary** – this will be an administrator with a working knowledge of the expectations of the University’s Code of Practice (e.g. a Faculty, School or QAO administrator).

6.2.2.1 Conjoint PPR Panels

**Please Note:** For some Validated Institutions it may be necessary to hold a conjoint Periodic Programme Review (for example where the partner/their provision is subject to the approval of another party).

Procedures for the managing this process are available from the QAO.

6.2.3 What are the terms of reference for a PPR?

Each review will operate to a standard set of terms of reference, which provide guidance to the Panel and the partner with regard to the purpose of the review, and how it will be carried out.

The full terms of reference are available within the *Code of Practice for Taught programmes, Annex F, Section 5* at: [http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html#purpose](http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html#purpose)

6.2.4 What are the key areas of focus in a PPR?

The following five key areas are the focus of each PPR.

Exploration of these areas enables PPR Panels to fulfil their terms of reference in regard to the review.

The detail of each of the following areas, is available in *Annex F or the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes*: [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html#focus](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html#focus)
• **SECTION A: Taught Programme Design and Delivery**  
The Panel will explore the curriculum, methods of delivery and assessment of UG and PG taught programmes.

• **SECTION B: Postgraduate Research Provision**  
The Panel will explore the design and delivery of any research programmes of study.

• **SECTION C: Student Support and Guidance**  
The Panel will explore the student support and guidance offered to students within a Validated Institution.

• **SECTION D: Learning Opportunities**  
The Panel will consider the student learning environments and resources for taught and research programmes at a Validated Institution.

• **SECTION E: Maintenance and Enhancement of Quality and Standards:**  
The Panel will consider the maintenance and enhancement of quality and standards in the Validated Institution.

6.2.5 What is required in terms of review documentation?

A full list of required documentation, to be provided by the Validated Institution is available in Annex F of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, Section 7:  
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html#documentation

6.2.5.1 The Critical Evaluation Document

The Validated Institution will need to provide a critical evaluation of the education it provides (this evaluation should not normally be more than 10 pages of A4).

This document should focus on explaining to the Review Panel how the Validated Institution ensures that all of the education that it offers is of high quality and how it seeks to further enhance the quality of its provision. Specific reference should be made to how the Validated Institution addresses the needs of international students and students with disabilities, where appropriate.

The critical evaluation document should appraise the effectiveness of changes made to its education provision since the previous review. The evaluation should refer to or be accompanied by appropriate evidence, much of which will be found within the documentation listed above, and should comment on the Validated Institution’s response to any recent external review (i.e. last PPR) and/or report from a statutory or professional body (where applicable).

6.2.6 What is required of the Validated Institution in preparing for PPR?

Before the PPR takes place the Validated Institution should:

• Liaise with the QAO to find suitable dates on which to hold the review.
• Identify suitable External panel members to be recommended to the University.
• Propose an agenda for the review visit which should be in line with the standard agenda as detailed in Annex F, Section 10,  
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html#rvp
The QAO will liaise with the Chair of the review panel on the partner’s behalf to ensure that they are in agreement with the proposed programme/agenda.

Prepare the review documentation as outlined in Annex F, Section 7, https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexf.html#documentation

- Send a copy of the Critical Evaluation document and all review documentation to the University and panel members **four weeks prior to the review**. Documentation should be supplied either on a memory stick, or be made accessible (i.e. via Dropbox).

Documentation can be sent to the QAO to be checked prior to submission if required.

- Ensure that rooms, refreshments, lunches etc. are available for the review visit.
- Suggest accommodation for external members of the review panel (the QAO will cover the external members’ accommodation/travel costs and pay any expenses following receipt of a completed expenses claim form).
- Make sure that key staff members are available to attend the PPR.
- Ensure that representative groups of students are available to meet with the review panel during the PPR.

6.2.7 Is there a set schedule for a PPR?

PPRs will normally extend over a two-day period.

The Validated Institution will need to prepare an agenda for both days and the QAO can advise on this. An example agenda is provided below:

**Day One**
- Welcome by the Head of Validated Institution.
- Private meeting of PPR Panel (1 hour).
- Meetings with Students (1 ½ hours, which may be split into separate meetings with undergraduate and postgraduate students).
- Lunch and private meeting of PPR Panel (1 hour).
- Meeting re: Taught Programme Design and Delivery (1 ½ hours).
- Meeting re: Postgraduate Research Provision (where applicable) (1 ½ hours).

**Day Two**
- Private meeting of PPR Panel (1 hour).
- Meeting re: Learning Opportunities (1 ½ hours) to include an inspection of resources if appropriate.
- Meeting re: Student Support and Guidance (1 ½ hours).
- Lunch and private meeting of PPR Panel (1 hour).
- Meeting re: Maintenance and Enhancement of Quality and Standards (1 ½ hours)
- Private Meeting of PPR Panel (1 ½ hours).
- Feedback to Validated Institution.

Where appropriate a tour of teaching facilities should be included with the Agenda.

6.2.8 What are the possible outcomes of a PPR?

Each PPR panel will make recommendations and recognise good practice at the end of a review.
Recommendations will focus on areas where the partner, Faculty or University need to take action to address the findings of the PPR Panel.

Recommendations are prioritised as Essential, Advisable or Desirable as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential (i.e. must be done/high degree of urgency)</td>
<td>Where a Review Panel finds it necessary to make an essential recommendation, all members of the panel must have agreed that the quality of learning opportunities and/or academic standards were currently at risk through non-fulfilment of the recommendation. Under these circumstances, the Review Panel must recommend that the programmes in question continue subject to the fulfilment of the essential recommendation(s). It should be noted that in cases where a Review Panel makes an essential recommendation which cannot be fulfilled by the School/Faculty/University, this may result in the programmes being discontinued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisable (i.e. should be done/medium degree of urgency)</td>
<td>A Review Panel will make an advisable recommendation in cases where it has agreed that the quality of learning opportunities and/or academic standards may be put at risk in the future through non-fulfilment of the recommendation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desirable (i.e. for consideration/not urgent)</td>
<td>A Review Panel will make desirable recommendations in cases where it perceives opportunities for the School to enhance its educational provision.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6.2.9 What happens after the PPR Visit?

The Secretary to the Panel will prepare a draft report and send this to the Chair for revision and/or approval after completion of the review. The report will follow a set format.

