

**CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY**  
**UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK**

**BACKGROUND PAPER THREE**

**UNIVERSITY ARRANGEMENTS TO SUPPORT THE UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC  
FRAMEWORK**

**Introduction**

- 3.1 The arrangements set out represent the provisions in December 2005 to support the introduction, implementation, development and control of the Undergraduate Academic Framework. The intention is to outline the salient aspects at the time when the Academic Framework was put forward for approval. Where possible, reference is made to University policies or departmental statements as a guide to existing arrangements and requirements.
- 3.2 As the University evolves, the processes and procedures, together with the departments and committees responsible for their operation, will change. Any subsequent development will take account of the need to support the Undergraduate Academic Framework, and associated Schemes and programmes.

**SELECTION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

- 3.3 The University Admissions and Recruitment Department is responsible for the administration of undergraduate selection and admissions processes. The arrangements for recruitment, selection and admission are set out in the University Admissions Policy<sup>1</sup>, the development of which was informed by the QAA Code of Practice<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.4 Applications for full-time programmes (both the Honours Degree and the Dip HE) are made through agencies such as UCAS (University and Colleges Admissions Service) and NMAS (Nursing and Midwifery Admissions Service). Applications for part-time programmes are made direct to the University.
- 3.5 The selection process for applicants is agreed between the Director of Admissions and Recruitment and the head of the academic department. In some cases, particularly for professional programmes, the University will interview applicants. The Director of Admissions and Recruitment, who is a senior member of staff, makes the final decision on any problematic

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<sup>1</sup> Admissions Policy June 2003 (<http://admissions-recruitment.cant.ac.uk/Extranet/policy.htm#1>)

<sup>2</sup> QAA Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education Section 10: Recruitment and admissions (September 2001) (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section10/default.asp>)

application and it is for the Director to exercise discretion whenever this is required, subject to arrangements for complaint<sup>3</sup>.

- 3.6 Eligible applicants and applicants to whom an offer of a place has been made are invited to Open Days at the University<sup>4</sup>. At the Open Days, applicants are given more details about their chosen programmes and the University. They also meet staff and students.
- 3.7 The International Office is the agency for the recruitment of overseas students to modules in undergraduate programmes that attract credit in the student's home institutions, together with award-bearing programmes taught by academic departments at undergraduate levels. The International Office also handles applications for EU students, but has a shared responsibility with the Admissions Office for those programmes in Education and Health that require an interview.
- 3.8 The overall objective of the selection procedures is to admit applicants who are suitable for their chosen programmes and who will thrive personally and academically in the University environment. All candidates are considered irrespective of their ethnic origin, class, gender, religious affiliation and physical disability. The University's Equal Opportunities Policy<sup>5</sup> and Race Equality Policy<sup>6</sup> embrace all existing and intending members of the University community.

## CREDIT TRANSFER AND EXEMPTION

- 3.9 The University has a well established Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) Structure in operation and all APCL and APEL claims will be assessed using standard University guidelines and procedures<sup>7</sup>. In order to claim credit transfer/ exemption from part of a degree programme, applicants will be required to submit evidence that meets the learning outcomes and level of the part of the programme to be exempted. The evidence may be in the form of a transcript from another higher education institution or, more rarely, a portfolio of work that meets the requirements of the module(s) to be exempted. Normally, credit transfer/exemption that is given for APCL or APEL cannot exceed 50% of the total of a degree or diploma and must not have been completed more than 5 years previously. For an honours degree, entry might be permitted to the third year provided the Level 2 credits are sufficiently similar to the University's provision.

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<sup>3</sup> General Information for Applicants (including complaints procedure) (<http://admissions-recruitment.cant.ac.uk/current/general.htm>)

<sup>4</sup> Open Days (<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/modules/open-days/index.asp>)

<sup>5</sup> Equal Opportunities Policy Statement (Approved by Governing Body 23 March 2004) (<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/college/equal-opportunities/documents/Equal%20Opportunities%20Policy.doc>)

<sup>6</sup> Race Equality Policy (March 2004) ([http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/college/word\\_docs/RaceEquality.doc](http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/college/word_docs/RaceEquality.doc))

<sup>7</sup> ASU Policy and Guidance for APCL and APEL ([http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/apl\\_apel/Policy\\_&Guidance\\_%20APEL\\_%202004-5.doc](http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/apl_apel/Policy_&Guidance_%20APEL_%202004-5.doc))

- 3.10 In full-time degree programmes, credit transfer/exemption is usually available only for full years of work (120 credits). The most common situation is where a student who has undertaken one or more years of a higher education programme in another institution seeks to gain credit exemption from Level One (120 credits) of a programme at the University.
- 3.11 Students seeking credit exemption from part of a programme apply to the Director of Admissions and Recruitment, who will assess the claim for general credit in consultation with relevant University officers. The claim is passed to Programme Directors to establish the relevancy of the evidence to the programme within which credit exemption is sought.

## **SUBJECT BENCHMARKS**

- 3.12 Together with the external examiner system, the use of subject benchmarks is the basis for uniformity of academic standards within the University and across the sector. The QAA (2000) regards subject benchmarks as a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of programmes in a specific subject<sup>8</sup>. They represent general expectations about the standards for the award of qualifications at a given level and articulate the attributes and capabilities that those possessing such qualifications should be able to demonstrate.
- 3.13 The University requires an explanation of how subject benchmarks have been addressed in the document, and this is to be included in the *Introduction and Rationale* for each programme validation. Where appropriate, programme aims and learning outcomes, in both the programme specification and the text of the document, are to be cross-referenced with appropriate benchmark statements.
- 3.14 All vocational health programmes must map their use of benchmarks. Elsewhere, Programme Directors are encouraged to use them selectively - to adopt those which apply to the design of their particular programme and to give reasons why others are not applicable or relevant (e.g. because the programme extends only to Level 2 or because the subject in question contributes to only part of a degree programme).
- 3.15 The FHEQ and subject benchmarks now include a requirement for key skills (which are called 'Graduate Skills' in the Academic Framework) to be included in the undergraduate syllabus.

