University Course Scrutiny Criteria

This document sets out the University Course Scrutiny Criteria which must be met to enable a course to be approved by the University. It also sets out the process within faculties for the scrutiny of the course by the Faculty Curriculum Approval Panel and confirmation of the final version by the Faculty to the University Curriculum Approval Panel.

Operation of the Faculty Curriculum Approval Panel (FCAP)
The Faculty Curriculum Approval Panel (FCAP) is a faculty's structure for reviewing courses and their routes (and major course changes) prior to submission of a final copy to the University Curriculum Approval Panel (FCAP). The FCAP serves to assure the Faculty (and the UCAP) that, as evidenced in the documents, the proposed course(s) will be of the expected standard of academic quality and will provide the expected student experience. The FCAP will adopt a holistic and coherent approach to reviewing a course and any routes. The work of the FCAP will depend on a robust curriculum design and development and work done at course team, department and school levels.

For the FCAP to be able to perform its function, these different levels are assumed to have performed their due functions. Therefore, the expectation is that the documents presented to the panel will have been through a thorough development and reading to ensure coherence and accuracy.

The FCAP will need to look at the following documents:
- Planning Stage 1 (PS1) and Planning Stage 2 (PS2) forms.
- Course document.
- Course specification.
- Module descriptors and specifications.
- External advisor report.
- PSRB relevant documents.

The FCAP will consider the documents provided utilising the criteria identified below and recommend a course for approval to the University Curriculum Approval Panel when it is satisfied fully that:
- The course design as detailed will ensure that discipline specific needs will be met;
- The course design as detailed will address Faculty, University and National and professional/PSRB standards, and these will be met when the course is delivered, including adherence to the University Regulation and Credit Framework;
- There is constructive alignment of the course level and module level outcomes and requirements to ensure that student experience will be part of a planned and deliberate process, leading to achievement of course outcomes;
- The course planning, as evidenced in the documents, is holistic, coherent, and likely to lead to effective teaching delivery and positive student outcomes. Resource and delivery implications are thought through and align to the planned delivery;

- The course administrative and statutory requirements (e.g. University systems setup, UCAS code, HeCoS etc) as approved by FPPE are in place;
- Areas of a new course that rely on other courses across the Faculty are effectively aligned;
- The documents are professionally presented, edited, accurate, free of errors and final clean copies.

Decision by the FCAP

The FCAP, at the conclusion of its task, will write a brief report providing justification for its decisions on specific highlighted areas. For example, academic merit and/or discipline specific reason/rationale or course specific imperatives which are important for understanding the approach in implementing the University policy/procedures. The FCAP report confirming that the course will meet stated criteria will be submitted to the Faculty Quality Committee prior to submission to the University Curriculum Approval Panel (UCAP).

Course Scrutiny Criteria

Areas	Criteria
Course management	
Administrative and statutory information	The required information is consistently captured across all the documents (includes calendar requirements – see below). Information such as UCAS codes, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements.
Course naming and level	Aligned to appropriate level of the FHEQ and University Academic Framework - consistently reflected across all the documents.
Links to the appropriate national standards and PSRBs where applicable	Provide correct links to: • National subject benchmark statements where applicable. • The relevant PSRB standards where applicable.
Academic Calendar	Clearly planned and aligned- the appropriate University calendar, number of weeks, assessment, and reassessment periods.
The course entry requirements	Fair and appropriate for the level (with respect to University and national expectations). Selection criteria clearly articulated – beyond the minimum tariff points, any other criteria to be considered for the planned enrolment capacity.
Course organisation	
Course introduction	The aim is concise and provides clear intentions of the course/what the course will provide to the students.
Alignment to the appropriate national standards and PSRBs where applicable	The course, as designed, clearly aligns to: • The national benchmark standards where applicable; • The relevant PSRB standards (where applicable) – embedded in the design and for a revised course, clearly mapped. External advisor's report is useful for evaluation.

Consultation with stakeholders – internal (other faculties, finance, planning, market research) and external	• Evidence of consultation feedback clearly used to shape course. • Evidence of external advisor's comments being used to support refining the course development. • Alignment with information already provided in PS1&2, the academic need for any deviations/changes clearly articulated.
Course (and any routes) structure	• The course, as structured, shows clear escalation in academic challenge (from year to year). • Any minimum numbers (of students) and module options - refer to the information in PS1 and PS2 – it is necessary in evaluating resource for learning and teaching to support students. • Clear rationale for pre-requisites and co-requisites. • Decolonisation of the curriculum is reflected and clearly explained (evidenced from external advisor and LTE). Clear articulation for course/discipline specific imperatives taken into consideration in explaining the decolonising the curricula.
Course (and any routes) Learning Outcomes (LOs)	• Clear, appropriate to the level and aligned to the rationale, purpose of the course. • The CCCU graduate attributes embedded into the LOs. • Clear and appropriately aligned to the relevant FHEQ level, standards and any relevant professional statutory regulatory bodies (PSRB). • LOs are supported by the external advisor. • The learning outcomes for all exit awards are clearly articulated (for a 3-year degree, these would be outcomes at the end of each year). For single or combined honours, the LOs clearly reflect the differences. • Route learning outcomes are clear and aligned to the route and course.
Modules	• Confirm the appropriateness of the modules to the Course (and any Route) – from the external advisor comments. • The aims are aligned to (feed from) the course (route) aims. • There is constructive alignment of module learning outcomes and the course (route) outcomes (LOs), showing how the Course LOs will be developed in the delivery of the modules. • The module structure shows clear development of central themes and knowledge, and how these will lead to the achievement of the course outcomes. • The module content is appropriate and will lead to the achievement of the course aims (evidence from the external advisor). • The module content includes evidence of drawing from the research expertise in the discipline (where appropriate).
Work-based Learning/Practice	• Clear arrangements for placements that align with University policy and any relevant PSRB standards. • Responsibility for placements and training/engagement with placement link tutor/mentor.