Once it has been considered by the Chair, the final draft report will be sent to the Panel for their agreement, before being passed to the Validated Institution to be checked for factual accuracy (at this stage the Validated Institution does not respond to the content of the report, but is only concerned to correct any errors of fact).

Once this check has been completed and any amendments have been made, a copy of the final report is sent to the Validated Institution.

At this stage the Validated Institution is asked to provide a formal response to the report within three months of receiving it.

The formal response is returned to the QAO who will then send a copy of the report and the response to the Head of the Validated Institution’s Cognate School, copying in the Faculties Support Officer relevant Faculty Dean, and the School Administration Manager of the Validated Institution’s Cognate School.

The Head of the cognate School will be asked to arrange for the report to be considered by the relevant committees of the School (Education and Graduate Studies) and to provide a commentary on the Validated Institution’s response.

Where the Periodic Programme Review is held conjointly with another body, the QAO will at this time also send a copy of the final response to the relevant contact at that body.
Following consideration by the Validated Institution’s cognate School, the commentary, response and report will then be forwarded by the School for consideration by the relevant Faculty Board.

If the Faculty Board considers that the Validated Institution and School has responded satisfactorily to the report, the report and response will be forwarded to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) and Graduate School Board (GSB), as appropriate to the level of the programmes concerned, together with its own views on the documentation and its recommendation: i.e. that the programmes under review should continue, should continue subject to conditions or should not continue.

6.2.10 Follow up Actions

In cases where programmes of study are approved to continue subject to conditions (i.e. the report includes essential recommendations or where a Faculty so requests it), the Validated Institution will be required to submit a one-year follow-up report to Faculty Board commenting on the implementation and progress of actions taken to satisfy any conditions set to allow for the continuation of programmes.

The Faculty Board will report to ASQC and the Graduate School Board as to whether it considers that the actions taken by the Validated Institution have proven satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If the report is unsatisfactory ASQC or the Graduate School Board may, in cases involving failure to meet set conditions, recommend that the programmes concerned be discontinued.

6.2.11 When are we next subject to a PPR?

A table detailing when Academic Schools/Partners are due to undergo Periodic Review can be found at:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/review/ppr-schedule-201819.pdf

Section 7

Guidance on Boards of Examiners Meetings

The guidance in this section has been extracted from the following:

- Annex J (Boards of Examiners) of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexj.html
- Annex K (External Examiners) of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexk.html
- The Credit Framework for Taught Programmes of Study http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html

7.1 Boards of Examiners

7.1.1 Who sits on a Board of Examiners?

A Board of Examiners is appointed for each programme of study and is made up of:
• One or more External Examiner(s), appointed by the University.
• One University of Kent examiner, from the relevant School, who acts as Chair.
• One examiner from the Validated Institution who is appointed as Deputy Chair (normally the programme leader or equivalent).
• Examiners from the Validated Institutions i.e. normally one marker for each module on the programme.
• One Secretary to the Panel, a member of staff from the Validated Institution.
• One member of staff from Kent’s QAO who acts as an advisor to the Board.

Boards of Examiners are appointed annually by the University, in line with this requirement. Validated Institutions will routinely be asked to provide CVs for examiners.

Please see Section 2 of this Handbook ‘Annual Timetable’ of dates for more information.

7.1.2 What are the responsibilities of the Board of Examiners?

The Board of Examiners is responsible for:

• Reviewing the marking of coursework and confirming the marks to be awarded;
• Making recommendations for the award of Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees to students who have successfully completed programmes of study;
• Making recommendations with regard to progression, referrals and termination of registration of students.

7.1.3 How often does the Board of Examiners meet?

A Board of Examiners will meet at least annually. Some partners may require more than one Board per year, for example where they have undergraduate and postgraduate students completing at different points in the calendar.

7.1.4 What does the External Examiner do in relation to Boards of Examiners?

The External Examiner is required to attend Boards of Examiners at which decisions are to be made about the award of degrees.

The full roles and responsibilities of the External Examiner are detailed in Annex K, section 9: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/ga/codes/taught/annexk.html#role

Please note the following:

• An External Examiner, as a full member of the relevant Board of Examiners (BoE), has the right to be present at all BoE meetings at which significant decisions are to be taken in regard to the specialisms with which he/she has been concerned (including where appropriate the setting of papers), and is required to be present at all final BoE meetings in the subject(s) in which he/she has been involved. At the end of such Board of Examiners meetings, the External Examiner is required to sign the pass list or other list of students progressing from one stage to the next to confirm that he/she endorses the decisions made at the Board.

• Where a Board of Examiners has been arranged, but the External Examiner then advises that he/she is no longer able to attend on that date, that absence may only be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education, and only under exceptional circumstances.
Where such absence is not approved, the Board of Examiners must be re-arranged for the earliest date possible.

- External Examiners are invited, but are not required, to attend meetings of Boards of Examiners convened to consider referral results and deferral results. Boards of Examiners will have considered students’ cases following the initial assessment and will set out provisional decisions in each student’s case pending the results of the referrals and the deferrals. The decisions about awards to students following referrals and deferrals taken by Boards of Examiners in the absence of a relevant External Examiner will be subject to confirmation by the appropriate External Examiner.

7.1.5 What does the Deputy Chair do?

The Deputy Chair, appointed from the Validated Institution, is responsible for:

- Making arrangements for meetings and for informing members of those arrangements.
- Ensuring that all members of the Board of Examiners receive detailed information about the programme, including assessment requirements and the programme syllabus.
- Ensuring that arrangements for the approval of examination papers and monitoring of internal marking are agreed with the External Examiner(s) and are consistent with the requirements of the University’s Code of Practice.
- Ensuring that proofs of examination question papers are checked for level, spread, accuracy, clarity and appropriateness, that where questions are divided into parts the marks allocated to each part are shown on the paper, and that all draft examination papers are sent to the appropriate External Examiner for comment and approval;
- Convening a preliminary meeting of internal examiners to agree provisional marks (see Preliminary Meetings below).
- Ensuring that appropriate documentation, including an agenda, is provided at meetings of Boards of Examiners.
- Ensuring that advance mark sheets are provided to the QAO ideally one week prior to the date of the Board of Examiners.
- Ensuring that the composite mark sheet for each student on the programme is amended as appropriate during the meeting and is signed by the Chair, Deputy Chair and the External Examiner and presented to the advisor of the QAO once the meeting has been closed.
- Ensuring that the Board of Examiners is informed of all medical evidence and other evidence of mitigating circumstances submitted by students.
- Ensuring that students are informed of decisions made regarding their progress and the award of qualifications.
- Informing candidates selected for a viva voce examination of the time and place of the viva, and its purpose.
- Ensuring that where the Board of Examiners considers the work of students who have not, at that point, completed their programme of study, such examination scripts, extended essays and dissertations are properly and securely stored so that they are available if required for re-reading by the Examiners in the light of the final year performance of candidates.