## **LEARNING AND TEACHING HOURS**

- 3.16 The starting point is the notion that 40 hours is a reasonable working week. In terms of notional learning hours, 120 credits are attributed to the

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<sup>8</sup> QAA Honours degree benchmark statements  
(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/honours/default.asp>);  
QAA Benchmarking academic and practitioner standards in health care subjects  
(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/health/default.asp>);  
QAA Foundation Degree qualification benchmark  
(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/foundationDegree/benchmark/FDQB.asp>)

learning acquired at a particular level in a full time academic year of approximately 30 weeks. One full-time academic year involves 1200 hours of notional learning time; one full time week involves 40 hours of notional learning time. One credit is attributed to 10 hours of notional learning time at a specified level. For a 20-credit module, this gives 200 notional learning hours<sup>9</sup>. This time covers taught hours, guided learning, reading and production of assessments.

- 3.17 The academic staffing allocated to departments relates to the validated teaching hours and the number of students enrolled. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Dean of Faculty) must agree the proposed teaching hours and the resulting resource implications before the programme documentation goes to internal scrutiny. The global academic staff resources for the department are allocated to programmes within the department by the Head of Department in consultation with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Dean of Faculty). Support staffing in academic departments similarly relate to needs identified in the validation process<sup>10</sup>.
- 3.18 One particular feature that can cause an imbalance of workload from time to time is the occurrence of deadlines for the presentation of assessed coursework. Departments are to phase the assessments of different modules within the subject to avoid too many simultaneous demands, and assist students plan their work by early publication of assignments and of deadlines for the year in programme handbooks issued at the beginning of the year. In the case of the General Undergraduate Modular Scheme, the Management Committee will oversee the balance of assessment demands across the Scheme.

## ASSESSMENT

### Procedures

- 3.19 Assessment seeks to maintain standards of achievement by students in the context of established qualifications. It is regulated by programme validations and by the policies and procedures of the University. The former are directed towards the learning outcomes and the latter to the maintenance of standards, set down in regulations and conventions. The regulation of assessment has evolved through a continuous process of monitoring and self-evaluation over many years and the incorporation of external requirements and good practice.
- 3.20 Following discussions in University committees, and taking account of the QAA Code of Practice Sections 4, 5 and 6, the Academic Board approved an institutional Assessment Policy<sup>11</sup> to consolidate and reform practice,

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<sup>9</sup> General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes (<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GenInfoToSupt2004.doc>) Definitions

<sup>10</sup> General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes (<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GenInfoToSupt2004.doc>) Section 3.1

<sup>11</sup> Assessment Policy (<http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/Assessment/AssessmentPolicyDoc.doc>)

together with the series of accompanying Policies and Procedures on Examinations (PPE) 1 to 35<sup>12</sup>.

- 3.21 The Academic Board is responsible for the academic standards of all awards made by the University, but delegates to the faculties the responsibility for monitoring implementation of the Assessment Policy. Within the faculties, Faculty Quality Officers (FQOs) promote the implementation of the policy.
- 3.22 Oversight of the assessment process rests with the Academic Board, which has responsibility for the establishment, implementation and review of the Examination, Conventions, Policies and Procedures, and recommending to the Governing Body the approval of Examination Regulations. The assessment process is managed within this context by academic departments in accordance with the validated programmes.
- 3.23 The specific requirements for the assessment of each module are set out in the programme validation, and summarized in the Programme Specification. As part of the validation process, there is scrutiny of the proposed assessment in terms of the learning outcomes: the assessment process matches the performance of each candidate against these.
- 3.24 The assessment of a candidate's performance takes place within the specified assessment criteria and according to the specified methods published in advance. External examiners judge the effectiveness of the maintenance of the standards of the University's awards, the competence and impartiality of assessment, consistency in the treatment of individual candidates, and comparability within the sector.
- 3.25 The Academic Board ensures the University has in place straightforward and unambiguous rules for the conduct of assessment processes for all categories of candidate and all categories of award, and for the determination of appeals against assessment procedures.
- 3.26 The arrangements for assessment are the means for putting into operation the programme assessment strategy approved in the validation document. They include the establishment of an Examination Board<sup>13</sup> for each programme, whose Deputy Chair is the accounting officer for the assessment process of the programme.
- 3.27 The Deputy Chair of the Examination Board ensures the establishment of the arrangements for assessment in writing, based on the appropriate model approved by the Academic Standards Committee (ASC). It must contain all arrangements for marking, examination papers, the return of marks and other necessary academic and administrative procedures relating to personnel and procedures involved with assessment.

