

Higher Education Course Approval Policy 2024-27

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HIGHER EDUCATION

Course Approval Policy

1.0 Introduction

All new Higher Education programmes are subject to the CCCG HE Course Approval Policy. The policy outlines the process to ensure that the new courses align with CCCG strategy, industry demand, are financially viable and provide high quality learning opportunities and support to enable learners to achieve high academic standards.

The purposes of the HE Course Approval Policy are to:

- Ensure that all new HE courses are consistent with the College's Strategic Plan and HE Strategy to aid the integration of academic and business considerations in an objective and strategic manner
- Ensure and maintain the continued high quality of CCCG's HE courses through flexible and accessible processes for course approval and design that are proportionate to risk
- Ensure external feedback is used to inform fully course design and approval
- Give all staff, students and other participants appropriate information and guidance in planning and developing a course and in preparing for external validation
- Ensure definitive course documentation is produced to assist with compliance with external and legal expectations for public information e.g., CMA
- Provide a framework for course design, development and approvals that can be reviewed and enhanced to contribute to the enhancement of the CCCG HE provision
- Ensure that the good practices are taken from the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance for *Course Design and Development*

2.0 Scope

All Higher Education courses are subject to this policy. Higher Education for the purpose of this policy means both prescribed and non-prescribed provision. It covers new courses, revised courses, new pathways to existing courses, foundation years, new credit bearing awards including stand-alone units/modules or micro qualifications. Non-credit qualifications or modules at level 4 or above should be recorded at the central database that is overseen by Performance and Quality.

3.0 Timelines

It is not good practice nor desirable to attempt to have an HE programme be approved in January for September delivery.

- Significant consultation with employers and external experts as well as staff and students should be a key part of the course design process according to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. This takes time to coordinate and feedback into the course content and design.
- Recruitment to the new course may be considerably hampered by a lack of time for an effective marketing campaign to support it. In addition, tight turnarounds for public information on course content risks inaccuracies and omissions thereby breaching Competition and Markets Authority legislation.
- Access to student loans may be delayed by a course's late registration with the Students Loans Company causing unnecessary financial hardship to eligible students.

Please refer to the CCCG HE Timelines for Course Approval for further guidance.

4.0 Procedure

The new programme approval process for higher education programmes consists of two stages: Initial Approval (stage 1) and Full Approval (stage 2).

4.1 STAGE 1: INITIAL APPROVAL

Initial Approval (stage 1) is integrated within the College's current business and curriculum planning process and timetable. Please refer to the **HE Timelines for Course Approval [Appendix 1]**.

The proposing Directorate will be required to produce a business case, using the **HE Course Approval Proposal Form [Appendix 2]**, outlining how the programme will support the CCCG strategic objectives. The following information is required:

- Evidence of intelligence-led demand (approaches/ responses to employers, PSRBs, student voice etc and staff input)
- Outline of the proposed learning programme (including Awarding Organisation information)
- Marketing and recruitment plan
- Progression opportunities / plans
- Resource requirements (including appropriately qualified staffing and physical resources)
- Training and Development needs
- Projected income and expenditure (first 2 – 3 years only)

It is expected that all relevant internal departments (e.g. marketing, learning resources) and external stakeholders will be consulted for the completion of the HE Course Approval Template.

The intention of the new provision should be brought to the HE Committee and HE Strategy Board (HESB). Following which, the proposals will be considered by the HE Course Approval Panel that will be convened to support this process. [see the HE Course Approval Panel Guidance, Appendix 3].

The Course Approval Panel will confirm the outcome of the proposal with the Chair signing the Approval Panel Record [Appendix 3] which then will be reported at the HESB. HESB formally signs off the approval of the new course. The decision will be communicated to the relevant Assistant Principal and relevant managers.

4.2 STAGE TWO: FULL APPROVAL

Following Initial Approval, the relevant department will be required to gain Full Approval, which will be achieved by following relevant awarding organisation's approval (validation) process. The HE Quality Enhancement Manager can provide academic managers with additional support during the approval process. A completed Course Information Sheet (Appendix 4) will be required by the Marketing Department to ensure CMA compliance.

University validations: University validation processes in particular, are complex, rigorous and time-bound. It can take at least a year to develop a new HE programme with a University as multiple revisions may be required within the timetable set by the University's course approval committee system.