7.1.6 What does the Chair of the Board of Examiners do?

The Chair of Examiners is responsible for chairing the Board of Examiners on behalf of the University and for:

- Advising the Board with regard to regulations and conventions and their interpretation.
Ensuring that a record is kept of the decisions made by the Board and that these decisions are acted upon.
Where the Board makes a decision other than that indicated by the conventions, ensuring that the reasons for doing so are recorded on the official record of results.
Ensuring the External Examiner(s), signs the official record to confirm their acceptance of the decisions made by the Board.

7.1.7 What does the Secretary do?

The Validated Institution will appoint a member of its staff to act as Secretary to the Board of Examiners. The Secretary will:

- Attend meetings of the Board of Examiners.
- Be responsible for recording the decisions made by the Board including the consideration given to specific cases. Most decisions are recorded on the composite mark sheet which is signed and appended to the minutes (the format of the minutes should follow that of the agenda).
- Ensure the minutes record details of any special cases which are discussed and that they accurately report all decisions and discussions clearly. In the case of a subsequent appeal, minutes are vital.
- Ensure that the Board has addressed all marginal and failing students with care and has made explicit the reasons for its decisions. (Where a Board might have used some discretion but has chosen not to do so, this should also be recorded).
- Confirm to members the decisions of the Board as recorded on the official record in order to ensure that decisions have been correctly recorded.
- Ensure that all members of Boards of Examiners are provided with the relevant regulations and Examination Conventions.
- Ensure that lists showing recommendations for the award of qualifications are prepared and submitted to QAO who will create a pass list and arrange for their approval.

Appended to the pass list will be the annotated composite mark sheets which include the signatures of the External Examiner and the Chair.

7.1.8 What is the role of the Quality Assurance Office?

- The QAO representative will attend the meeting to advise on regulations and conventions and their interpretation.
- The QAO will receive the signed, annotated mark sheet after the Board (via the Secretary/Deputy Chair at the meeting) and will ensure that the pass list is generated from this.
- The QAO will send this pass list to the Deputy Chair (or other designated representative from the Validated Institution).
- The QAO will ensure that final marks are input onto the student record to assist with the production of transcripts.

**Please Note:** Students must not be informed that awards are finalised until after the pass list has been signed by the relevant University of Kent Faculty Dean, and the partner has been informed of this by the QAO.

Pass lists **can take up to two weeks to be signed**, and partners are expected to make allowances for this when informing students of when their final award will be confirmed.

7.1.9 How should composite mark sheets be presented?
Partners may devise their own composite mark sheets to be presented to the Board of Examiners; however here are some key areas that all composites should include:

- Student Indicator – this should not be the student name, but some form of student reference number*
- Module name, code, and credit value for each module
- Final overall, rounded module mark (this is the mark rounded in line with the requirements in Annex 6 of the Credit Framework – Marking, http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex6.html)
- Number of Credits gained by each student
- Total average grade for finalist students to two decimal places
- Classification under average
- Classification under preponderance
- Indication of any students who are eligible for a raise as their final classification is within 0.5 of the next boundary.
- Notes on any other information useful to the Board, i.e. extensions, re-sit/repeated modules, deferrals, intermissions, Compensation/Condonement etc.

For finalist students partners should always provide **on one sheet** the students final year marks and the marks from any other stage which contributes to their final award (i.e. for BA (Hons) degree, marks for stages 2 and 3), as this enables Boards to assess their classification under preponderance.

The QAO can provide guidance on the presentation of mark sheets.

Following the Board of Examiners, when all decisions have been agreed and finalised institutions will need to provide a copy of the composite mark sheet, **with student names**, for signing by the Chair, Deputy Chair and External Examiner (s). This signed mark sheet is then used to produce the pass list for the programme.

7.2 Conduct of Meetings

7.2.1 Confidentiality

All discussion at meetings of Boards of Examiners shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed to students.

All mark sheets presented at Boards of Examiners should be anonimised.

7.2.2 Impartiality

Any member of a Board of Examiners who has a particular interest in a student or students to be considered by the Board must declare such interest at the start of the meeting or in advance to the Chair of the Board.

The Chair of the Board shall decide whether it would be appropriate for such a member to withdraw for part or all of the meeting. Individual members of academic staff should not take on a formal role of representing or advocating the interests of an individual student.

7.3 Mitigation Committee (formerly 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 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.

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex9.html

7.3.1 Mitigation of Extenuating Circumstances

Mitigation is a corrective measure that allows Boards of Examiners to make adjustments to module marks and award credit where student performance in assessment has been impacted negatively by extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control.

The purpose of making such interventions is to arrive at an outcome that properly reflects the student’s level of achievement on the affected module(s) and therefore on the stage/programme of study as a whole.

Boards of Examiners (via the School’s Mitigation Committee) will consider applications from students for mitigation with regard to any extenuating circumstances that have affected their performance in assessed work.

The procedures and conventions for considering such applications are set out in Annex 9: Mitigation of Extenuating Circumstances of the Credit Framework and its appendices.

- Appendix 1: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/credit-framework/CF%20Annex%209%202019-20_Appendix%201_Conventions.pdf
- Appendix 2: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/credit-framework/CF%20Annex%209%202019-20_Appendix%202_Extensions.pdf

Validated Institutions should apply the procedures and conventions as set out above.

Please Note: that from 2019/20:

- It is now possible for a student who has passed a module to be deferred\(^7\) under specific circumstances as detailed at 3.3 in Annex 9 of the Credit Framework, Appendix 1 (see above).
- Partners should take into account the requirements regarding extensions, as detailed in Annex 9 of the Credit Framework, Appendix 2 (see above). This is practice that partners should follow for applicable pieces of assessment (i.e. written submissions).