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<sup>12</sup> Policies and Procedures on Examinations (<http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/default.shtml>)

<sup>13</sup> PPE22 Function, Membership and Conduct of Boards of Examiners ([http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE\\_Docs/PPE22%20Boards%20of%20Examiners.doc](http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE_Docs/PPE22%20Boards%20of%20Examiners.doc))

## External examiners

- 3.28 The external examiner system, and conformity with subject benchmarks, form the principal means for ensuring comparability of standards across the HE sector. External examiner procedures are set out in the External Examiner's Handbook<sup>14</sup>.
- 3.29 The University revised its policy and procedures for the selection, appointment, role, and function of external examiners<sup>15</sup> to incorporate the latest QAA Code of Practice for External Examining. External examiners are required to be persons of appropriate experience and standing.
- 3.30 External examiners must sign their assent to all awards before the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic), on behalf of the Academic Board approves the list. Their reports are scrutinised both at faculty level and centrally. The programme team is required to make a formal response in the Programme Quality Monitoring and Enhancement Report (PQMER)<sup>16</sup>. That appropriate action has been taken is checked by the faculty and through the Assessment Sub-committee of the ASC. This sub-committee identifies issues of institution-wide interest, or those that may require action centrally, referring them to the appropriate committee or department. The Director of the Academic Standards Unit (ASU), on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, may also take action directly if a matter of particular concern should arise.
- 3.31 In general, the reports of external examiners reflect very positively on the standards achieved by students and the quality of assessment and, so far as it can be inferred, of teaching. They also speak well of the institution's systems for supporting them and informing them of requirements, and for the conduct of the examination process and boards. The University is confident the consistent judgement of external examiners confirms that standards are fully in line with those of the universities they know, that administration within the University is sound, and that the expertise and the processes required to maintain standards are solidly embedded.

## Assessment Methods

- 3.32 The Assessment Policy is supported by an Assessment Handbook<sup>17</sup>, which is designed to make available material intended to support and encourage the development and implementation of assessment strategies offering a wide range of assessment methods. In so doing, it reflects the University's commitment to providing students with a greater range of assessment, thus

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<sup>14</sup> External Examiners Handbook ([http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/EE\\_docs/ExternalExaminersHandbook2004.doc](http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/EE_docs/ExternalExaminersHandbook2004.doc))

<sup>15</sup> PPE24 Responsibilities of External Examiners ([http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE\\_Docs/PPE24%20Responsibilities%20of%20External%20Examiners.doc](http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE_Docs/PPE24%20Responsibilities%20of%20External%20Examiners.doc))

<sup>16</sup> PPE25 Responding to Reports of External Examiners ([http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE\\_Docs/PPE25%20Responding%20to%20Reports%20of%20Ext%20Examiners.doc](http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE_Docs/PPE25%20Responding%20to%20Reports%20of%20Ext%20Examiners.doc))

<sup>17</sup> Assessment Handbook (<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/Assessment/AssessmentHandbook2005.doc>)

enhancing their learning experience whilst assuring the quality of the University's awards. The Handbook provides a digest of the relevant University policies and procedures relating to assessment, along with guidance on the design and use of assessment methods and tools. The Handbook is linked to exemplars of assessment tools, which are models of the good practice described in the Handbook and for which the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit (LTEU) is responsible. The intention is that the creation of a bank of examples of good practice will encourage increased sharing of experience of the practicalities of planning and implementing assessment strategies.

3.33 The Academic Framework promotes a wide variety of methods in a wide range of disciplines with differing traditions and perspectives of assessment. The Academic Framework is flexible in the patterns and methods of assessment it allows, while providing a central set of rules exist to ensure uniformity and parity across the Structure. There is parity both in patterns of assessment in modules and in terms of assessment demand. Programme validations identify those methods that are suited to the subject matter, the assessment criteria and the learning outcomes.

3.34 In the marking requirements and arrangements described below, two types of assessment are distinguished:

- Timed written examinations require the candidate to produce time-constrained written answers to seen or unseen questions under formal examination conditions. All written examinations are subject to anonymous marking.
- Coursework includes a wide variety of assessment methods, including essays, projects, dissertations, reports, presentations, posters, recitals, exhibitions, laboratory notes, multiple choice papers, on-line assessments, and seminar papers, outlined in the Assessment Handbook. Coursework assignments will usually incorporate Graduate Skills included in the assessment.

3.35 In the sections that follow, these will be referred to more briefly as *examination* and *coursework* respectively.

### Marking Procedures

3.36 The University arrangements for marking are set out in the Policies and Procedures for Examinations PPE28 Marking Procedures<sup>18</sup>. The procedures were revised in July 2008. The emphasis is on second marking, where the second examiner is responsible for reviewing the assessment process for each module. The second examiner is not responsible for providing any feedback to students.

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<sup>18</sup> PPE28 Marking Procedures (<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/quality-and-standards-office/External%20Examiners/PPE/PPE28%20Marking%20Procedures.docx>)

- 3.37 Second marking includes all fails and a sample of the other marks or grades spread across the range. The sample consists of either 10 pieces of work for each assessment or 20% of the submitted pieces of work for each assessment, whichever is the greater. The same procedures apply for course and for examinations.
- 3.38 Double marking is the process whereby each assessment is marked separately by two members of the Board of Examiners. Double marking applies to all assessments submitted by all students. Double marking may apply to a single module or to a programme as a whole.
- 3.39 Double marking is required only in the following circumstances
- 3.39.1 Where the second marking indicates significant inconsistencies in the marking, systemic deviations from the marking criteria or inappropriate feedback to students.
- 3.39.2 Where there is an individualised piece of work, including, but not restricted to, an independent study, dissertation, open module assessment, performance and exhibition,
- 3.39.3 Where, in advance of the commencement of the assessment process, the Board of Examiners adopts double marking as a policy decision.
- 3.39.4 Where, because of a requirement of an external regulatory body, the programme validation imposes double marking and binds the Board of Examiners to adopt the practice as a policy decision.
- 3.39.5 Where the Academic Board, on the advice of the Quality and Standards Committee, imposes double marking as a specific requirement for an individual programme or a general requirement for a category of programme.