Other Awarding Organisations, such as Pearson validation for Higher Nationals: Full Approvals from Pearson can be a much faster process than from a university – approval taking only 6 weeks if 'off the shelf' modules are selected. However, the same rigour must be applied to

the business case in the completion of the HE Course Approval Form for the course to succeed at the HE Course Approval Panel and the subsequent production of course materials for review – see item 6.0.

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs): these bodies have varying timelines for their course approval processes. The CCCG HE Course Approval processes will also apply.

5.0 Documentation required at Stage 2 will usually consist of:

- Programme Specification
- Programme Handbook
- Sample Assessment Material (e.g. assignment brief)
- Sample Assessment Schedule
- Full Curriculum plan
- Full staffing details including CVs

6.0 Once Full Approval has been granted, the definitive record checks will be performed and the programme will be added to the course file. In the exceptional circumstance that marketing information is published prior to Full Approval, all published information must state that the course is still 'subject to validation' with the permission of the University or Awarding Organisation.

Appendices

1. HE Timelines for Course Approval and the Flowchart
2. HE Course Approval Proposal Form
3. HE Course Approval Panel Guidance & Approval Panel Record
4. HE Course Information Form (for Marketing Department)

APPENDIX 1 HE Timelines for Course Approval and the Flowchart

1. Introduction

All proposals for new Higher Education programmes are required to follow the HE Course Approval process that will include an Approval Panel. This document is to be read and used in conjunction with the CCCG HE Course Approval Policy.

2. Timelines

All Appendices mentioned below are available online through SharePoint: P&Q: Higher Education: HE Course Approval

Stage 1 – INITIAL APPROVAL		
Activity		Example Timing
Course design, consultation and Business case submission	<p>Initial discussion with Assistant Principal, receive support to take the proposal forward.</p> <p>Engage with employers, external experts, staff, relevant departments at CCCG.</p> <p>Complete and submit the Proposal form.</p>	<p>Spring term</p> <p>Autumn term: September - October</p>
Business case presentation – panel approval	<p>The Course approval panel meeting includes presenting the proposal and Q&A.</p> <p>Following approval – the panel communicates the outcome and recommendations/conditions to be met.</p> <p>The outcome reported to HESB for sign off.</p> <p>Courses can be submitted to the Business Planning and/or proceed with the University or Awarding organisation's approval process.</p>	<p>Autumn term: October - November</p>

Stage 2 - FORMAL APPROVAL		
Activity		Example Timing
University or Awarding Organisation's approval process	<p>Follow University or awarding bodies approval /validation timetable and process.</p> <p>HE Quality Enhancement Manager may provide additional support during the approval process.</p>	Determined by the University or AO.
Implementation	<p>Curriculum Manager and/or Head of School should co-ordinate preparation for launch by liaison with:</p> <p>a) Marketing for accuracy of published information (definitive Programme Specification etc) following validation approval.</p> <p>b) other academic and resources staff to finalise content and prepare materials including Student Handbooks and INDUCTION activities to be checked;</p> <p>c) Inform Registry (important for student loans company registration), Admissions and Exams for administrative support.</p>	<p>Across spring & summer, ahead of new academic year:</p> <p>Progress monitored in HE Committee meetings e.g. Programme Specification/Handbook checked before distribution</p>
Launch	<p>Programme runs with first intake of students in new academic year. CM/HoS checks ILR for accuracy and liaises with Exams regularly for Registrations.</p>	Normally September/October start