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\(^7\) 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.
However, extensions for Validated Institutions will not be managed in KentVision once the system is online, and partners will therefore need to continue to operate their own internal system for the approval and recording of extension requests.

If you have any questions in relation to this, please contact the QAO.

7.3.2 Data Collection

Each year the University gathers data related to the application of mitigation and compensation by all of its Academic Schools.

Validated Institutions are also required to provide this data.

The data exercise is designed to capture any instance where an intervention turned a failed module, into a passed module.

Partners will be contacted with regard to the deadlines and pro-forma required to complete this data return.

7.4 Pre-meeting of the Board

Before each meeting of a Board of Examiners, and separate to the Mitigation Committee meeting, the Deputy Chair may convene a pre-meeting to consider other matters as it deems appropriate. Such matters might include

- ensuring that an accurate set of marks is available;
- deciding which candidates should be drawn to the attention of the External Examiner;
- reviewing the range of marks awarded for each module; and
- identification of other issues requiring discussion by the Board of Examiners.

The meeting is to ensure that any internal discussion of marks and other issues are resolved before the Board of Examiners’ meeting. A written note of the meeting should be kept to record decisions made, including criteria for decisions made on borderline cases.

The identities of candidates shall not be made known to examiners during the course of this meeting.

7.5 Notification of Board of Examiners Meeting and Supporting Papers

The Deputy Chair of the Board of Examiners is responsible for ensuring that all members of the Board are notified in good time of the time, date and location of the final Board of Examiners meeting and that they receive in advance or at the meeting:

- An agenda for the meeting (see below)
- Conventions for the awards under consideration
- Appropriate assessment data

7.5.1 Sample Agenda

The agenda for a meeting of a Board of Examiners might include the items listed below but will need adjustment to reflect the purposes of the meeting.
It is the responsibility of the Validated Institution to provide the agenda for the meeting and to carry out other duties of the Secretary to the Board.

- Introductions and Welcome to New Members
- Apologies for Absence
- Declarations of Interests
- Chair's Communications
- Report on Preliminary Meeting to consider Mitigation etc.
- Reports from other Boards of Examiners (as appropriate) Consideration of Marks on Modules
- To agree recommendations for the award of degrees and other qualifications
- To agree recommendations with regard to progression to the next stage of the programme.
- To agree recommendations with regard to students who have not met requirements for an award or to progress and appoint panel to deal with resits;
- Confirmation of Decisions: Secretary to obtain signature(s) of External Examiner(s) on final mark sheet) Concluding Remarks from External Examiner(s)
- Date of Next Meeting
- Any Other Business

7.5.2 Submission of Marks

Deputy Chairs are required to submit the provisional marks for each programme of study in advance of the Board of Examiners in the form of a composite mark sheet.

This should be circulated to members of the Board in advance of the meeting and to the QAO normally one week prior to the meeting.

Any amendments to marks at the meeting should be noted on these sheets.

Once all marks have been confirmed by the Board a final and complete version of the sheet must be signed by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner(s).

The final version of the marks sheet should include student names to allow the Pass List to be produced. At the end of the meeting the final version of the mark sheet should be given to the advisor from QAO in attendance at the Board.

Finalist students must only be informed of their final approved marks and classification once the pass list for the course has been signed by the relevant University Faculty Dean.

7.5.3 Input of Marks

As well as providing composite mark sheets a week ahead of the Board, Validated Institutions should also ensure that marks have been input into the web based Student Data System by the date of the Board.

This enables the QAO to process the pass lists for the programme in a timely fashion.

The QAO are able to advise on the input of marks where required.
7.5.4 Notification to Students

The Deputy Chair will ensure that the Validated Institution notifies students of their results and any conditions which students have to fulfil in order to progress.

Students should be informed that final year marks and classifications remain provisional until the pass list for the course has been signed by the relevant Faculty Dean.

7.6 Assessment Conventions for Taught Degrees, Top Up Programmes and Foundation Degrees

Please Note: Alternative marking and classification schemes are no longer permissible for Validated Institutions and all partners are expected to operate in line with the University’s Credit Framework in full for new students.

This follows the ending of bespoke conventions for Validated Institutions from the 2014/15 academic year.

Details of any alternative assessment conventions which apply to students who commenced prior to September 2014 can be found under each Validated Institution’s profile page at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/profiles/index.html

7.6.1 Conventions for the Award of Credit, and Degrees

The Credit Framework for Taught programmes provides the detailed requirements and conventions for the award of credit, and degrees.

It also outlines the methodology for the classification of awards.

The full Credit Framework can be found at: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html

The following are areas which may be of particular use to partners in processing awards, if you have any other queries in relation to the Conventions for the Award of Credit, and Degrees or any other areas listed below, please contact the QAO qa@kent.ac.uk

➢ 6. Award of Credits

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#awardofcredits

This section outlines the requirements for students to successfully complete a module, as well as providing detail on the application of compensation and condonement.

➢ 7. Progression

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#progression

This section outlines the requirements for students to successfully progression to the next stage of their programme.

8 From 2019/20 the requirement that the average mark for the stage must be at or above the pass mark for the module concerned in order to allow compensation to take place has been withdrawn.
It provides guidance on management of **Referral** (re-sits/repeats) and **Deferral** (as for the first time attempts at modules, under mitigating circumstances).

It also provides information on **Trailing** credit between stages, and the credit limits on this, including where it is used in conjunction with **compensation** and **condonement**.

**Please note:** Under **Referral** reference is made to requirements for ‘like for like’ and ‘instrument’ reassessment.

These requirements are not currently applicable to partners, as we do not record the assessment level marks for Validated Institution students. This information is not included on the module specification for Validated Institutions for this reason and Partners should continue to manage reassessment as they do now.

Partners should also consider **Annex 7 of the Credit Framework** which details how re-sit marks should be used.⁹

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex7.html

- **Postgraduate Dissertations**

Students are permitted two further retrieval attempts for modules, with the exception of Postgraduate Dissertations, where students are only permitted one further retrieval attempt, as detailed at 7.4.5 on the below link:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#progression

- **9. Alternative Exit Awards**

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#exit-awards

This provides guidance on Alternative Exit awards, where a student has not completed the whole programme for which they are registered.

- **12. Conventions for Award and Classification of Qualifications**

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#classification

This section outlines the full methodology that should be used when classifying awards.

