# Guidance CG (vi)

# Validation Criteria

Proposals for new courses should be considered against standard validation criteria. These, and additional criteria for validations of new subjects and collaborative provision, are detailed below.

## 1 - List of validation criteria

### 1.1 - All validations

New courses should only be approved if there is clear evidence that the following requirements have been met:

* A complete and comprehensive programme specification has been presented. If an incomplete or incorrectly formatted specification is presented, it must be a validation condition that it is corrected prior to commencement of the course (if in doubt seek advice from QAE).
* The course title is consistent with the course content.
* The course is consistent with the Office for Students’ (OfS) Sector Recognised Standards. These are available from: [Sector-recognised standards (officeforstudents.org.uk)](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/53821cbf-5779-4380-bf2a-aa8f5c53ecd4/sector-recognised-standards.pdf)
* The course will allow the University to continue to meet the OfS’s ongoing conditions of registration relating to quality and standards (B conditions).
* Subject benchmark statements have been considered in developing the course. These are available from: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>
* The course’s educational learning outcomes are fully specified and consistent with its aims (see guidance in the [Academic Framework](https://canvas.kingston.ac.uk/courses/311/pages/the-academic-framework-home-page) on [programme level aims and learning outcomes](https://canvas.kingston.ac.uk/courses/311/pages/programme-level-aims-and-learning-outcomes)and generic [Level Descriptors](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/?CatID=6893684b-8c83-4326-bbbb-4eb0f3e37264#ag)  (refer to AG1 in the list of Policies and Regulations) adopted by the University).
* Learning outcomes reflect the University’s Graduate Attributes (as appropriate to the final level of the course).
* The learning and teaching and assessment strategies of the course have been designed to deliver and assure the stated learning outcomes.
* [Future Skills](https://canvas.kingston.ac.uk/courses/311/pages/academic-framework-future-skills) requirements have been met and clearly embedded within the curriculum.
* The course addresses at least two of the [United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs),](https://canvas.kingston.ac.uk/courses/311/pages/academic-framework-curriculum-design) not including SDG 4 ‘Quality Education’.
* The programme specification makes clear which are core, and which are option or free choice modules.
* All modules are presented in the format of the standard module descriptor template.
* The set of modules included in the course provide a coherent experience for students and as a whole deliver the stated course learning outcomes.
* There should usually be a demonstrable link between the course curriculum and current research in the relevant subject area.
* Assessment rules are clearly stated in module descriptors in the format of the standard template (general regulatory requirements should also be followed).
* The level of modules is clearly indicated and learning outcomes reflect the level.
* Module co-requisites and pre-requisites are clear, logical, and not over specified.
* Any variations from the Undergraduate or Postgraduate Regulations have been approved by the Regulatory Framework Committee (RFC) before the validation event.
* Any exemptions from the University’s Academic Framework have been approved by the Education Committee before the validation event.
* Requirements of professional bodies should be fully considered, and courses should not be approved unless the Faculty anticipates that necessary Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) approval will be gained.
* Although assurance is sought in the University’s initial planning approval for new courses that appropriate resources will be available to mount a new course, Faculties/panels should nonetheless check that appropriate human and physical resources are available at the time of validation.
* The programme specification demonstrates (via programme learning outcomes and the teaching, learning and assessment strategy) how the KU Graduate Attributes will be developed and assessed.
* The proposed course is consistent with University policies, procedures, and strategies (e.g. the Academic Framework, Widening Participation, Admissions, Fairness in Assessment, Access, Participation & Inclusion, etc.).
* Course teams have taken real steps to meet the University’s Equality Duty whilst maintaining academic standards and compliance with Data Protection and Health and Safety legislation. Teams are advised to refer to the [AF Handbook](https://canvas.kingston.ac.uk/courses/311/pages/the-academic-framework-home-page)when preparing for validations. In addition, advice can be sought from the LTEC, Student Services, the Access, Participation & Inclusion team, or the Sustainability team.