### Regulations and Conventions

- 3.40 All programmes are governed by the General Regulations for Bachelors Degrees and any Special Regulations for the programme approved by the Academic Board and the Governing Body of the University, together with the Conventions for the Degree of Bachelor and for Diplomas and Certificates at Undergraduate Level, and any Additional Conventions for a particular programme.
- 3.41 The Assessment Policy sets out the division between Regulations and Conventions, which represents the working practice of the University<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Assessment Policy Section 7 (<http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/Assessment/AssessmentPolicyDoc.doc>)



## Regulations

3.42 The Regulations essentially set out the structure for programmes. The General Regulations address matters such as:

- conditions of entry to a programme ('admission')
- the study required in terms of the period of time and level to qualify for an award
- conditions for progression, and the options where students fail to meet those conditions
- the range of recommendations open to a Board of Examiners
- the power to award certificates, diplomas or degrees (including aegrotat awards)
- the action required when a candidate submits concessionary evidence
- the grounds for academic appeals
- the power of the Academic Board to delegate responsibility and dispense a candidate from the regulations

3.43 In addition, there is provision for Special Regulations to modify the General Regulations, usually relating to:

- entry requirements (including APEL and APCL)
- credit exemption
- periods of study and programme details

## Conventions

3.44 The Conventions relate to practical matters of programme and examination board administration. The General Conventions include:

- change of degree or subject
- requirements for passing from one level of the programme to another, and the options for those candidates who do not meet the requirements
- the procedures for the award of a class of degree
- the provision of exit awards

3.45 The Additional Conventions set out requirements for particular programmes. Such requirements vary, and include matters such as:

- weighting of marks for particular parts of the programme
- arrangements for the assessment of specific parts of the programme, including practical placements
- requirements for successfully completing a placement, and the options available when a candidate fails to meet those requirements
- penalties for non-attendance
- requirement to pass all courses or modules
- requirements relating to the interview of candidates
- extent of resitting permitted, where this differs from the agreed conventions
- requirement to meet the standards set by an outside body
- arrangements for the averaging of marks across modules

- arrangements for the development of a portfolio
  - prohibiting the award of a distinction
- 3.46 The Assessment Policy seeks to reduce this variation, and incorporates the development of Special Regulations and Additional Conventions into the validation process.
- 3.47 The development of the Undergraduate Academic Framework has been accompanied by a review of the Regulations and Conventions. The proposal, which will be considered by the appropriate University Committees, including the Governing Body, is that there should be a simplification of the regulatory Structure for all awards of the University. This would be achieved as follows:
- 3.47.1 Regulations would have a reduced role in governing programmes.
  - 3.47.2 The Academic Board will report to the Governing Body on changes in Conventions. The Academic Board will undertake a Risk Analysis of significant changes to Conventions, and report the results to the Governing Body.
  - 3.47.3 The arrangement set out in the Assessment Policy of the presumption that General Conventions will govern the assessment and award process for all programmes should continue. Variations would continue to be identified through the validation process.
  - 3.47.4 Where there is a legitimate need for modifications to the General Conventions, these should take the form of Schedules to the General Conventions. The Schedules of variations would relate to matters such as:
    - special admission requirements,
    - credit exemption,
    - periods of study,
    - practical placements,
    - the requirement to pass all courses, and
    - requirements of outside professional bodies.
  - 3.47.5 The Schedules would be in tabular form, to allow ease of comparison between programmes and scrutiny of variations. There would be a presumption there would be monitoring of such variations.
  - 3.47.6 The Schedules would be subject to annual review to ensure they remained current.
  - 3.47.7 The Programme Assessment Strategy, which forms part of the Validation Document, would address matters relating to routine programme and examination administration. The Programme Assessment Strategy forms the primary means of communicating

the Structure for assessment to students, internal examiners and external examiners.

3.47.8 In revising the current Regulations and Conventions, there should be a review of the appropriateness of mechanisms for documenting processes. Where appropriate, the process should be included in the Policies and Procedures relating to conduct of Examinations (PPEs), which also have the approval of the Academic Board.

3.47.9 The guiding principle should be the enhancement of the transparency of the examination process for examiners and candidates, through the most straightforward route that preserves the integrity of the assessment and award arrangements.

3.48 The modifications to the Regulations and Conventions described above would have the broad effect of bringing about a higher degree of consistency and equity to the process of determining the outcomes of students' results.

3.49 In the event the University decides not to proceed with the rationalisation described above, the existing arrangements for Regulations and Conventions would continue.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE**

3.50 The University is committed to the highest standards of:

- academic guidance
- personal support, and
- the representation of students.

3.51 Students are provided with support and guidance principally through the Personal Tutor system, the Student Support Service, the Student Study Support Unit, the Careers and Student Development Service. The arrangements are set out in the appropriate student handbooks. The quality of support provision is monitored by the Student Services Committee through an annual report from each of the student service areas, which includes systematic collection of feedback from users of services and the presentation of an annual report to a panel of the Student Services Committee.

3.52 The general arrangements for the provision of student support and guidance are described in 'General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes'<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes Section 2 (<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GenInfoToSupt2004.doc>)

## Central Support Departments

- 3.53 Central departments, whose managers report directly to a senior member of the University, are responsible for the provision of support services to support the Academic Framework. These departments use service level statements or business plans as a way of stimulating creative thought and promoting inter-departmental communication and collaboration.<sup>21</sup> They are each subject to Internal Review and other quality monitoring procedures.