Partners should note the following:

- **Section 12.4.2.3** should be used for the classification of Foundation Degrees, Postgraduate Taught programmes, Graduate Certificates, and any other award other than an honours degree.

- **Section 12.4.2.4** should be used for the classification of BA (Hons) Degrees, this includes Top-up Degrees.¹⁰

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⁹ Partners should note that from 2019/20 changes have been made to Annex 7 to reflect that where a module has been failed, and is subsequently passed, the minimum pass mark will be used for both award of credit and progression AND classification and transcript.

¹⁰ When classifying top-up degrees by preponderance, partners should refer to **12.4.2.4 Classification of Honours Degrees**, iii) ‘Preponderance’ Method of Classification, and use the box ‘For degrees/students with contributing credits other than above’.
In addition, for those postgraduate students first registered in 2019/20, the postgraduate classification methodology has been brought into line with that for undergraduate programmes\(^{11}\), therefore:

- The ‘two more marks rule’ or Borderline consideration for students within two marks of the next classification boundary, can no longer be applied.

- Average and preponderance should be used for all students (unless a pre-existing exemption is in place).

- Where the overall weighted average mark for classification purposes falls within 0.5% of the boundary for a higher class band (i.e. 69.5 - 69.9), it will be rounded up to the nearest integer.

- The rounding of module marks is now in line with the rounding algorithm used for undergraduate modules.

- Vice voce examination can no longer be used for the purposes of determining classification.

Final Average for Classification purposes

From 2019/20 partners should also note that final weighted average for classification purposes for all programmes should be displayed to two decimal places.

7.6.2 Classification of Alternative Exit Awards

Alternative Exit Awards may also be classified, where it is appropriate to do so.

In cases where the volume of credit achieved by a non-completing student exceeds the volume of credit required for the alternative exit award (e.g. a student registered for a Master’s degree exits without completing the volume of credit required for the award of the Master’s or the PG Diploma but has achieved more than the 60 credits needed for the PG Certificate) the following principles should be applied when selecting which modules should be chosen for use in classification:

(a) Firstly, the examiners should select the modules - and therefore the marks for the modules – which are most relevant to the exit award in question;

(b) However, where either (i) the volume of credit from modules most relevant to the exit award exceeds the volume required; or (ii) none of the modules are more relevant than any other, the examiners should select the modules with the best marks for the purposes of classification, up to the volume of credit required for the award.

7.6.3 Marking

Partners should ensure that marking is carried out in-line with the requirements stated within Annex 6 of the Credit Framework at:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex6.html

\(^{11}\) With respect to students who first registered on a programme leading to a postgraduate taught award prior to 2019-20, the methodology in place at the time they commenced their award will be used.
7.6.4 Placement Marks

From September 2014 the contribution made Placement to the classification of programmes will vary, depending on whether marks during study away from the Validated Institution have been determined by staff at the Validated Institution or by staff at the placement provider.

The measures included in the Credit Framework 12.4.2.1.4 will apply:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfo.html#classification

Section 8

Guidance on Published Information

The QAA’s UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance, Partnerships, https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships highlights the importance of awarding organisations ensuring information supplied to students accurately represents the nature of the arrangement and programme.

Therefore Kent maintains an overview of the content of Validated Institution Student Handbooks and publicity material.

8.1 Publicity Material

The relationship between Kent and each Validated Institution should be accurately portrayed in marketing material and in line with the Memorandum of Agreement signed with the University.

Marketing material produced by Validated Institutions may utilise the University’s trademark, further guidance on this is available in section 8.5.

Key phrases that may be included in publicly available information are:

The Institution of (insert name) offers students an opportunity to study a range of undergraduate/postgraduate programmes, which are validated by the University of Kent. The Institution of (insert name) is responsible for devising and delivering the course but the University of Kent have oversight of the standards and quality of the award.

And;

The University of Kent validates the awards and qualifications which students study at the Institution of (insert name). The Institution is responsible for the day-to-day management of the academic programme and support services. The University monitors this provision to ensure suitably highly standards are maintained and upon successful completion of the course(s) students will receive an award from the University of Kent, stating the Institution of (insert name) as the place of study.

8.2 Student Handbooks
The key areas of information noted in Annex D of the University’s Code of Practice, Information to Students should be considered by Validated Institutions when setting out the Handbooks for their programmes.

These can be found at: [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexd.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexd.html)

A copy of all handbooks should be sent to the QAO each year in advance of their publication. This is to ensure that the information included in them is accurate, complete and up-to-date.

The deadline for receipt of the handbook(s) by the University is normally **31st August** each year; QAO will confirm the accuracy of the information within a reasonable timescale of receipt of each handbook.

In some institutions handbooks may be produced early or later in the year. In these cases, staff responsible for the production of student handbooks will be asked to arrange alternative submission time frames with the QAO.

### 8.3 Public Information, Publicity and Promotional Activity

Kent also requires that partners submit links to or hard copies of prospectuses, and other public information, publicity materials, or promotional activities related to Kent Validated programmes **by the 31st August each year**.

Again if production of such material falls outside of the **31st August** deadline partners will be asked to arrange alternative submission timescales with the QAO.

### 8.4 Websites

The University annually checks all of its partner’s websites to ensure that information regarding the University of Kent is accurate.

As with other publicity Validated Institutions must ensure that the relationship between the Validated Institution and Kent is accurately portrayed on their website.

### 8.5 Use of Kent’s Logo

Institutions validated by Kent are free to use Kent’s logo on published material and on their websites, in line with the requirements of their individual Memorandum of Agreement.

Further information regarding Kent’s corporate identity can be found at: [https://www.kent.ac.uk/brand/visual/logo.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/brand/visual/logo.html)

### 8.6 Validation Website

The University have web pages dedicated to information about Validated arrangements, which include a profile of each of the University’s Validated Institutions. This is available at: [http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/profiles/index.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/profiles/index.html)

This information is updated from time-to-time however, if the information on this website requires amendment at any point of the academic year please contact the QAO who will be able to carry out the required changes.
Section 9

Guidance on Academic Appeals and Complaints for Taught Programmes

The following pages provide guidance on the requirements of Annex 13 Appeals Against Recommendations of Boards of Examiners and Annex 10 Academic Discipline – Procedures of the University of Kent’s Credit Framework for Taught Programmes http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html[1]

9.1 Definitions

**Academic Appeal:** A request for a review of a decision made by a Board of Examiners in regards to matters of progression to the next stage, assessment results or academic awards.

