

Academic Quality and Standards Handbook 2011-2012

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Guidance Notes

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations used throughout the Academic Quality and Standards Handbook

AAB	Accreditation and Approvals Board
AB	Academic Board
AD	Academic Directorate
ADC	Academic Development Centre
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
APCL	Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning
AQS	Academic Quality and Standards
AQSH	Academic Quality and Standards Handbook
AQSRG	Academic Quality and Standards Review Group
ARC	Academic Regulations Committee
BoS	Board of Study
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CAMS	Credit Accumulation System component of SITS
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme
CoP	Code of Practice
DE	Developmental Engagement
EE	External Examiners
EEAB	External Examiners Approvals Board
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EOL	Edexcel on-line
FDL	Flexible and distributed learning
FE	Further education

Abbreviations

FHEQ	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
FQC	Faculty Quality Committee
FQ-EHEA	Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Areas
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEIs	Higher education institutions
HERO	Higher Education Research and Opportunities
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
IAV	Institutional Approval Visit
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IQA	Internal Quality Audit
IQER	Integrated Quality Enhancement Review
IRR	Institutional Review Report
ISR	Internal Subject Review
ITE	Initial teacher education
JACS	Joint academic coding system
KEYS	Kingston Enhancing your Academic and Employability Skills
KU	Kingston University
LRC	Learning Resource Centre
L&T	Learning and teaching
LTA	Learning, teaching and assessment
MAB	Module Assessment Board
MALA	Masters Award(s) by Learning Agreement

Abbreviations

MEQ	Module Evaluation Questionnaire
MoC	Memorandum of Co-operation
MRDP	Module Review and Development Plan
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSS	National Student Survey
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PAB	Programme Assessment Board
PCF	Postgraduate Credit Framework
PSB	Professional and Statutory Body
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
QA	Quality Assurance
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QE	Quality Enhancement
QEC	Quality Enhancement Committee
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SBS	Subject Benchmark Statements
SEG	Student Experience Group
SITS	Strategic Information Technology Services
SMG	School Management Group
SMT	Senior Management Team
SR	Summative Review
SSCC	Staff Student Consultative Committee
STAR	Student Targets, Admissions and Recruitment Committee
TQI	Teaching Quality Information

Abbreviations

UCAS	University and Colleges Admissions Service
UCE	University Chief Examiner
UMS	Undergraduate Modular Scheme
USD	University Secretary's Department
WBL	Work Based Learning
WP	Widening Participation

Glossary

Glossary of Terms used in the Academic Quality and Standards Handbook (AQSH)

Academic Board (AB)	Operates at a strategic level, responsible for issues relating to research, scholarship, teaching, learning and assessment, academic standards and qualifications. The development of the University's academic activities and the support of these activities. Advises the Vice-Chancellor and Board of Governors as necessary
Academic Directorate (AD)	Responsible for management of overarching policies on academic affairs, course planning, and academic strategy and how these impact on the student experience. The executive body which provides a link to the Academic Board and its sub-committees
Academic Infrastructure	Series of documents published by the Quality Assurance Agency designed to provide guidance on quality, standards and best practice in higher education. Includes the Code of Practice, Subject Benchmark Statements and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications <i>(see section K – External Quality Assurance and Enhancement Requirements)</i>
Academic Quality and Standards (AQS)	This department has responsibility for implementing and monitoring the academic quality assurance procedures and academic regulations of the University. It works closely with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Academic Quality and Standards Review Group (ASQRG)	A sub-committee of the Quality Enhancement Committee. It has been established as a forum for the consideration of matters relating to quality assurance policy and procedures
Academic Regulations Committee (ARC)	A sub-committee of Academic Board responsible for regulatory issues
Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)	A process for accessing and, as appropriate, recognising prior experiential learning or prior certificated learning for academic purposes <i>(see section H – Accreditation Processes)</i>

Glossary

Administrative Schedule	Document outlining the generic administrative arrangements for the delivery of courses where the University is sub-contracting HEFCE-funded numbers and the students are registered for KU awards
Advanced Standing	This is where an individual student is considered for entry to a later year/level/stage of a University award. Applications are considered on an individual basis using accreditation of prior learning (APL) principles and guidelines and it is a matter of academic judgement by those responsible for admissions whether to allow the applicant admission (see section H - Accreditation processes)
Annual Monitoring	Annual monitoring is the continuous internal process by which the University critically appraises the operation of its fields and ensures that appropriate standards are maintained (see section F - Annual Review and Development)
Approval to recruit	Approval to recruit is the decision taken by the Vice-Chancellor, following successful validation, as to whether students may be recruited to the field. (A field may, however, be publicised once Academic Directorate has recommended to the Academic Board that the field can proceed to validation. In these cases the field must be described as 'subject to validation') (see section A - Academic Planning)
Articulation Agreement	A formal agreement recognising the credit rating of a named qualification of another institution or organisation creating the opportunity to transfer credit and enable student entry from the named institution or organisation with advanced standing and specific credit to a University award. Students who achieve the agreed standard have the right to enrol on the articulated programme (see section H - Accreditation Processes)
Board of Study (BoS)	Forum for discussion of matters relating to a field, course or course scheme. Boards of study make recommendations to Head of School and Faculty Board as appropriate
Credit	Credit is awarded in recognition of the achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level

