

**CAP Guidance 1: Standard Criteria for Approval of all Provision**

There are a range of external and internal reference points that must be taken into account in the design and development of any University of Worcester course. In particular the course must have taken account of the [OfS sector recognised standards](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/53821cbf-5779-4380-bf2a-aa8f5c53ecd4/sector-recognised-standards.pdf) and the [OfS conditions of registration related to quality and standards](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/quality-and-standards/how-we-regulate-quality-and-standards/), [the UK Quality Code for Higher Education](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code) published by the QAA, and the University’s [Curriculum Design Policy](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/CurriculumDesignPolicy.pdf).

There are a range of further national reference points published by the QAA, including [subject benchmark statements](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements), or by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies that are relevant to specific courses or course types; these will be discussed in the preliminary course approval meeting.

The standard criteria set out below have been informed by the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education:

Design principles

1. Is there a clear rationale and target market for the course?
2. Has there been appropriate market research and consultation with potential ‘stakeholders’ and employers to inform the design of the course?
3. Have issues of demand, recruitment, admissions and career/employment opportunities for students been addressed?
4. Does the course design take account of student employability, inclusion, internationalisation and sustainability, as well as research informed teaching (see UW [Curriculum Design Policy](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/CurriculumDesignPolicy.pdf) and associated guidance document)?
5. Has appropriate attention been given to the setting of threshold standards, and where appropriate the requirements of PSRB?

Academic Level

1. Has the level of the course been informed by the appropriate benchmarks to establish the threshold standards?
2. Is the level of the intended learning outcomes for the course and for any named stages/exit awards in the course clearly defined and benchmarked to the sector recognised standards/FHEQ and other level descriptors? (A level is an indicator of the relative demand, complexity, depth of study and learner autonomy involved in a course. Various systems are currently in use to identify levels, including descriptors indicating the intellectual and skill attainment expected of students). The [University grade descriptors](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/GenericGradeDescriptors.pdf) are helpful in this respect.
3. Is the location of the course in terms of level clearly specified in the programme specification?

Progression

1. Does the curriculum promote progression so that the demands on the learner in intellectual challenge, skills, knowledge, conceptualisation and learning autonomy increase through the levels?
2. Are there clear arrangements for personal academic tutoring?

Flexibility

1. Has the range of requirements of learners likely to enter the course been considered in terms of academic and other support, curriculum structure and content?
2. Is the course design consistent with University credit frameworks?

Coherence

1. Is the overall coherence and intellectual integrity of the course clear?
2. Has the course been designed in a way that will ensure the student's experience has a logic and integrity that are clearly linked to the purpose of the course?
3. Have the academic and practical elements, opportunities for personal development and the academic outcomes been considered?
4. Is the breadth and depth of the subject material to be included in the course appropriate?

Integrity

1. Are the expectations provided to students and others, about the intended learning outcomes, learning, teaching and assessment methods of the course, realistic and deliverable?
2. Has consideration been given to the induction of students into an academic community?
3. Is the course likely to produce graduates with the appropriate capabilities and qualities for success on graduation, linked to the UW graduate attributes?

Resources

1. Are the staff appropriately qualified and experienced to manage and deliver the course?
2. Are the learning resources (and, where pertinent, any specialist resources) appropriate for the delivery of the course?

Documentation

1. Is the programme specification accurate and current, and of a publishable standard?
2. Are the module specifications accurate, complete and current?
3. Is the Course Handbook accurate, current and consistent with the programme specification?

Quality Assurance

1. Is the course appropriately aligned with the [TCRF](https://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/TaughtCoursesRegulatoryFramework.pdf), and have any variations been identified, agreed and approved?
2. Are the arrangements for management of the course clear and appropriate?
3. Have the arrangements for student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement of the course been considered (including those for student representation, feedback and evaluation of modules)?
4. Are arrangements for annual evaluation effective?