**Academic Complaint:** A specific concern about the provision of a programme of study or related academic service: e.g. delivery of teaching, availability of learning of resources.

**Complaint:** means any specific concern, other than one relating to an academic matter as defined above, made by a student with regard to the provision of the host institution against which the complaint is made.

9.2 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Validated Institution to:

- Manage, in the first instance, all academic complaints, non-academic complaints and non-academic disciplinary cases;
- Establish an academic disciplinary committee or committees to consider academic offences as per the requirements of Annex 10 of the University’s Credit Framework;
- Have in place their own procedures for dealing with complaints from students and to have in place mechanisms to ensure students are aware of these procedures;
- Inform the University, on an annual basis, of the number of academic and non-academic complaints made by students in relation to Kent programmes and the outcome of these complaints.

It is the responsibility of the University of Kent to:

- Manage all appeals made by students against decisions of Boards of Examiners;
- Manage all appeals made by students against decisions made by disciplinary committees with respect to academic offences as defined by Annex 10 of the Credit Framework;
- Manage academic complaints made by students who have exhausted the academic complaints procedure of a Validated Institution and remain dissatisfied under its procedures and are, therefore, submitting a grievance to the University’s Council.

9.3 Academic Discipline

Each Validated Institution is required to have an Academic Disciplinary Committee to consider alleged breaches of General Regulations section V, item 3: https://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/general.html

This states that students are required to act with honesty and integrity in fulfilling requirements in relation to assessment of their academic progress.
The Credit Framework, Annex 10, Academic Discipline: Procedures, states some examples of conduct which is regarded as a breach of this regulation.

These examples can be found here: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex10.html

9.3.1 How should alleged breaches of General Regulation V.3 be dealt with?

In the event of an alleged breach of regulation V.3, institutions should follow the procedures as detailed in Annex 10 of the Credit Framework. http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex10.html

Where required the QAO can offer advice on instigating these procedures.

9.3.2 Appeals against decisions of the Academic Disciplinary Committee

Students may appeal against a decision of the Academic Disciplinary Committee.

The student may appeal against a decision and/ or penalty made under these regulations on one or more of the following grounds by writing within 21 days of the date on which notification of the decision was sent:

- that there is evidence of a failure to follow the procedures set out in these regulations, which casts reasonable doubt on the reliability of the decision; and/or
- that fresh evidence can be presented, which could not reasonably have been made available before the decision was made, and which casts reasonable doubt on the reliability of the decision; and/or
- that the decision was unreasonable or not justified given the evidence which was available at the time.

Information on the process for submission of an Appeals is available within the Validation website pages at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/studentinfo.html

9.4 Academic Appeals Process

As the awarding body the University of Kent will consider all student appeals.

The most effective route to resolution of an appeal is one in which all parties engage in a spirit of cooperation. The University strives to ensure the fairness and objectivity of its procedures including the maintenance of academic standards.

Appeals should normally be submitted to QAO by the student submitting the appeal (if an appeal is submitted directly to the Faculties Support Office it will be passed to QAO for consideration).

Appeals will only be considered if submitted within 21 days from the date of the publication of assessment results by a Board of Examiners/notice of a decision made by an Academic Disciplinary Committee.

The submission of an appeal is no guarantee of its successful outcome. Where students have been advised to undertake further assessment in failed modules by Boards of Examiners and appeal against this decision, they must proceed to take the further assessment until the outcome of the appeal is known.
University staff members will treat in good faith and maintain confidentiality, according to the procedures, any academic appeal which is brought forward by students studying at Validated Institutions.

Detail on the process for submission of Appeals can be found at:

http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/studentinfo.html
and
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex13.html

FAQs for students on appeals processes can be found at:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/fso/appeals/index.html

9.5 Complaints Procedure

The process to be followed when managing student complaints is determined by the nature of the complaint.

Definition of Complaints and responsibility for their management can be found at:
http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/procedures/collabprocedures2.html#appealsandcomplaints

Detail on the process for submission of Complaints by Students can be found at:
http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/studentinfo.html

Section 10

Information for Students

10.1 Introduction

The University publishes a list of information that should be provided to students by Validated Institutions in relation to their programme within *Annex D of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes*. Institutions should make themselves aware of this list:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexd.html

10.2 Access to University facilities

Students studying at institutions validated by Kent are not normally able to access the University facilities that are open to Kent students.

10.3 Certificates and Congregations

The University issues certificates to all students who successfully complete an award validated by Kent.

Students will be invited to attend a University graduation ceremony, which takes place in November each year, to receive their certificate and official transcript.

Where students are unable to attend the ceremony, the University’s Congregations team will be send certificate and transcripts by to the Validated Institution for distribution.
It is recommended that when Validated Institutions send out certificates and transcripts, that they use a tracked mail service.

Replacement certificates may be requested if the original has been lost or destroyed. Details on this can be found at: https://www.kent.ac.uk/csao/graduates/dregreecert.html

10.4 Transcripts

Transcripts are an official record of a student's academic achievement and include a breakdown of modules taken and results attained for a specific programme of study.

Official transcripts are provided to students as part of the University graduation ceremony.

Where students are unable to attend the ceremony, transcripts are sent by post along with the student's certificate via the Validated Institution.

If a student requires a replacement or copy of their transcript then they can apply for one by following the links at: https://www.kent.ac.uk/csao/graduates/transcripts.html

10.5 Appeals and Complaints Procedures

Procedures for Appeals and Complaints can be found in Section 9 of this Handbook.

Guidance is also available for students at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/studentinfo.html

10.6 Regulations

Students are required to abide by the University regulations. These can be viewed online at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html

10.7 Visa Requirements

The University is not able to help Validated Institutions or their students, with regard to student visas or advice on student visas.

Validated Institutions must therefore make their own appropriate arrangements in order to meet UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements.

10.8 Availability of External Examiners Reports

Whilst External Examiner Reports are already often available to student representatives at forums such as the Student Voice Committee, the University requires that all students are given access to the reports for their programme in full.

This requirement applies to all Validated Institution programmes.