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Placements (where applicable)	• Clear outcomes for the placement and how these will be monitored and assessed. • Availability of year abroad/placements and whether optional.
Module specifications and student handbook	The constructive alignment of learning teaching delivery and assessment (also as detailed in the sections that follow).

Teaching delivery	
The learning, teaching and assessment strategy	As teaching delivery is at module level, evaluating teaching delivery should be coherent. How will the teaching delivery ensure the course learning outcomes (LOs) are delivered and met at module level? Consider: • A clear convincing reason/justification of the approach to teaching delivery, how the nine principles of the CCCU's Learning and Teaching Strategy, specifically inform and are applied in the course and modules. • How the teaching delivery is appropriately planned (what type of delivery, activities encouraging student engagement) for each module to ensure the module and course (route) LOs are developed in students, and how this is realistic for the selected calendar. • Justification for the choice of diverse teaching delivery methods that support the student profile. • How the teaching delivery proactively identifies and addresses the needs of a diverse student cohort • For online delivery, how synchronous/asynchronous learning are appropriate to the course, profile of students and align to the requirements. • An appropriate balance of academic directed learning, guided independent learning and independent learning at each level of study to prepare students for changes in the academic challenge of modules and the development of independent learning in students. • The total teaching activities hours align to the module credits – for example for a 20-credit module all activities are completed in an average of 200 hours (with 30 -50 hours for face-to-face or synchronous learning). Appropriateness of the selected calendar. • Teaching materials (bibliographies) are up to date – taking into consideration research and professional activity outputs (where appropriate). Provide a motivation, supported by a clear academic rationale/course specific imperative, where the implementation of policies and procedures are not immediately clear, however, the planned implementation definitely enhances the student engagement and experience.

Assessment and Feedback	
The assessment strategy and assessments	There should be alignment between the teaching delivery methods and assessment – ensuring that LOs are addressed through teaching and how the nine principles of the [CCCU's Learning and Teaching](#) Strategy, specifically inform and are applied to the course and modules. • A clear assessment strategy – a plan for assessment that aligns with the teaching delivery, course/modules and the LOs, and can clearly be offered in the specified calendar. • Rationale/justification (clear reason) for the selected assessment methods and how these align to the selected teaching delivery methods and the LOs. • The selected assessment methods are varied and are aligned to the achievement of course/module outcomes (LOs). • The selected assessment methods align with the minimum requirements of the Academic Framework, for example inclusion of a Dissertation or Individual Study of at least 20 credits. • Clear rationale is provided for any innovative assessment methods/procedures, specifically articulating how these enhance student learning, engagement and development of LOs. • Skills listed in the assessment activities feed from the outcomes and aims, ensuring learning outcomes are effectively assessed. • Formative assessment clearly embedded in module learning and teaching delivery, clearly designed summative assessment that also supports learning. • A clearly articulated process across the course for providing feedback to students to monitor learning. • Clear methods of assessment of work-based learning to ensure LOs are met. Provide a motivation, supported by a clear academic rationale/course specific imperative, where the implementation of policies and procedures are not immediately clear, however, the planned implementation will ensure that students effectively develop the LOs – for example adoption of students developing a portfolio of evidence of learning (instead of a laboratory report) as part of assessment.
Academic Support	
Course-specific student support	Course-specific student support mechanisms to ensure development of graduate outcomes and employability taking into consideration student profile. • How course level academic support such as Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT) are in place and will be utilised. • Specific support arrangements for digital or distant learning or part-time students. • A clear strategy with planned support to ensure the development of communities of learning and belonging and to create and enhance a positive learning community for students. • Specifically, how the course students will be signposted to University support services such as Health and Wellbeing.

	• Articulation of how the course will manage student expectations with respect to the student academic learning experience from registration to graduation. • Clear articulation of deliberate plans for academic monitoring and support to ensure progression.
Employability	• Clearly articulated activities to develop student employability. • How these employability activities will be monitored and enhanced. • How the employer/professional sector supports development of employability.
Student Voice	
Student voice/feedback	• Evidence of consultation with students to inform the course design. • Clear articulation of how student feedback (module evaluations, national surveys (NSS, PTES, UKES)) will be obtained and utilised to enhance the course (and ongoing course development) and student experience • Provide mechanisms/approaches for closing feedback loops - obtaining student voice/feedback, making changes to course and informing students of changes. • Student participation in decision -making on the course for example Boards of Studies, Student Voice Forums etc.
Learning Resources	
Resources for the course	Consider all the documents, to ensure alignment across all the documentation against what has been approved • Appropriate and effective consultation with other areas – library, IT, other faculties etc • Clarity on whether students need to provide their own resources. • Resources for placements/year abroad. Include any course specific requirements and how these are addressed.
Partnerships and PSRBs	
Collaborative arrangements	Where applicable, processes in place for management and monitoring.
PSRBs	See course organisation section. The course team ensure embedding of requirements at design stage or mapping.