Note - QAE is responsible for checking the following:

* The course must be consistent with the new course idea forms, and any subsequent changes, as approved by the Portfolio Management Group (PMG).
* Any conditions set by the PMG relating to the proposal have been adequately addressed.
* If a revalidation, the course must be consistent with form A2c (proposal for the revalidation of an existing course), and any subsequent changes, as approved by the Quality Assurance Portfolio Change Committee (QAPCC).

### 1.2 - Additional criteria for panels validating new subjects

New courses should only be approved if there is clear evidence that the following requirements have been met:

* Adequate resources are available to support the new course (e.g., staff (academic, administrative, and technical), library and media, laboratories, placement arrangements etc.). In many cases course proposers may reasonably wish to build up resources over the life of a new course. Panels should consider how the provision of new resources as a course develops can be checked and monitored in their conditions and recommendations. Panels need to be assured that adequate resources are/will be available for the first year of operation.
* Staff development is demonstrable and ongoing to support the introduction of the new course.

### 1.3 - Additional criteria for panels validating collaborative provision

New courses of collaborative provision should only be approved if there is clear evidence that the following requirements have been met:

* Adequate liaison arrangements must be planned to assure the quality and standards of the course in the partner institution (including identification of responsible staff, student voice committees, external examining, assessment boards etc.) (See section B – Guidance BG (ii)).
* Joint staff development should be demonstrable and ongoing to foster a mutual understanding of the standards and quality of student experience required by the University and also to provide the partner with an understanding of the University’s procedures and general requirements.
* Adequate processes must be in place to ensure the accuracy and consistency of marketing material in relation to the course and collaboration*.*
* For collaborative provision not included in KU’s Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) return (refer to either Planning Office or QAE for further details) the default position is that students will **not** have access to Kingston University resources unless stated in the terms of the Institutional Agreement. Adequate arrangements should therefore be in place to support students in respect of access to library resources, including e-resources, and non-academic matters (e.g. pastoral support, careers advice etc.).
* [Future Skills](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/future-skills/undergraduate/) requirements have been met and clearly embedded within the curriculum (this applies to franchised collaborative provision). If the partner is not embedding Future Skills, the curriculum should clearly align to the Future Skills framework (this applies to validated provision only).

Note - QAE is responsible for checking the following:

* The course must be consistent with form A2b (proposal for the approval of a new collaborative partner or new provision to be delivered by a collaborative partner), as approved by the Quality Assurance Portfolio Change Committee (QAPCC).
* Any conditions set by the QAPCC relating to the proposal have been adequately addressed.

### 1.4 - Additional criteria for the validation of courses delivered via blended learning

New courses that fall into categories 2, 3 or 4 of the University’s blended learning typology (see Section C) should only be approved if there is clear evidence that the following requirements have been met:

* The level of digital literacy that students must possess to enrol on the course is clearly articulated.
* Any hardware requirements (over and above the University’s recommended specifications) or specialist software that students are required to purchase themselves is clearly stated.
* The course design has considered the expectations for students’ digital skills, and activities have been designed to support students to develop those capabilities.
* Adequate arrangements will be in place to assure the delivery of appropriate study materials to students.
* Adequate arrangements will be in place to prepare students to engage effectively with the course.
* Adequate arrangements will be in place to effectively support students (such as provision of formative and summative feedback and access to student services and personal tutoring).
* Adequate arrangements will be in place to provide opportunities for students to provide formal feedback to staff in relation to their academic and student experience.
* Adequate arrangements will be in place to ensure that the security of assessments is assured.

### 1.5 - Additional criteria for the approval of Higher or Degree Apprenticeships

New courses that either incorporate or lead to a higher or degree apprenticeship should only be approved if there is clear evidence that the following requirements have been met:

* The proposed programme, including the training provision, constitutes appropriate preparation to enable the apprentice to meet the relevant apprenticeship standard or occupational competence.
* There is sufficient assurance that the quality of learning opportunities for the degree apprenticeship is consistent with those of all other HE programmes delivered by the University.

### 1.6 - Issues for discussion

Panel members are invited to submit issues for discussion with the course team to the Validation Officer up to seven days prior to the event. If panel members choose to take up this opportunity, their feedback will be circulated to the panel and course team no later than 24 hours before the event.