There is no set method for Validated Institutions to make the reports available to students but some suggested ones are:

- Making them available on a dedicated webpage which students can access.
- Making them available to students through a virtual learning environment.
• Making them available to the students by e-mailing the report directly to students on the programme.

Partners should ensure that reports for the last three years are accessible.

Section 11

Student Evaluation

Validated Institutions should have in place methods of seeking the views of students on both modules taken and their programme as a whole.

These methods should take into account the requirements of the University’s Annex M of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes - Student Evaluation.

Annex M is concerned with arrangements for obtaining the views of students on matters related to learning and teaching and for consideration of the views of students.

The Annex can be read in full at:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexm.html

Validated Institutions should also establish one or more Student Voice Committees.

In addition to the gathering of feedback by Validated Institutions, the University itself surveys all Validated Institution students annually to obtain their views on their experience as Validated Institution students, and their understanding of Kent’s role in their degrees.

11.1 Module Evaluation

Validated Institutions should seek the views of students on each of the modules they have taken; the purpose of module evaluation is threefold.

With regard to quality assurance, it should:

- inform the annual monitoring of courses.

With regard to quality enhancement, it should:

- provide short-cycle, developmental feedback to assist staff reflect on course design and teaching, and allow them to make changes as appropriate;
- encourage students to reflect on their own learning.

11.1.1 Methods of Evaluation

End of module evaluation

An opportunity must be provided for anonymous student evaluation by an end of module questionnaire each time a module is offered.

For quality assurance purposes, a questionnaire should be made available containing closed choice questions regarding:
- the provision of resources (e.g. computing, library);
- the adequacy of the physical setting (lecture rooms and other facilities);
- the information provided about a module both before and during the module;
- the organisation and delivery of material,
- the setting and punctual return of assessed work
- the helpfulness of all forms of feedback and opportunities for discussion on
  individual work.

For quality enhancement purposes, the same questionnaire may include open-ended
questions which allow students to express their views freely.

**Other Forms of Evaluation and Feedback**

In addition to any quality enhancement material collected in the second part of the
questionnaire, other forms of evaluation and feedback should be collected especially
in the early and middle part of a module

(see  [http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexm.html#appendix](http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexm.html#appendix) for
examples).

These allow students to express their views and provide short-cycle feedback to staff.

In addition, separate forms of evaluation may be used for different components of a
module (e.g. lectures, seminars, workshops, classes or components taught by guest
lecturers).

Each teacher/module convenor will determine procedures for collecting enhancement
data, analysing responses, and providing feedback to students.

**Use of Evaluation Data**

- A statistical summary of fixed choice question responses, and responses to such
data where appropriate, should be included as part of the annual monitoring
  process (see Section 6 of the Validation Handbook)
- A report of enhancement data should be included as part of the annual
  monitoring process. (The method used to solicit it should be stated.)
- All staff should be given an opportunity to respond to questionnaire and feedback
data.
- Students should be informed of how their views have been considered and with
  what result, for example by making available to them through the annual
  monitoring process and minutes of meetings of Boards of Studies.

11.2 Programme Evaluation

Directors of Studies (or their nominee) should summarise in Annual Monitoring reports
feedback on their programmes obtained through both in-course questionnaires and the exit
questionnaires such as the National Student Survey (NSS).

Where available Validated Institutions should also summarise feedback from the Kent Partner
Institution Survey (see 11.5)

11.3 Student Voice Committees
Validated Institutions should establish one or more Student Voice Committees.

- Student Voice Committees should be regarded by as a forum for engaging students in the quality management and enhancement of their programmes of study. Student Voice Committees should be seen as an opportunity for staff members to consult with students on all aspects of their student learning experience and involve them in discussions with regard to future developments in the Institution.

- Each Institution will establish one or more Student Voice Committee. It is for Institutions to decide whether it is appropriate to have a single such Committee or whether, for example, there should be a Committee corresponding to each Board of Studies (or equivalent).

- The membership of the Student Voice Committee should include at least one student from each stage of each programme or group of programmes falling within the remit of the Committee and, for each programme or group of programmes, at least one member of staff who has a detailed knowledge of the programme(s).

- Student Voice Committees should meet at least once per term. Dates of meetings should be widely publicised within the School and students and staff should be invited to submit, through their representatives, items of business for consideration by the Committee.

- Student Voice Committee meetings should be arranged, as far as is possible, for times and dates when the student representatives are able to attend.

- Prior to the Student Voice Committee meeting an agenda-setting meeting should take place between the Committee Chair and the student representatives. The agenda-setting meeting should include an opportunity for the student representatives to bring to the attention of the Chair any matters that they wish to raise at the Committee. This will ensure such matters are included in the agenda and allow them to be properly addressed. There is a template agenda to be used for meetings. This is available below:

**Student Voice Committee Agenda**

1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2. Introduction (by the Chair)
3. Matter arising/actions from previous meeting
4. Matters raised by student representatives
5. Other items relevant to Institution, for example:
   - NSS and other internal survey results;
   - Recommendations from External Examiners
6. Proposed programme specifications (both new and major revisions to existing specifications prior to the specifications being submitted for approval)
7. Assessment and feedback
8. Student Voice: agreed summary of key points to feedback to all students about issues raised or discussed by student reps above, noting any actions taken (or why not) at the meeting
9. Any other business
10. Date/time of next meeting

- Student representatives are expected to attend all relevant Student Voice Committee meetings. If, exceptionally, a student representative is not in a position to attend a meeting
he/she is encouraged to send a written submission to the meeting instead. The student representative may also send a written submission to a meeting if there is a matter that the representative feels should be raised anonymously. Any written submissions should be sent to the Chair by the date of the agenda-setting meeting.

- Assessment deadlines must be communicated to students at the beginning of the academic year and, where possible, assessment deadline schedules are expected to be timetabled in collaboration with students. It is envisaged that this will be undertaken with each current student cohort for the next cohort, as an agenda item in the final Committee meeting, and subsequently reported to the relevant Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent. The School should communicate clearly to its incoming cohort that the assessment deadline schedule was derived in collaboration with students the previous term (and that they will have the same opportunity in their turn).

- Agendas for meetings and associated papers should be sent to all members in advance of meetings.