Glossary

Credit accumulation and transfer	A mechanism which allows credit awarded by a higher education awarding body to be recognised, quantified and included towards the credit requirements for a programme delivered by another higher education provider and/or between programmes offered by a higher education provider
Credit level	An indicator of the relative complexity and/or depth of learning
Credit level descriptors	The generic characteristics of learning at a specific level, used as reference points
Credit value	The number of credits, at a particular level, assigned to a body of learning. In other words, it indicates both the amount of learning expected and the relative level of difficulty
Codes of Practice	Guidance on good practice in various aspects of Higher Education, published by the Quality Assurance Agency (see section K – External Quality Assurance and Enhancement Requirements)
Collaborative Provision	This is the umbrella term used to cover the different types of collaborative arrangements. The QAA Code of Practice on Collaborative Provision and Flexible and Distributed Learning defines collaborative provision as “educational provision leading to an award, or to specific credit towards an award, of an awarding institution delivered and/or supported and/or assessed through an arrangement with a partner organisation”. Therefore any compulsory credit leading to a University award which is delivered/supported/assessed by a partner is defined by the University as collaborative provision, and will be subject to the processes outlined in section B of the Handbook (see section B – Collaborative Provision)
Credit Rated course	A course in a partner organisation can be recognised for the award of academic credit (eg. where the course carries less credit than is required for an award) (see section B - Collaborative Provision)
Dual Award	A dual award is where separate awards are conferred by more than one institution upon a student upon completion of a single programme of study (see section B – Collaborative Provision)

Glossary

Due Diligence	Refers to the task of carefully reviewing and verifying all critical assumptions and facts presented by an institution, to enable the University to be confident that institutions with which it plans to work closely are of appropriate legal, technical and financial standing, and that the intended collaboration does not present the University with any particular difficulties in principle <i>(see section B – Collaborative Provision)</i>
EDEXCEL	The UK’s largest awarding body offering academic and vocational qualifications and testing to schools, colleges, employers and other places of learning in the UK and internationally <i>(see section K – External Quality Assurance and Enhancement Requirements)</i>
External Examiners Approvals Board (EEAB)	Forum for approval of external examiner appointments <i>(see section I – External Examiners)</i>
Field closure	Field closure is the permanent withdrawal of the field (sanctioned by the Vice-Chancellor) from the University's academic portfolio of taught provision. The field no longer remains in validation <i>(see section A - Academic Planning)</i>
Financial Schedule	Agreement outlining the financial arrangements for course management and delivery between the University and a collaborative partner <i>(see section B - Collaborative Provision)</i>
Franchised field	A franchised field is designed and assessed by Kingston University but is delivered by a partner institution. Normally, the field will also be delivered within the University and/or by a number of partners in a network (where this is the case, the partnership is co-ordinated and managed by the University). Some variation may be permitted to suit local circumstances, but normally the learning outcomes of franchised fields are identical to their “in-house” counterparts and/or to fields offered by the other partners in the franchise <i>(see section B - Collaborative Provision)</i>
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)	HEFCE are responsible for the distribution of public money for teaching and research to universities and colleges. In doing so, it aims to promote high quality education and research, within a financially healthy sector. The Council also plays a key role in ensuring accountability and promoting good practice

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Higher Education Research and Opportunities (HERO)	A national organisation providing information on HEIs in the UK
Institutional Agreement	Formalises the contract between the University and the collaborative partner (see section B - Collaborative Provision)
Institutional Approval	Institutional approval is the process by which a new partnership arrangement is scrutinised for its suitability to collaborate in programmes leading to awards of the University. The process culminates in approval by the Academic Board on the recommendation of Academic Directorate and the completion of an Institutional Agreement between senior officers of the partner institution and the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the University (see section B - Collaborative Provision)
Institutional Audit	An external scrutiny process by the Quality Assurance Agency to inspect the academic standards and quality of provision at a Higher Education Institution (see section K – External Quality Assurance and Enhancement Requirements)
Internal Quality Audit (IQA)	Kingston University’s process for investigating specific quality-related or procedures with a view to providing support for QA processes where necessary (see section E - Internal Quality Audit)
Integrated Quality Enhancement Review (IQER)	IQER is a review method specially devised for higher education in further education colleges in England (see section K – External Quality Assurance and Enhancement Requirements)
Internal Subject Review (ISR)	Internal subject review is the process by which the operation of existing fields within each subject area are critically appraised at regular intervals (normally a six year cycle) by a panel including external peers (see section D - Internal Subject Review)
Joint Academic Coding System (JACS Codes)	Subject codes used in national and international quality assurance processes (see section A – Academic Planning)
Joint Award	A joint award is where a single award is conferred jointly by more than one institution upon a student upon completion of a single programme of study (see section B – Collaborative Provision)

