



Academic Policy 3:

Academic Quality and Standards

2025-2026

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Section 1

Aims of the Policy

- 1 The aim of this policy is to provide a statement outlining the University's approach to the safeguarding of academic standards and the assurance and enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience. The Academic Quality and Standards Handbook, Academic Research Students' Handbook and the Research Ethics and Guidance and Procedures set out the regulations and procedures that underpin this policy.

Scope

- 2 The policy applies to all provision that leads to an award of the University or an award of credit. The policy covers taught and research degree programmes and collaborative provision.

Definitions

- 3 **Academic standards** are defined as the level of achievement a student has to reach in order to be eligible for a Kingston University award. The University is responsible for ensuring that UK academic standards are met in its qualifications by aligning programme learning outcomes with the relevant qualification descriptor as set out in the [Sector Recognised Standards](#) by the Office for Students. Academic standards are concerned with the appropriateness of learning outcomes (aims, content and level) and curriculum, and the effectiveness of assessment (in relation to attainment of learning outcomes). We are also responsible for defining our own academic standards by setting the pass marks and determining the grading/marking schemes and any criteria for classification of qualifications that differentiate between levels of student achievement.
- 4 **Academic quality** refers to the ways in which we provide students with the best possible opportunity to meet the stated learning outcomes of their course and the academic standards of their intended award, through engaging in the activities provided. The types of activities which are likely to contribute to the student experience include: learning, teaching, assessment and academic guidance practices; deployment of learning resources, recruitment and admissions; careers advice and guidance; pastoral support; provision of information and academic appeals, complaint and grievance procedures.
- 5 **Enhancement** is the process by which the University systematically improves the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported.

Section 2

Principles

Framework

- 6 The University's quality assurance and enhancement procedures operate within a Framework set out within the Academic Quality and Standards Handbook, Academic Regulations policies and guidance, Research Students' Handbook and the Research Ethics and Guidance and Procedures. These documents are published widely and available on the internet and StaffSpace and make clear responsibility for academic quality and standards. The requirements set out in these documents are regularly reviewed in consultation with staff and students and changes are approved by Academic Council and its sub-committees.
- 7 The University aims to ensure its processes operate efficiently and wherever possible avoid duplication and align with other quality assurance processes and requirements in Higher Education.
- 8 The Framework ensures that:
 - Each course/module is subject to rigorous validation, monitoring and review to ensure appropriate standards and the continued enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience
 - Each course/module will be set at the appropriate level for the course/module as set against the Sector Recognised Standards and University level descriptors
 - Each course/module will have a programme specification/module descriptor with clearly stated learning outcomes and assessment aligned with and based on the achievement of specified learning outcomes
 - Each course/module operates in accordance with the University academic regulations and assessment requirements.

Communication

- 9 The associated documentation will be accessible to all staff and students as appropriate.
- 10 The University complies with external requirements for information provision in accordance with the guidance provided by the Competition & Markets Authority as contained in their publication 'UK higher education providers – advice on consumer protection law' (published May 2023).

Responsibility

- 11 The University's Academic Council takes ultimate responsibility for safeguarding of the academic standards of awards and enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience.

- 12 All staff, whether directly providing teaching and learning or providing supporting services and systems, have responsibility for contributing to the maintenance of academic standards and enhancement of the quality of the students' learning experience.
- 13 The University will maintain institutional oversight of quality assurance and enhancement processes so as to ensure that local responsibilities are met and to identify generic issues and opportunities that may arise.
- 14 The Academic Quality and Standards Handbook and Academic Regulations, policies and guidance will set out responsibility for named individuals or posts in respect of quality assurance and regulatory requirements.

Students

- 15 We actively seek to provide students with the opportunity and encouragement to contribute to and participate in quality assurance and enhancement activities. The University will include opportunities for student input and feedback within its quality assurance and enhancement processes including but not limited to: student membership of KU committees; student representation on Student Voice Committees; the course representative system, student evaluation of their experience of being a KU study (i.e. module questionnaires and NSS); student involvement in validation and substantive reviews.

Externality

- 16 The University will include input and judgments from those external to the University within its quality assurance and enhancement processes including but not limited to, validation, review, external examining and audit, to ensure comparability of standards with other UK Higher Education providers.
- 17 The University takes account of and ensures compliance with the regulatory requirements contained in the Office for Student's regulatory framework for higher education in England.
- 18 The University wherever possible seeks to ensure its programmes are approved or accredited by appropriate Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

Stakeholders

- 19 The University will ensure that relevant stakeholders are consulted regarding their views of the quality of provision and take account of these views in the quality assurance and enhancement processes. This includes the views of staff, students, graduates, employers, commissioners, partners and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

Enhancement

- 20 The University reflects on its activities and seeks to improve both the quality of the student learning experience by enhancing learning opportunities and the processes for quality assurance and enhancement. This is approached through a process of combining systematic reflection and active planning. It is achieved through:
- Annual priorities established, monitored and evaluated;
 - Analysis of evidence and data derived from continuous monitoring, student feedback and assessment and progression data including targets and objectives;
 - Routine and periodic evaluation of quality assurance and enhancement activities including identification of good practice;
 - Evaluation of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment including identification of good practice;
 - Effective and incentivised educational and staff development to support achievement of quality enhancement including the AdvanceHE accredited Kingston Academic Practice Standards Framework (KAPS) which is based on the Professional Standards Framework (2023);