- Agendas for Student Voice Committee meetings should include any matters raised by student representatives as per the above and should ensure that there is opportunity for consideration of suggestions from staff or from students for the development and enhancement of programmes. Agendas should be comprehensive and provide scope for discussion of all aspects of student learning, including, for example, programmes and modules of study (including teaching, learning and assessment methods), the Personal Academic Support System (PASS) or equivalent, learning resources, disability support and curriculum development.

- Specific agenda items to be discussed by the Student Voice Committee include:
  - Matters raised by student representatives;
  - NSS and other internal survey results;
  - Recommendations from External Examiners (see Annex K: External Examiners section 13.1);
  - Proposed programme specifications (both new and major revisions to existing specifications) prior to the specifications being submitted for Faculty approval (see note);
  - Assessment and feedback matters;
  - The School's feedback return rates (see the Credit Framework Annex 6: Marking section 27);
  - Assessment deadlines for the coming academic year (see above).

- Student representatives must be given the opportunity to be explicitly involved in discussions at the Student Voice Committee. Student comments and Institutional responses should be recorded in the Committee minutes.

**Note:** Discussion on programme specifications should focus on what the students might see as attractive about the programme, and what they would want to learn and experience while studying for it. The relevant extract of the minutes will be included in the documentation submitted to PASC (as per Annex C: Approval and Withdrawal of Taught Programmes section 2.3.1 ix).

- Minutes of meetings should be made available to all students taking the programme(s) falling within the remit of the Committee and to all staff teaching on the programme(s).
• Student Voice Committees should report to and make recommendations to the appropriate Board(s) of Studies or equivalent.

• Students should be informed of how their views have been considered in a timely fashion following each Committee meeting.

• Institutions should monitor the attendance of student representatives at Student Voice Committees. Committee secretaries are recommended to maintain attendance lists (for both staff and students), which will allow any non-engagement to be easily identified.

11.5 Kent Survey

In addition to the above evaluation processes, Kent now surveys directly all partner institution students, including Validated Institution students, to obtain their views on the experience of studying towards a Kent award.

Validated Institutions will be asked to provide student email contact information as part of submitting student registrations, this information will then be used to circulate the survey to students.

Validated Institutions will be informed when the Kent survey commences each year, and contacted with results for their institution once available.

11.6 Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

The University publishes a section of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, Annex N, which directly relates to the engagement of students in the quality assurance and enhancement processes.

This section of the Code may provide guidance to Validated Intuitions on measures that can be adopted for their provision.

The Code can be found at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexn.html

Section 12

Staff Development Information

The University currently provides the following development opportunities for staff at Validated Institutions.

12.1 Partnership Forum

The Partnership Forum is an annual event hosted at the beginning of the Spring Term by the University which provides an opportunity for partner staff to discuss issues relating to quality management and enhancement.

The Forum also provides opportunity for partner staff to give feedback to the University, suggest areas for improvement, or to request clarifications on University policy.

The Forum is especially useful for new staff within Validated Institutions and provides an opportunity to be introduced to staff from the University of Kent, particularly the Quality Assurance Office, and other Validated Institutions and discuss areas of shared interest.
The date of the next Partnership Forum, and presentations and minutes from previous forums can be found at: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/forum/index.html

12.2 Academic Practice

The University’s Unit for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UELT) offers a range of support for all staff engaged in teaching and research, including those at Validated Institutions.

The types of programmes and training organised by UELT includes:

The Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE):

Worth 60 credits at level 7 this programme draws on theories of teaching and learning, and on educational research and brings these to bear on participants own work and experience.

If Validated Institution staff members are interested in taking the PGCHE then should consider the information available at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qualifications/pgche/index.html

The Learning and Teaching Network:

The Learning and Teaching Network provides sessions for staff working towards enhancing learning, teaching and assessment.

Sessions are normally held on either the Canterbury or Medway campuses, details of which can be found at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/networks/ltn/index.html

If a number of staff members are interested in a topic offered as part of the Learning and Teaching Network, then it may be able to organise a bespoke session at your institution.

12.3 Boards of Examiners Training

QAO deliver training sessions for new members of Boards of Examiners on an annual basis.

Deputy Chairs and other staff members from Validated Institutions are strongly encouraged to attend.

The training normally takes place in March each year as part of the Learning and Teaching calendar http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/networks/ltn/index.html

12.4 QA News

Validated Institutions are required to subscribed to the QAO’s newsletter ‘QA News’ this newsletter provides important information and updates to University and Partner staff on areas such as:

- changes in QA procedures and processes recommended by Education Board and the Graduate School Board;
- updates on external Quality Assurance Agency reviews, consultations and developments;
- updates on the University’s preparation for external audits that will take place from time to time.

To receive this newsletter email qa@kent.ac.uk and we will arrange for you to be added to the QA news e-mail list.

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Please Note: It is a requirement that at least one member of staff from each Validated Institution is on the QA News e-mail list.

If you do not believe you have a staff member on the list, or if a member of staff on the list leaves your organisation, you are required to inform QAO.

Section 13
Appointment and Renewal of External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed by Kent to all Kent awarded programmes in line with the requirements of Annex K of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexk.html

It is the responsibility of each Validated Institution to nominate potential External Examiners, and to complete the Form for Appointment of External Examiners for Taught Programmes of Study. The most up-to-date version of this form is available at the above link.

13.1 Process for Appointment

Once the appointment form has been completed by the Validated Institution it should be submitted to the QAO for checking and to be forwarded through the approval process of the University - appointment forms should not be sent directly to a Validated Institutions cognate School.

Once an External Examiner appointment has been approved, the University of Kent appoints the External Examiner, and provides them with information regarding the detail of their role and the terms of their appointment.

External Examiners are appointed by the University of Kent for four years, after which time, in exceptional circumstances, there is a possibility of a further year of appointment.

Validated Institutions should ensure they have sufficient time to nominate and gain approval for External Examiner appointments before their Boards take place.

Remaining periods of appointment for Externals can be checked by contacting the QAO.

13.2 Expiration of External Examiner Appointment

Once an External Examiner’s appointment has ended, it is the responsibility of the Validated Institution to nominate a potential replacement External Examiner(s).

Section 14
Useful Contacts

Contact information for Quality Assurance Office Staff can be found at, https://www.kent.ac.uk/uelt/staff.html alternatively the Quality Assurance Office can be contacted via qa@kent.ac.uk

A profile of each Validated Institution can be found at: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/validation/index.html