## Pastoral Support and Guidance

- 3.54 Overall responsibility for this area rests with the Director of Student Services, who reports to the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic).
- 3.55 The University operates a Personal Tutoring system such that academic staff carry some pastoral responsibilities within their role as Personal Tutor. Each student is allocated a Personal Tutor, from within their teaching department(s), who is someone to whom they can turn for help and guidance on academic and pastoral matters. Personal Tutors may refer students to the central support services if this is appropriate.
- 3.56 Central University Student Support Services allow access to a wide range of specialist, support provision. In addition to the Director of Student Services, students are currently able to access the Student Support Services reception, accredited student counsellors, a student adviser (finance and childcare), a disability adviser, the Chaplaincy, Accommodation and Housing Welfare Services and International Student Support Services.
- 3.57 These specialist sources of support link with the tutorial provision in the teaching departments and with other central services such as the Registry and Careers and Student Development.

## Student Study Support Unit (SSSU)

- 3.58 The Director of Student Services oversees the Student Study Support Unit (SSSU)<sup>22</sup>, which provides academic support to students outside their teaching departments. Students may refer themselves to the SSSU or they may be recommended by a course or module tutor or Personal Tutor to seek support. Support is provided by a variety of means that include one-to-one tutorials with a Language or Study Skills Tutor, access to paper- or Web-based resources such as Writing/Study Guidance Notes, and the provision of regular workshops that address aspects of studying at university level.
- 3.59 The 'Student Champion' Scheme<sup>23</sup> has been set up to make support available during the summer vacation period for students who are facing September assessments. It provides a source of information, guidance,

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<sup>21</sup> Service Level Statements - Support Departments

(<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/extranet/sls/index.htm>)

<sup>22</sup> Student Study Support Unit (<http://student-support.canterbury.ac.uk/sssu/>)

<sup>23</sup> Student Champion (<http://student-support.canterbury.ac.uk/champion/index.htm>)

encouragement and practical advice to support students preparing to (re)sit September examinations. It is essentially a telephone service, operated by the SSSU. It is available to all students of the University irrespective of their campus location.

### Student Progress File

- 3.60 The student progress file acts as a developmental record of the individual student's response to the programme. Each file will include at least these two elements:
- A transcript summarising the student's learning and achievement in relation to the programme(s)
  - A PDP Structure within which the student can monitor, build and reflect upon personal development.
- 3.61 Responsibility for compiling and organising the PDP file will lie with the student. Personal Tutors will support students' progress files and the Careers and Student Development Service will administer the system. For Combined Honours students an identified tutor from each discipline area will be allocated. Both tutors will have access to their student's PDP.
- 3.62 Students will be required to produce their final progress file for signing off by their Personal Tutor during the Trinity Term of their final year. The tutor with responsibility for the student's reference will be provided with appropriate statements to assist in its writing. Students will be encouraged to use their PDP to engage in a dialogue with the Student Guidance and Development Service.
- 3.63 At least at Level One, tutors with responsibility for PDP are allocated time (per student) to engage in the process.
- 3.64 Although the evidence to inform PDP will come from assessment processes and other feedback from the programme, the PDP is not assessed as a separate entity.

### Careers and Student Development

- 3.65 The University places an emphasis on preparing students for employment and the world beyond the University. One of the ways it seeks to do this is by emphasising the importance of 'skills' to students and in developing these through the curriculum. Developing these skills should not only assist with employability but also help students with their academic studies.
- 3.66 In line with the professional/vocational nature of much of its curriculum, the University also places an emphasis on career development skills as a means of encouraging students to start thinking about and planning for the future life beyond the University at an early stage in their studies.

3.67 The work of the Careers and Student Development Service has been established in line with the QAA Code of Practice for Career Education Information and Guidance<sup>24</sup> and for Placement Activity<sup>25</sup>. It also conforms to the National Guidance Standards.

3.68 All students covered by the Academic Framework are informed of the range of services in the Careers and Student Development Service at induction and exit events with written information and group presentations. They are encouraged to make full use of the Careers Advisory Service<sup>26</sup>, Job Shop<sup>27</sup>, CV Service<sup>28</sup>, student development information, the central reference system<sup>29</sup>, and sport and recreational opportunities including the St Georges Fitness Centre<sup>30</sup>. Individual confidential guidance, both personal and computerised, is available throughout and after graduation.

3.69 Careers and Student Development is currently responsible for the following:

a) Final Year Activities

During their final year, students can access general and subject specific workshops relating to job hunting and further study. Information is provided about national recruitment fairs in the region. A professional curriculum vitae service is available.

b) Support for Graduate Skills Development

The Service provides a variety of information, modules and vacancy bulletins to enable students to develop particular Graduate Skills relevant to their modules of study and future careers. Students may access these from the start of their studies and throughout by self-referral or by referral by staff.

c) Administration of the PDP Files

All students in the Academic Framework are encouraged to maintain a progress file to help them improve their learning and personal development. Careers and Student Development administer these in liaison with Personal Tutors and the Registry.