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Joint Delivery	This is where a Kingston University award is jointly delivered by the partner and the University (this should not be confused with a “joint award”, see above). For quality assurance purposes, provision which is jointly delivered is treated in the same way as franchised provision <i>(see section B – Collaborative Provision)</i>
Key Skills Framework	The aims of the framework are designed to encourage students to become increasingly future focussed as they progress through their studies. They can access opportunities to develop skills thorough both the design and delivery of programmes and engagement in extracurricular activities <i>(see section C – Validation of New Fields)</i>
Learning outcomes	Statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning
Liaison Document	Document used in the validation of collaborative arrangements outlining the respective responsibilities of the University and the partner organisation with respect to the delivery of the field <i>(see section B - Collaborative Provision)</i>
Masters by Learning Agreement (MALA)	MALA is a form of programme followed by individuals or cohorts who do all or a significant part of their study in a work setting <i>(see section H – Accreditation Processes)</i>
Module	A self-contained, formally structured learning experience with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria
Module Assessment Board (MAB)	The assessment board responsible for the assessment and standards of modules within a subject. It agrees the grades achieved by students within these modules and makes recommendations to the Programme Assessment Boards (PABs) about the most appropriate means of reassessment where failure has occurred
Programme Assessment Board (PAB)	the assessment board responsible for the overall assessment of students following similar programmes and for the standards of awards
Planning Approval	Planning approval is the process by which a new field is given approval to proceed to validation following consideration by the Academic Directorate and

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	approval by the Academic Board. Ultimate authority for approval to proceed to validation rests with the Vice-Chancellor (see section A - Academic Planning)
Planning Meeting	Meeting held to formalise the arrangements for a forthcoming validation or ISR event (eg. date, documentary requirements, etc) (see section C - Validation of New Fields) (see section D – Internal Subject Review)
Postgraduate Credit Framework (PCF)	Regulations for Kingston University’s postgraduate courses
Programme Specification	Definitive record of the key features of the field including aims, learning outcomes, teaching and learning and assessment strategies, etc (previously known as the field specification) (see section C - Validation of New Fields)
Progression Agreement/Compacts/ Accords	These are arrangements designed to support individual students in the application process to the University. They can apply to entry at the start of a course or to entry with advanced standing (see above). The partners agree to support and facilitate the applications from individual students covered by the agreement. These agreements often underpin vocational progression pathways, support applications from non-traditional entrants in Widening Participation initiatives and offer certain guarantees to students applying from the partner, including support in accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) (see section H - Accreditation Processes) <i>Note: there are various sources of advice available on progression agreements/compacts and accords, eg. the Head of Widening Participation, and External Affairs (the International Office and UK Marketing)</i>
Qualification descriptors	Generic statements of the outcomes of study for the main qualification at each level which exemplify the nature and characteristics of that qualification
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)	National Organisation responsible for reviewing standards and quality in higher education and providing reference points to define standards
Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC)	University level committee (sub-committee of Academic Board) responsible for quality assurance and enhancement

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Strategic Information Technology Services (SITS)	SITS is a software database aimed at universities so that they can administer all aspects of student life. At Kingston, SITS is used to manage enquiries, applications, programme planning, assessments (progression and awards), timetabling/exam scheduling and research students
StaffSpace	The internal intranet system
StudySpace	The internal virtual learning environment (formerly known as Blackboard)
Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCCs)	SSCCs are sub-committees of Board of Study and they are a forum for students to give feedback on any aspect of the course/field and its operation (see section L – Student Feedback)
Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS)	Documents published by the Quality Assurance Agency as part of the Academic Infrastructure, outlining the skills and attributes that graduates of certain subjects should be expected to possess. (see section C - Validation of New Fields)
Suspension of recruitment	Suspension of recruitment is a decision to cease recruitment to a field for a temporary period. The field will remain in validation (see section A - Academic Planning)
University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)	UCAS are the body responsible for managing applications to higher education courses in the UK
Undergraduate Modular Scheme (UMS)	Regulations for Kingston University's undergraduate courses
Validation	Validation is the process of approving a new or revised curriculum against agreed criteria (see section C - Validation of New Fields)
Validated field	A field that has been through the validation process and has been subsequently approved (see section C – Validation of New Fields) In terms of collaborative provision - a validated field is designed and delivered by the partner institution but awarded and quality assured by Kingston University. The field is “unique” to the partner and is not offered by the University (see section B - Collaborative Provision)

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	<p><i>Note: “Validation” is a term describing the process and must be distinguished from the definition of a “validated field”. All new courses that lead to normal awards and the award of credit go through a process of validation</i></p>
Withdrawal of validation	<p>Withdrawal of validation is a decision made by the Vice-Chancellor if there is evidence that a field is no longer meeting minimum acceptable standards. If validation is to be reinstated, the Vice-Chancellor will determine the process by which this will be done (see section A - Academic Planning)</p>
Work-based learning	<p>Learning that is usually achieved and demonstrated through engagement with a workplace environment, the assessment of reflective practice and the designation of appropriate learning outcomes (see section H – Accreditation Processes)</p>