

Kingston College

Quality Assurance - Higher Education



At Kingston College we are keen to maintain and improve upon a culture of excellence and quality in all our practices to ensure our students' experience is set at the highest standard. Our standards and quality code are set out below.

Quality Assurance - Higher Education

Kingston College is committed to a culture of quality assurance and uses the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education to support the quality assurance of policies, practices and processes. In addition, the College encourages a strong focus on continuous improvement and sharing of good practice.

QAA Review Report, Outcomes & Action Plan - April 2014

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has confirmed the quality and standards of provision at Kingston College following its review of the institution. A team of QAA reviewers visited Kingston College and judged that its academic standards, the quality and enhancement of its student learning opportunities and the quality of its information about learning opportunities all meet UK expectations. The review team comprised Professor Hastings McKenzie (Staffordshire University), Professor Anne Peat (University of Sheffield), Sarah Crook (student reviewer from Queen Mary, University of London), Professor Gary Wood (University College Birmingham) and Daphne Rowlands (independent reviewer).

- QAA report - Kingston College
- The College's action plan produced in response to the Key Findings in the Review report is available to download at the foot of this page.

Definition of the Quality Code

The College identifies the Quality Code as a set of documents published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) which guides all Higher Education Institutions in their approaches to learning and teaching and is intended to safeguard the quality and standards of courses and awards. The Quality Code sets out the Expectations that all providers of UK higher education are required to meet. The Quality Code has three Parts:

1. **Part A: Setting and maintaining threshold academic standards.**
2. **Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality.**
3. **Part C: Information about higher education provision.**

1 Part A: Setting and maintaining threshold academic standards:

Threshold academic standards are the minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic award. The Quality Code sets out Expectations which higher education providers are required to meet to ensure that academic standards are set and maintained.

2 Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality:

Academic quality is concerned with how well the learning opportunities made available to students enable them to achieve their award. The Quality Code sets out Expectations which higher education providers are required to meet to ensure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning resources are provided for students; that the learning opportunities provided are monitored; and that the provider considers how to improve them.

3. Part C: Information about higher education provision:

Public confidence in higher education relies on public understanding of the achievement represented by higher education qualifications. The Quality Code sets out an Expectation that higher education providers make available valid, reliable useful and accessible information about their provision.

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

The 'Framework for Higher Education Qualifications' is a published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ).

- The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland.

Subject Benchmark Statements -

A 'Subject Benchmark Statement' is a published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

Programme Specifications

'Programme Specifications' are published statements about the intended learning outcomes of a programmes of study, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

External Examiner Reports

External Examiner Reports and what the College does with these

All HE Programmes have External Examiners who are appointed by the Higher Education awarding body. The awarding body may be a University or Pearson's. These awarding bodies are expected to follow the procedures outlined in B7 of the UK Quality Code. UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Chapter B7: External examining

Reports from External Examiners are used to monitor academic standards and improve the quality of learning. Evidence from External Examiners' indicates that assessments at the College are:

'Sufficiently discriminating, up-to-date and appropriately varied across the range of programmes offered'

How the Awarding Bodies and the College process and use the Examiners' Reports

External Examiners are present at Programme Assessment Boards (PABs), together with the Programme Leader and representatives from the University (this is not currently the case, or a requirement for, the Pearson's assessment boards that are run for each programme). At the PAB, the programme leaders can contribute to discussions and hear comments from the External Examiner.

The External Examiner completes a report and sends this to the relevant Quality Assurance team of the HE provider. The report is then passed on to the relevant programme team at the University who will transmit this via the Liaison or Link person(s), to the relevant programme team at the College.

The College team might be involved in writing a draft response to the External Examiner's report; however, team drafts are discussed and finalised by the Link person at the University partner before this is sent to the External. The relevant University is responsible for the Academic Standards of the awards.

In all cases, an Action Plan in response to the External Examiner's comments is required. This is done through programme monitoring at the partner awarding body and via the HE QSARs and HE SED in the College's own self-assessment process.

In the case of Pearson's, the External Examiner reports are received via the Quality Nominee at the College and the Pearson's online database. Programme areas are informed when the report has been received. Responses are required in the form of action plans in the programme and school self-evaluation documents.

The Quality Learning and Academic Standards (QLAS) division at the College receives all reports and processes each report by logging both points over and above expected practice and point for improvement. Where points for improvement have been logged or where points have been raised in annual collaborative reports, QLAS follow these up to ensure that programmes have responded and implemented their action planning.

External Examiner Reports and the QAA

Universities and College are required to make External Examiners' reports available to students. Reports are available to student course representatives through the programme Board of Study for all university partners.

If you are a student at the College and would like to request a report to look at, you can do this by contacting the Quality and Learning Services (QLS) at heqls@kingston-college.ac.uk.

Where the report comes from a University partner, QLAS will pass the request on to the relevant partner.
