Message from the Head of Quality Assurance

I am delighted to share with you the launch of the new Quality Assurance and Compliance Office at the University of Kent.

The Quality Assurance and Compliance Office team consists of members of staff from both the former Quality Assurance and Faculties Support Offices. Covering a range of QA specialisms and areas of expertise, the team will be working collaboratively across the University to provide guidance, support and training on QA matters to staff and students.

Over the coming year, we will be seeking to enhance various areas of Kent’s recently published QA framework and would welcome your input. We will also be rolling out a new QA training programme, covering key areas of the Codes of Practice, Credit Framework, and Academic Regulations for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses. The aim is to ensure that staff at all levels are equipped to confidently apply QA policies and procedures within Divisions.
Overview

The Quality Assurance and Compliance Office (QACO) is here to advise professional and academic staff across Divisions. The Quality Assurance and Compliance Office (QACO) is part of the Education Directorate. The core purpose of the QACO team is to provide leadership, advice and guidance on Quality Assurance (QA) matters to the staff and students of the University.

Working collaboratively with the Divisions, other Professional Service Departments and Kent Union, we will:

- Develop and implement consistent QA Frameworks and policies across the University in line with the national regulatory framework;
- Evidence through monitoring and review, the University’s compliance with national requirements for quality and standards;
- Ensure the quality of the student learning experience remains of a nationally recognised standard of excellence;
- Provide an ongoing, regularly reviewed, programme of training to staff and students in the requirements of the University's QA Codes of Practice;
- Protect the University's best interests and enhance its reputation nationally by mitigating QA related risks.

Our new QACO website is currently being developed, but in the meantime you can still access both the Quality Assurance and Faculty Support Office webpages for information about current policies, procedures, and team member responsibilities.

QA website:  https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/index.html
FSO website: https://www.kent.ac.uk/fso/

Please get in touch with a member of the team or email qaco@kent.ac.uk if you have any Quality Assurance related queries.
Updates to Codes of Practice / Credit Framework

The following changes have recently been applied to the Code of Practice - Taught Courses of Study; Research Courses of Study

- **Annex B** (Approval and Withdrawal of Research Courses): the revised Course specification template has been published.
- **Annex C** (Approval and Withdrawal of Taught Courses): Appendix C: The Curriculum Development Tracker has been published.
- **Annex E** (Annual Monitoring, Taught): Appendices have been published.
- **Annex J** (Meetings of Boards of Examiners, Taught): Chair of the Board of Examiners updated with 'Chief Examiner' for consistency.
- **Annex K** (External and Internal Examiners, Research): has been updated to reflect the new approval process for the appointment of External Examiners.
- **Annex K** (External Examiners and External Advisers for Taught Courses): Clarification of responsibilities relating to approval of School responses to External Examiner reports.
- **Annex L** (Quality Assurance Procedures for Courses of Study at Validated Institutions and Partner Colleges Leading to University Awards, Taught), Annex C (Approval and Withdrawal of Taught Courses) **Appendix B** (Approval and Withdrawal of Modules, Taught) and Annex L (Quality Assurance Procedures for Courses of Study at Validated Institutions and Partner Colleges Leading to University Awards, Taught) **Appendix A**: Changes have been made to clarify the routes of approval for Collaborative Awards and Validated Courses.
- **Annex O** (Approval and Quality Assurance Procedures for Collaborative Partnerships – Part 1 Development of New Partnerships, Taught) **Appendix E**: Signatories to Agreements have been
amended to state normal signatory for UK Partnerships is the DVC Education and Student Experience and normal signatory for international partnerships is the DVC Academic Planning Performance and Strategy.

- Annex S (University Procedures for engaging with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements, Taught): Section 7 amended to reflect the signature and acceptance of PSRB accreditation agreement(s) by the relevant Divisional Director of Education and Student Experience/Graduate Studies and Student Experience.

- Annex S (University Procedures for engaging with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements, Taught): Section 10 amended to reflect Divisional reporting to the Education and Student Experience Board, where a PSRB decides not to continue an existing accreditation.

Code of Practice - Taught Courses of Study:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/documents/copt2020-introduction-v2.pdf

Code of Practice - Research Courses of Study:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/research/documents/copr2020-introduction.pdf

The following changes have recently been applied to the Credit Framework

- Annex 5 (Alternative Exit Awards): AEA added to the table for WBL.
- Annex 10 (Academic Misconduct Principle and Procedures) of the Credit Framework, a new Academic Misconduct Form has been revised and published. Clarification of penalties in appendices A and B. Template letters are also available in appendices D - J.
- Annex 13 (Appeals against Recommendations of Boards of Examiners) of the Credit Framework, Appeals against Recommendations of Boards of Examiners has been revised.


The following changes have recently been applied to the Academic Regulations

- The Regulatory Framework for Professional Doctorates has been updated to reflect terminology changes.
- The Fitness to Practice Procedures for Programmes Other than Social Work have been revised for new nomenclature.

Academic Regulations (Taught): https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html
QA Training Schedule

We will provide dates for upcoming training, both here and on our website. If you would like to attend any of these training sessions, please email Sarah Collins at s.a.l.king@kent.ac.uk.

QAC FAQs

These are QA questions that are asked regularly, that might be of general interest. If you have a questions that you would like to see answered here, please contact qaco@kent.ac.uk.

Q: As the Code of Practice has been updated in relation to exam boards, would Divisions be expected to adhere to the normal timeline? A: The standard examination schedule has not changed. In the event that Covid-19 causes significant disruption to the exam period again this year, adjustments to the examination schedule may be required. Exam boards should be scheduled as necessary unless Divisions are notified otherwise.

Q: Who signs Postgraduate Pass Lists? A: For postgraduate research students, the Pass List should be sent to the Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and Student Experience for signature. Once signed, the Pass List should be sent to QACO via SharePoint for the scrutiny and approval of the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College. For postgraduate taught students, until
KentVision launches, Pass Lists should be sent to QACO via SharePoint and they will be approved by the Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and Student Experience.

Q: Do Covid Postgraduate Research related extensions need to be uploaded to SharePoint for approval and does the completion date need to be amended? A: If the extension requested is only for the 3 month fee free extension, then it does not need to be uploaded to SharePoint as it already has blanket approval from the Dean of the Graduate Researcher College. Please ensure that the extension is recorded on Cressida, both on the Notes screen and on the PG Thesis screen, for the updated anticipated submission date. Please note that Student Immigration and Compliance must be advised of any Tier 4 students who have been granted an extension.

Useful weblinks

Academic Regulations – Research Courses:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html?tab=research-courses-of-study

Academic Regulations – Taught Courses:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html

Collaborative Partnerships:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/index.html

Credit Framework:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html

Research Code of Practice:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html?tab=research-courses-of-study

Taught Code of Practice:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this newsletter, please email s.a.l.king@kent.ac.uk or qaco@kent.ac.uk.