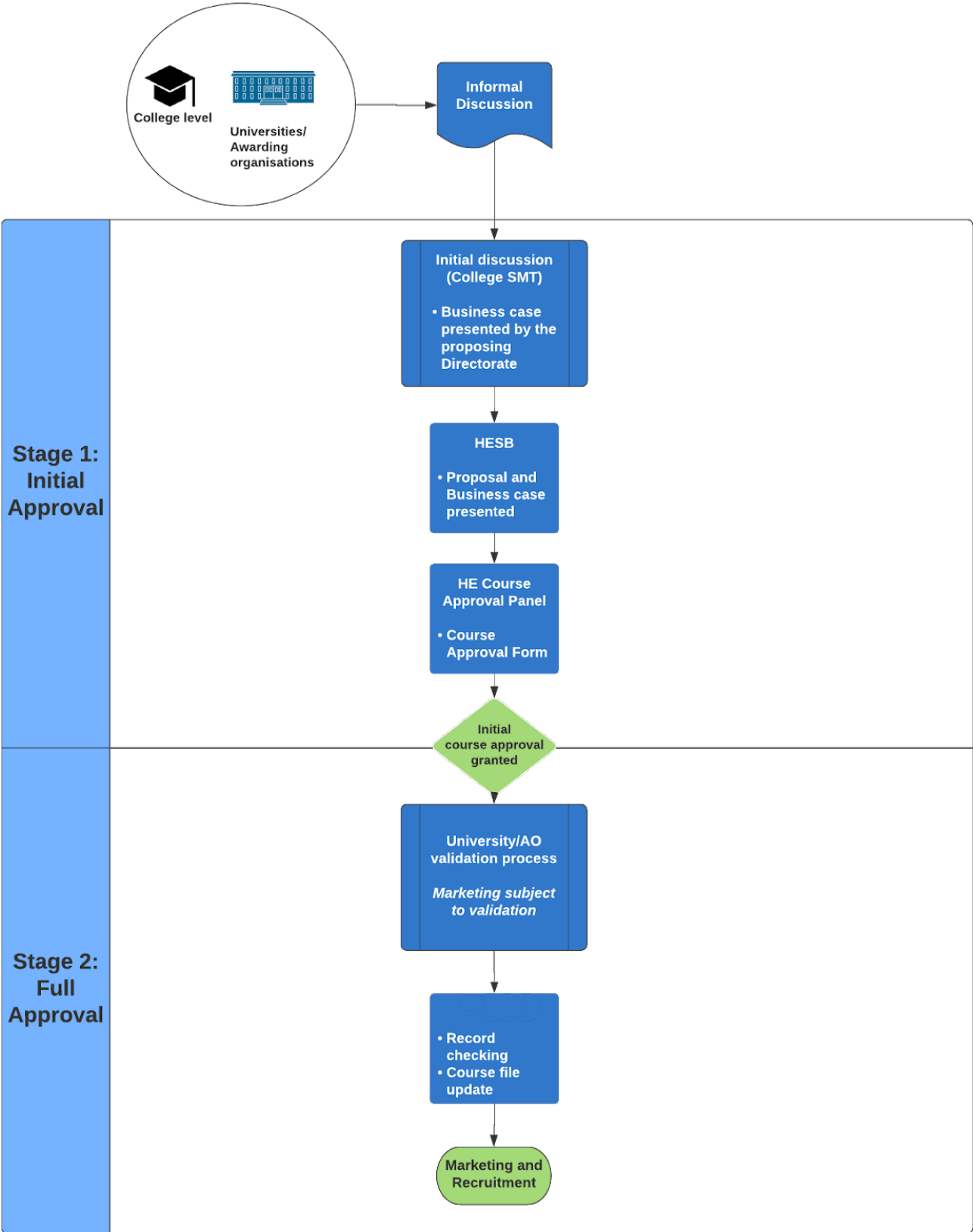
Appendices

- HE Course Approval Proposal Form
- HE Course Approval Panel Guidance and Record
- HE Course Information Sheet

Glossary

- HEI – Higher Education Institution

The Flowchart of HE Course Approval process



APPENDIX 2 HE Course Approval Proposal Form

OVERVIEW

Submission Date		
Originator/College Contact		
Curriculum Team Area		
Awarding Organisation		
Partnership: New or Existing to CCCG?		
Is Institutional Approval (IA) required?		
Awarding Organisation Contact / Link Tutor & Collaborating Faculty		
Named Entry award(s) i.e., what do students enrol onto?	Award e.g., BSc, FdA, HNC,	Programme Title e.g., Marketing
Named Exit award(s) i.e., what <u>named</u> awards can students exit with?		
Type of collaborative programme	Please tick box as appropriate	
	Franchised	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Joint	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Validated	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please limit each answer below to 1- 2 paragraphs

1. Rationale for why the programme is being developed [strong evidence of intelligence-led demand and strategic alignment]
2. Target audience & Entry requirements
3. External Consultation (Employers, Students, PSRBs, sector specialists etc)
4. Marketing and Recruitment Plan (include internal progression activities)
5. Evidence of progression opportunities post-graduation
6. Delivery method – please confirm if the programme runs via Distance or Blended delivery
7. Additional material resources required (e.g. software, academic journals)