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<sup>24</sup> Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education Section 8: Career education, information and guidance (January 2001)

(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section8/default.asp>)

<sup>25</sup> Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education Section 9: Placement learning (July 2001)

(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section9/default.asp>)

<sup>26</sup> Careers and Student Development (<http://careers-student-development.canterbury.ac.uk/our%20services/ourservices.htm>)

<sup>27</sup> JobShop (<http://careers.canterbury.ac.uk/newjobshop/jobshopindex2.htm>)

<sup>28</sup> [CVs, Covering Letters](#) & Interview advice

([http://careers.canterbury.ac.uk/how\\_to/how\\_to\\_new.htm](http://careers.canterbury.ac.uk/how_to/how_to_new.htm))

<sup>29</sup> Reference Guidelines

(<http://careers.canterbury.ac.uk/referenceguidelines/refguidelines.htm>)

<sup>30</sup> St Georges Fitness Centre (<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/departments/fitness/>)

## Academic Tutorial Support

- 3.70 Each student is allocated a Personal Tutor from within the teaching department(s)<sup>31</sup>. The role of the Personal Tutor is to provide guidance on academic and pastoral matters and to support the student in the development of the PDP file. Normally, the student has the same Personal Tutor for the duration of the programme. Where there is a good reason, it is possible for a student to request a change of Personal Tutor through the Director of Student Services.
- 3.71 For students following Single Honours programmes, the department responsible for the programme will normally provide the Personal Tutor. For students following programmes in two subjects, each student is normally provided with a Personal Tutor from one (not both) of the subject departments.
- 3.72 Personal Tutors of students studying two subjects have a particular role in supporting them to manage their work and achieve all learning outcomes in both subjects. In order to do this the Personal Tutor will monitor PDP files and liaise with Programme Directors.

## Student Handbooks

- 3.73 All students receive the University Student Handbook<sup>32</sup>, which gives general information about the University and its services. Students also receive the Information Services Handbook<sup>33</sup>. Student Handbooks are also available online.
- 3.74 Students will receive an Academic Framework Handbook at the start of the programme that will provide an overview of the Academic Framework as a whole, how module results contribute to the degree class, procedures for change of module, and arrangements for appeals.

## Student Feedback

- 3.75 Feedback from students is an important part of the quality management processes across the University. All programmes monitor student perceptions annually to inform their provision. Departments are required to seek feedback from students on the quality of the learning experience both termly (Staff Student Liaison forum) and at the end of sessions. They respond to this feedback and report within the annual Programme Quality Monitoring and Enhancement Report (PQMER). Outcomes are communicated to students in a variety of appropriate ways, e.g. in teaching, through specially arranged sessions, and Staff Student Liaison meetings.

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<sup>31</sup> Personal Tutoring ([http://student-support.canterbury.ac.uk/staff/p\\_tutoring/guidelines.htm](http://student-support.canterbury.ac.uk/staff/p_tutoring/guidelines.htm))

<sup>32</sup> Student Handbook (<http://student-support.canterbury.ac.uk/handbook/Handbook%202004.htm>)

<sup>33</sup> Information Services Handbook (<http://information-services.cant.ac.uk/introduction/introduction.htm>)

3.76 Since 1995, student feedback on the quality of the student experience has been sought through the University's triennial Student Satisfaction Survey.<sup>34</sup> This involves the use of a questionnaire to probe levels of satisfaction with various aspects of student experience, including:

- admissions, induction and registration
- accommodation and catering
- teaching and learning
- student support including counselling, welfare and spiritual support
- careers information, advice and guidance
- student development - opportunities for sports, recreation and volunteering
- equal opportunities - support for disabled, black and other minority groups

3.77 The 2004 survey involved a larger (17.3%) sample and the report shows high levels of satisfaction, with three quarters of students being 'very satisfied' with the quality of teaching and over 80% saying they would recommend their programme to a friend. Areas of dissatisfaction are also recorded, and departments are committed to take action on these.

### Student Representation at Departmental and Institutional Level

3.78 The commitment of the University to student representation is documented in its Student Charter<sup>35</sup>. One of the aims of this Charter is to ensure student participation in the University's decision-making process, and there is a requirement to:

- provide opportunities (and encouragement) for students to participate in the work of its Committees
- assist, through the Student Union, with the training of students who serve on these Committees

3.79 In return, students are expected to:

- be aware of the procedures for student representation on University committees
- consider their own potential involvement in such committees
- support and inform those students who represent them on such committees

3.80 At departmental level, there is a healthy variety of practice to ensure student representation in communication and decision-making. Two sorts of committee provide such opportunities: Staff-Student Liaison and Programme Management, although the relative importance of each is determined by departmental practice. The outcomes of student representation are reported back to students and relevant staff through a

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<sup>34</sup> Student Satisfaction Survey Report 2004 ([http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/student\\_survey/StudentExperienceFinalReport04.doc](http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/student_survey/StudentExperienceFinalReport04.doc))

<sup>35</sup> Student Charter (<http://student-support.cant.ac.uk/students/charter/index.htm>)



number of channels, including relevant student groups, departmental notice boards, and web sites. Records of such meetings must be available for scrutiny as part of the annual monitoring of programmes through the PQMERs.

- 3.81 Student representation at the level of the University includes representation on the Academic Board, and the Governing Body where the President of the Student Union is a Student Governor.
- 3.82 A Student Forum provides an opportunity for student representatives to raise issues significant to the whole University, beyond departmental level. It meets twice a year, is chaired by a member of the senior management team and formal minutes kept. A number of other, less formal, regular meetings take place that allow student representatives to contribute to specific issues.

### International Students

- 3.83 The University's mission clearly states the importance of the international dimension. The International Office<sup>36</sup> promotes international activities. The first scholarships of £3000 tuition fee reduction were awarded to international students for the academic year 2003-2004. On campus, the International Society and International Volunteers Scheme are active and successful.
- 3.84 The teaching department supports academically international students on award bearing modules and programmes. In addition, international students receive pastoral support through the International Office and Student Services.
- 3.85 There is close liaison between the International Office and various official bodies, for instance HM Immigration concerning visas, Kent Police regarding police registration, and the British Banking Association with regard to information on opening bank accounts. The University acts on advice provided by bodies such as the British Council and UKCOSA, to build upon good practice within the sector.

