

Guidance for Course Unit Specifications Template

Introduction

Programmes of study are divided into course units; and each course unit must have a specification. The course unit specification provides a concise summary of the course unit to provide a central record, to assist programme design and to inform students. Handbooks and information provided to students when they enrol on the course unit will include more detailed documentation, e.g. a breakdown of learning hours, bibliography etc.

Notes on the completion of the template

Please be concise and do not feel that you have to fill all the space provided!

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- Credit rating: course units for undergraduate programmes are 10 credits or integral multiples thereof, and for masters programmes are 15 credits or integral multiples thereof; in Year 4 of integrated master's programmes, 10 and 15-credit units may be mixed.

- Level: details of levels are contained in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) - <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/thequality-code/qualifications>

Prior to the publishing of the FHEQ, first year undergraduate was viewed as being at level 1; second year undergraduate, level 2; third year undergraduate, level 3; masters, level 4. Foundation Year was level 0.

However, under the FHEQ, first year undergraduate is now seen as level 4; second year undergraduate, level 5; third year undergraduate, level 6; masters, level 7. Foundation Year is level 3 under the FHEQ.

- Contact hours: the amount of expected timetabled hours of staff-student contact, including lectures, tutorials, seminars and workshops.
- Other scheduled teaching and learning activities: any other activities related to the course unit which are outside of formal timetabled teaching activities such as lectures, tutorials and seminars, etc. These include revision workshops/surgeries, online discussions/tutorials, meetings with academic advisers and field trips.
- Pre-requisite course units: course units that must have been taken previously.
- Co-requisite course units: course units that must be taken at the same time.
- School responsible: the School with responsibility for delivering the course unit – not necessarily the School responsible for the programme of study.
- Member of staff responsible: usually the course unit leader.

- ECTS: (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System): There are 2 UK credits for every 1 ECT credit, in accordance with the Credit Framework (QAA) - <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/academic-credit>. Therefore if a course unit is worth 30 UK credits, this will equate to 15 ECT.

- Notional hours of learning: The number of hours which it is expected that a learner (at a particular level) will spend, on average, to achieve the specified learning outcomes at that level. It is expected that there will be 10 hours of notional study associated with every 1 credit achieved. Therefore if a course unit is worth 30 credits, this will equate to 300 notional study hours, in accordance with the Credit Framework (QAA).

2. AIMS

A set of statements about the purpose of the course unit, usually expressed in terms of what you intend as the provider.

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE UNIT

A concise summary of the course unit (e.g. indicating the context of the course unit within the programme of study and the content covered by the course unit).

4. INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

You do not have to include outcomes under every heading, but rather to state the main things you expect a student to do on successful completion of the course unit. Outcomes are normally expressed at typical or modal level (i.e. an 'average' student should attain all of the outcomes) although some disciplines where competence is essential use the threshold level (i.e. all students will attain each outcome).

5. LEARNING AND TEACHING PROCESSES

A brief description of the learning and teaching methods employed on the course unit, including the use of eLearning.

6. ASSESSMENT (INCLUDING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT, E-ASSESSMENT AND INFORMATION ABOUT FEEDBACK)

Assessment task: an indication of the nature of the task (e.g. unseen examination, coursework essay, portfolio, including any use of eLearning).

Length of task: expressed using an appropriate measure (e.g. word count; length of examination; expected number of hours of student effort).

How and when feedback is provided: details of the nature and timing of feedback to students regarding their assessments.

Weighting of task: in addition to summative assessment, this section may describe any formative assessment that does not directly contribute to a student's grade on the course unit.

7. INDICATIVE READING LIST

Details of the main items of recommended reading material which relate to the course unit.

Document control box	
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Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations	N/A
Related Policies:	N/A
Related Procedures and Guidance:	The Manual of Academic Procedures (MAP) Template for Unit Specifications Programme Specification Guidance
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