8. Staffing and Training & Development needs
9. Projected Income and Expenditure (first 2 – 3 years) (costs set against income)

Programme Information <i>(to be also completed for micro-qualifications or stand-alone units)</i>				
a) Study Mode(s) (FT/PT/Day Release) (and Programme Title if more than one)	b) Length of Programme (please ensure all study modes are listed)	c) Date of first/next intake and term(s) of intake e.g., Autumn 2024/25	d) Other intakes (please specify)	e) Study site(s) for each programme
f) Does this programme replace any other programmes?				
g) If yes to the above question, the proposer confirms that all affected students were consulted and agree to this change. <i>(Please refer to the Student Protection Plan)</i>				
h) What is the intended Validation schedule? <i>(Provide milestone Dates)</i>				
i) Location of Awarding Organisation Validation event				
j) Combined IA visit?	Yes/No			
k) Is this a joint (Re-) Accreditation event with a PSRB? Please provide details and contact information				
l) Are Articulation Agreements involved?	If yes, for top-ups, will a new/existing Articulation Agreement be involved?			

Module information								
<i>[Ensure that the rules of combination are correctly interpreted for Higher Nationals]</i>								
Module Title	Module Code	FHEQ Level	Year of Study e.g., Yr 1, Yr 2	Compulsory or optional	Credit value	Will this module be considered at this event?	New module	Study site
<i>Add additional rows where needed</i>								

a) If any of these modules are shared with other programmes, please indicate which modules and programmes by completing the following:			
Programme code	Programme title	Module code	Module title

Please include a diagram of the programme structure for <i>all</i> modes of study e.g. FT and PT including placements (<i>not applicable for stand-alone units</i>)	
a) Total credits required for the programme by Level	
Total credits Level 4	
Total credits Level 5	
Total credits Level 6	
Total credits Level 7	

b) Total credits required for the programme by year	
Total credits Year 1	

Total credits Year 2	
Total credits Year 3	
Total credits Year 4	

Resources	
a) Are any additional resources required at the CCCG? If yes, please specify e.g., additional teaching resources	
b) Do you wish to recruit international (non-EEA) students? NB: If yes, this must be considered and approved by the Awarding Organisation - please provide details of your current Tier 4 sponsorship status to Academic Partnerships.	
c) Please confirm that CCCG has SLC (Student Loan Company) approval.	

HECoS code(s) – (consult with MIS colleagues)		
	Code	% split
Principal HECoS code		
HECoS code 2		

*HECos codes indicate the subject(s) of study. These replace the JACS codes from Autumn 2019. Where the programme covers more than one subject give the HECoS code for each area and indicate the split between the HECoS codes. Guides and a full list is available at: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/hecos>

Target numbers for each programme			
a) Insert Year 1 <i>Target</i> Student numbers for next 6 years for each programme.	Academic Year	Student numbers - FT	Student numbers - PT
	2025-26		
	2026-27		
	2027-28		
	2028-29		
	2029-30		
	2030-31		

Regulations	
a) Confirm what academic regulations will apply for the proposed course. It is expected that the College will normally adopt a university's or Awarding Organisation's regulations for academic misconduct and also for taught programmes. This information must be included in the Programme Specification.	

SIGNATURES		
Title	Name	Signature
Assistant Principal from the proposing Directorate		
Head of School from the proposing Directorate		

APPENDIX 3 CCCCG HE Course Approval Panel Guidance & Panel Record

SECTION 1

1.0 Introduction

The CCCG HE Course Approval Policy and the CCCG HE Timelines for Course Approvals

The HE course approval process for higher education programmes at CCCG consists of two stages: Initial Approval (stage 1) and Full Approval (stage 2). The HE Course Approval Panel supports the Initial Approval (Stage 1) of the process.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of the CCCG HE Course Approval Panel (stage 1) is to ensure the:

- sound rationale for offering the course, for example in terms of student and employer demand
- course(s) are compatible with the existing curriculum portfolio
- courses are financially viable
- alignment with the College's strategic plans (including partnership arrangements)
- provision of a high quality HE experience, ensuring that students are provided with learning opportunities of an appropriate quality
- appropriateness of staffing and resourcing levels
- external subject expert(s) are able to contribute advice on the course(s)
- Approval and recommendations rest with this Panel

The areas explored during the Approval Panel consideration are set out in **Section 2**. Guidance questions for the Panel are set out in **Section 3**.