### RESOURCES

- 3.86 In view of its size and diversity, the resources required to support the Academic Framework are very great. These resources can be divided for the purposes of description into University resources and departmentally based resources. Further details on the University resources are in *General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes*<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> International Office (<http://international.canterbury.ac.uk/>)

<sup>37</sup> General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes Section 3 (<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GenInfoToSupt2004.doc>)

## Library Services

3.87 Library Services<sup>38</sup>, which is responsible for Library and Bookshop provision, is committed to support the mission and key priorities of the University by providing innovative, practical and responsive library services that support the learning, teaching and research needs of all students and staff. It reports to the Information Services Committee. The Annual Operational and Development Plan is monitored through the committee and a Service Level Statement is published through the University's Intranet.

## Computing Services

3.88 The Department of Computing Services<sup>39</sup> is a fully centralised resource, providing regulated and standardised services throughout the University; only in special cases is ICT support provided from within individual support or academic departments. The Computing Services Department is responsible for the provision and support for all IT networks, services and equipment at all campuses. It is large and functionally organised in order to achieve an integrated, value-for-money service.

3.89 As student expectations grow, it is recognised that continual improvements to the quality, quantity and diversity of provision are necessary. This is particularly true on the Canterbury campus, where space is restricted and changes are required due to growth and development. A major review of the provision and support for Learning and Information Services is underway, which will inform the way forward for Learning and Teaching support as well as the Information Strategy and Information Systems Strategy for the medium to long term.

## Audio Visual Services

3.90 Audio Visual Services<sup>40</sup>, which is part of Computing Services, provides a service for the maintenance and installation of teaching equipment. This department develops and supports the effective and efficient use of audio visual and information technology to provide a comprehensive support service for teaching activities throughout the University.

3.91 Lecture theatres and a number of other teaching rooms are equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual technology to enhance course delivery and the learning experience. All teaching rooms have audio-visual facilities, and over half have digital equipment with data projection facilities. The University has funded a rolling programme for the installation of this technology, and the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit (LTEU) provides training for academic staff in the use of the new facilities.

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<sup>38</sup> Library Services (<http://library.canterbury.ac.uk/>)

<sup>39</sup> Computing Services (<http://computing-services.canterbury.ac.uk/>)

<sup>40</sup> Audio Visual Services (<http://audio-visual.canterbury.ac.uk/>)

## Virtual Learning Environment

3.92 Among the particular responsibilities of LTEU is the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)<sup>41</sup>, which was introduced in 2001. This has rapidly become a major resource in the support of learning and teaching. Academic staff are trained in course development using this tool and can explore additional opportunities offered by the system to enhance learning and teaching strategies. LTEU supports the development of VLE practice through learning technologists. The VLE'S functionality and versatility allows academic staff to use it in innovative ways in their teaching. The last student satisfaction survey, March 2004,<sup>42</sup> showed an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards Blackboard as a learning resource, and it became clear that students' use of the VLE was continuous throughout the academic year.

## Departmental Resources

3.93 Subject departments also provide resources to support students in their subject programmes. For instance, the English Department houses an audio-visual resource centre, the Department of Media has three studios, several editing suites, and a film dubbing theatre, and the Faculty of Health and Social Care has substantial resources devoted to the support of programmes within the Faculty. These examples illustrate the diversity of resources within departments. Details of the departmentally based resources are described in the programme validation.

## QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

### Principles of Quality Management

3.94 The following principles form the basis for the University's quality assurance procedures.<sup>43</sup>

3.95 Quality assurance is a shared activity, owned and carried out at the closest possible point to the process of learning and teaching. It is a professional responsibility rather than simply a management function. Although heads of department, the deans and central agencies of the University monitor it, all academic staff are involved in the achievement and maintenance of standards and the enhancement of quality.

- Academic quality assurance is a holistic process of review, validation, evaluation and revalidation: a dynamic cycle generating continuous improvement in the design and delivery of programmes. It involves responsive action based on critical, confident self-appraisal.

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<sup>41</sup> Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (<http://lteu.canterbury.ac.uk/blackboard/>)

<sup>42</sup> ASU (2004) Report of the Student Satisfaction Survey

<sup>43</sup> There is a compendium of all quality management information in the form of a Quality Information File (QUIF), also available electronically (<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/college/audit/qualInfFile.html>).

- The University's internal quality assurance mechanisms operate, where relevant, in conjunction with professional bodies and take account of the requirements of external quality agencies such as QAA. At the same time, there is the promotion of autonomy in learning and teaching, and recognition of the need to be open to experimentation and change.

### Arrangements for Quality Management

3.96 The Academic Board holds the academic responsibility for the Academic Framework. However, the Academic Standards Committee (ASC)<sup>44</sup> oversees the operation of quality management in the University as a responsibility delegated by the Academic Board. ASC is responsible to the Academic Board for developing and exercising oversight of the policies, principles and procedures needed to maintain and enhance the quality and standards of the University's academic work.

3.97 Responsibility for the management of quality assurance responsibilities is delegated to the faculties under the leadership of the Faculty Quality Officers (FQOs), who are responsible to the Pro-Vice Chancellors (Deans of Faculty). The ASU monitors Quality management processes.

### Programme Quality Monitoring

3.98 The programmes within the Academic Framework follow the procedures for quality management described in section 5 of *General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes*<sup>45</sup>.

3.99 Once approved and implemented, a programme is subject to annual monitoring and review. This process is managed at faculty level in collaboration with the ASU<sup>46</sup>. All programmes are required to produce an annual Programme Quality Monitoring and Enhancement Report (PQMER). The PQMER Handbook<sup>47</sup> sets out the procedures for student evaluations, and ASU offers an analysis service for departments that use its evaluation pro-forma. Faculty Quality Monitoring Committees (FQMCs) also report to ASC where assurance of the procedure lies. The PQMER process is subject to annual appraisal by the Quality Management and Enhancement Officer<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Academic Standards Committee (<http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/committee/default.shtml>)

<sup>45</sup> General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes (<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GenInfoToSupt2004.doc>)

<sup>46</sup> Programme Quality Monitoring & Enhancement Report (PQMER) Process ([http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/programme\\_quality/default.shtml](http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/programme_quality/default.shtml))

<sup>47</sup> Programme Quality Monitoring & Enhancement Handbook ([http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/programme\\_quality/PQMR/Handbook2004v3.doc](http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/programme_quality/PQMR/Handbook2004v3.doc))

<sup>48</sup> Summation Report on Programme Quality Monitoring & Enhancement Process ([http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/programme\\_quality/PQMR/PQMRSummationReport.doc](http://academic-standards-unit.canterbury.ac.uk/programme_quality/PQMR/PQMRSummationReport.doc))

## Internal Review

- 3.100 A further element was added to the quality assurance arrangements by the implementation of a cycle of Internal Reviews of all departments, both academic and support, in 2002<sup>49</sup>.
- 3.101 Internal Review provides a means for departmental groups to reflect on the management and quality of their provision and the achievement of their published statements of purpose; and for the University to audit the implementation of the policies and strategies<sup>50</sup> for achieving its mission. Departments prepare evaluative statements and meet over two days with panels of peers and an external assessor, chaired by an SMT member.

## Appraisal by Professional and Statutory Bodies

- 3.102 Accreditations by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies have been made for 27 programmes in health and social work. The faculty enjoys a good reputation for safeguarding standards in both pre-qualifying education and continuing professional development. In addition, all curriculum planning is undertaken in conjunction with partners from practice, and a recent development is the inclusion of health and social care service users in both the design and delivery of programmes.

## Boards of Examiners

- 3.103 Boards of Examiners derive their authority from, and are responsible to, the Academic Board. They are responsible for ensuring the validated assessment procedures are followed and standards are consistent and appropriate.
- 3.104 Each Programme Boards of Examiners has at least one External Examiner as a member. There are special arrangements where a number of programmes come together in a Scheme Board which, under the Undergraduate Academic Framework, will be known as a Scheme Board.
- 3.105 The Academic Board establishes the composition of Subject Boards of Examiners and their responsibilities<sup>51</sup>, together with the arrangement for selection of External Examiners<sup>52</sup> and the mechanisms for addressing the content of their reports<sup>53</sup>. Reports from external examiners to the Vice Chancellor are also part of the evaluation procedure.

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<sup>49</sup> Internal Review at Canterbury Christ Church University

([http://quality.canterbury.ac.uk/Extranet/Internal\\_Review\\_Policy\\_2004-2005.doc](http://quality.canterbury.ac.uk/Extranet/Internal_Review_Policy_2004-2005.doc))

<sup>50</sup> Guidelines for Completing a Departmental Evaluative Profile for Use in an Internal Review  
(<http://quality.canterbury.ac.uk/Extranet/DEPGUIDELINES2004-2005.doc>)

<sup>51</sup> General Information to Support Documents Submitted for Validation/Revalidation of Programmes (<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GenInfoToSupt2004.doc>) Section 5

<sup>52</sup> PPE24 Responsibilities of External Examiners  
([http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE\\_Docs/PPE24%20Responsibilities%20of%20External%20Examiners.doc](http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE_Docs/PPE24%20Responsibilities%20of%20External%20Examiners.doc))

<sup>53</sup> PPE25 Responding to Reports of External Examiners  
([http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE\\_Docs/PPE25%20Responding%20to%20Reports%20of%20Ext%20Examiners.doc](http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/examining/PPE_Docs/PPE25%20Responding%20to%20Reports%20of%20Ext%20Examiners.doc))

## Proposals for Modifications to Programmes

- 3.106 Proposals for the modification of a programme are submitted for approval in advance of their proposed introduction, together with the appropriate information, and including the rationale and resource implications for the modification<sup>54</sup>.
- 3.107 Such modifications may include amendments to existing modules or their assessment, the addition or substitution of new modules, and the identification of new, named, pathways within a programme that may combine existing and new modules.
- 3.108 An endorsement sheet quantifying a range of resource issues, signed by the appropriate University officers, has to accompany all proposals. Proposals do not progress to the final stage if there are indications that appropriate resources are not available<sup>55</sup>.
- 3.109 New modules for inclusion in a programme must meet the same criteria as existing modules in the programme, e.g. rationale, duration and assessment.

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<sup>54</sup> Guidance for an Outline Proposal for a Modification to a Validated Programme  
([http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GUID\\_FOR\\_OUTLINE\\_PROP\\_FOR\\_A\\_MOD\\_TO\\_VALPROG.doc](http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/GUID_FOR_OUTLINE_PROP_FOR_A_MOD_TO_VALPROG.doc))

<sup>55</sup> Template for Writing an Outline Proposal for Modification for an existing programme  
(<http://asu.canterbury.ac.uk/validation/Template%20for%20Writing%20an%20Outline%20Proposal%20for%20Modification%20for%20an%20existing%20programe.doc>)