3.0 Membership

Panel members are invited to ensure a cross College approach and sufficient oversight and experience of the delivery of Higher Education to engage fully and impartially with the course approval process. The Chair is the Group Principal with HE responsibilities or a delegated manager.

Reviews will be conducted by a panel comprising:

- Group Principal with Group HE responsibility (Chair)
- Director of Quality
- Marketing and Communications representative
- Assistant Principal with HE responsibility
- Assistant Principal and/or Head of School outside the proposed course curriculum area
- HE Quality Enhancement Manager
- Director of Teaching and Learning
- Assistant Director Learner Services
- Class Reps (independent and/or from the School)
- PA/Minute taker

Assistant Principal and/or Head of School for the area of the curriculum for the course (to present the proposals)

4.0 Procedure

Initial Approval (stage 1) is normally integrated within the College's business and curriculum planning process and timetable. The proposing Directorate is required to produce a business case for the proposed HE programme that outlines how the programme will support the College's strategic objectives using the **HE Course Approval HE Course Proposal Form**. The form must

be signed by the relevant Assistant Principal and HoS for confirmation.

The HE Course Approval Panel will consider the course proposals and make the decision whether to grant initial approval, including any conditions and/or recommendations. The considerations may take place through paper circulation or in a meeting. The considerations will be noted in the **HE Course Approval Panel Record** (template below) and signed by the Chair of the Panel. The decision will be communicated to the relevant Assistant Principal, other relevant managers and reported to the next HESB. The signed HE Course Approval Panel Record (as PDF) will be returned to the HE Quality Enhancement Manager for upload to SharePoint – HE – Course Approval.

SECTION 2

The Panel is asked to consider the following in granting Initial Approval:

- Evidence of intelligence-led demand (approaches/ responses to employers, PSRBs, student voice and staff input)
- Outline of the proposed learning programme (including Awarding Organisation information) *
- Marketing and recruitment plan (including internal progression)
- Progression opportunities / plans
- Resource requirements (including appropriately qualified staffing)
- Training and Development needs
- Projected income and expenditure (first 2 – 3 years only)

***University Validations:** The HE Course Approval Panel will not consider compliance with the University's academic regulations etc. These will be considered in Stage 2- Full Approval as part of the HEI's own validation processes.

***Higher Nationals:** The HE Course Approval Panel will consider compliance with the Awarding Organisation's rules of combination with justification for modules chosen.

SECTION 3

Guidance for the Panel

The Approval Panel aim is to reach a consensus on the proposed course using constructive questioning and considerations. The questions below are **indicative** only to support this process.

1. Rationale and Market Demand

- Is the course compatible with Capital City College Group Strategy including strategic partnerships e.g. with Partner University
- Is the course compatible with the current curriculum offer and Curriculum Strategy?
- Will it compete with current courses for applicants?
- Is there market demand for the course?
 - From students?
 - From employers?
 - What is the marketing / recruitment strategy?
- *Projected income and expenditure (first 2 – 3 years only)*
- Have student entry profiles been considered? (Do they need higher level maths skills for example?)
- What progression pathways are planned for?
- Do the courses enable students to acquire skills and knowledge which will be of use to them in their future careers?
- Will graduates be able to gain relevant employment?

2. Course Design

- How has the course been designed to reflect major developments in the discipline?
- How have student and employer demand impacted upon the curriculum?
- How have employers/industry experts been involved in the development of the course(s) and what impact has this had?
- Does course design take due regard for issues of equality and diversity?
- Does the course design correlate to the Awarding Organisation rules of combination?

3. Curriculum Outline

- Is the curriculum content appropriate to each stage of the course, and to the level of the award?
- Is each course balanced, for example in terms of academic and practical elements and the breadth and depth of the curriculum?
- Is there a balance and integration between employment related skills and academic study?

4. Assessment

- Is there an Assessment Strategy in place to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- What innovations in assessment methods are proposed?
- Is the Assessment Strategy adequately responsive to the varying needs of students (e.g. disability)?
- For courses embedding work-based or work-related learning:
 - If employers are involved in the assessment of students, how will they work with academic staff?

5. Learning and Teaching

- Is there a Teaching and Learning Strategy in place to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- Is there a suitable variety of teaching and learning methods to meet the needs of a diverse range of students, including those with disabilities?
- How will staff draw upon their research, scholarship or professional activity to inform their teaching?

6. Work-based learning (WBL)

- Are the arrangements for the management and supervision of workplace learning systematic and clear?
- Are mentors and employer representatives supported in understanding their roles and responsibilities (including assessment if relevant)?
- Are Learning Agreements in place to define the specific outcomes intended for the workplace learning, the responsibilities of the employers, students, mentors and academic tutors?
- Are appropriate checks in place to ensure the work-based learning/placement provider provides the learning opportunities necessary for the student to meet the intended learning outcomes?
- Does the WBL/placement provider give appropriate support to students during their placement?
- Is it clear who is responsible for WBL assessment, and is assessment appropriate?
- How do you know that members of staff and employers understand and have consideration of their responsibilities under health & safety legislation?

Learning resources

- Are the learning materials relevant, sufficient, and readily available (e.g. library resources, reading lists; hard copy or web-based learning materials, VLE and IT facilities)? Have these been fully costed if not yet available?
- Is suitable learning and teaching accommodation available?
- Is additional specialist equipment required?

7. Staffing

- Are the existing staff proposed for teaching on the course appropriately qualified and experienced?
- Is appropriate technical and administrative support available?
- Are any additional staff appointments required to enable the course to be delivered effectively?
- Are adequate staff development opportunities available to support staff in terms of their professional development? Are there adequate opportunities for scholarly activity?
- Do the overall staffing arrangements suggest that sufficient expertise will be available for the effective delivery of the intended curriculum, for the overall teaching, learning and assessment strategy, and for the achievement of the learning outcomes?
- Where employers are contributing to the delivery of the course, how are these contributions designed and integrated?

HE Course Approval Panel Record

A. HE Course Approval Panel	
Date of panel	
Programme(s)	
Submitting tutor(s)	
Curriculum Area	
Panel members	
Chair	
Assistant Principal (AP)	
Director of Quality	
Teaching & Learning	
Learning Resources	
Marketing and Communications	
Head of School (HoS)	
HE Quality	
Class Representative	
Proposing Managers	
AP	
HoS	
Key points of discussion:	
Panel decision and outcome: Conditional approval/Unconditional approval/Not approved	

Reasons for the panel decision (indicate conditions, recommendations or reasons for non-approval)
Date(s) for conditions to be met (<i>if applicable, see panels outcome section</i>):

B. SIGNATURES – Final confirmation and sign off by the Panel Chair
Unconditional Approval

Chair	Name:	Signature:	Date:
Conditional Approval – Further actions required			
Condition /Actions:			Deadline:
<i>Indicate conditions/actions</i>			
Chair:	Name:	Signature:	Date:
Not approved			
Chair	Name:	Signature	Date:

Panel outcome will be reported to the HE Strategy Board and the College Leadership Team (CLT).

****Signed forms as PDF to be returned to HE Quality Enhancement Manager for upload to SharePoint – HE – Course Approvals****

Appendix 4 – Course Information Sheet

MARKETING COURSE INFORMATION LEAFLET TEMPLATE

Please complete the following information and return to the Head of Digital Marketing and Brand and website@capitalccg.ac.uk after you have received your course code (excluding apprenticeships and free short courses) from MIS.

Information should follow the college's tone of voice, talking to the applicant in first-person ('you will' and 'you can' and 'this course will give you' rather than 'learners can' or 'students will') – please remember to keep information succinct, relevant and exciting

College:

Course Code:

Course Title:

Exam Board/Ofqual Code:

Who is the course for?

School Leavers (16-18) Adults International

When does the course run?

e.g. This course is run in the evening/This course is taught over 2 days per week

ABOUT THE COURSE

Please supply an overview of the course:

COURSE DETAILS – WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Please supply a detailed breakdown of the course, including units:

Topics covered can include:

-

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS – WHAT WILL I NEED?

Please supply a detailed breakdown of the entry requirements for this course:

You will need:

-

All applicants must have an assessment and interview to confirm that the course is suitable for them.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Please tell us how the course is assessed, e.g. Each unit is assessed using a combination of course work and examination: