

Design specification for proposed UW Integrated Masters awards

It is anticipated that proposals for Integrated Masters awards will come forward as:

- a) entirely new bespoke programmes targeted at specific markets, possibly drawing on developments that are collaborative across Institutes, may include shared modules and a high proportion of work-based or research-based independent learning, normally promoted as a 4 /5 year IM award

or alternatively

- b) proposals that build on existing provision at either undergraduate and/or postgraduate level, and include modules shared across programmes. Normally promoted as a 3/4/5 year BA/BSc/IM award.

		Proposed UW Integrated Masters	Explanation/ Implications
1	Credit structure	4 x 120 credits at each of levels 4, 5, 6 and 7, over 4 (or 5 with placement) academic years.	This common structure does not have to preclude alternative structures if these can be educationally justified (for example final year being a calendar year and higher credit volume).
2	Course structure	Courses should be designed as a coherent 4 year programme with the possibility of exit awards at the end of level 6 as well as level 7.	This permits maximum flexibility for students, and also permits students who are not successful in the final level 7 stage to exit with an Hons degree. Requirements relating to provision for electives and at least half of a student's programme being in 30 credit year-long modules for levels 4 and 5 apply. There will be a single Programme Specification for related BA/BSc and IM awards. ¹
3	Module structure	30/15 credit modules or multiples thereof for all 4 levels.	30 credit modules are year-long and 15 credit modules are semester long.
4	Course start and end dates	Level 7 can either be based on a standard academic year structure (Sept – June) or a year-long structure (eg Sept – Sept or July – July), with earlier start date or later end date.	This must be made clear in all promotional material. A standard academic year can be preceded by an internship or placement which can be a requirement (if integral to programme learning outcomes) or optional.
5	Mode of study	Integrated Masters are normally full-time programmes, but students may be permitted to study on a part-time basis.	

¹ Please note that there now a requirement to specify the learning outcomes related to all exit awards. The University is currently considering whether it wishes to continue to use Cert HE and Dip HE as exit awards.

6	Added value: placements and internships	There should be clear added value in an Integrated Masters award, which may be in the form of an internship or placement in the summer period preceding level 7, and/or work-based or research based learning at level 7.	
7	Academic standards	Integrated Masters awards must meet the FHEQ descriptor for Masters awards in full, and take account of relevant subject and professional body subject benchmark statements and the QAA Masters degree characteristics document.	
8	Award Titles	Integrated Masters award titles will be scrutinised at the point of proposal, and confirmed through the course approval process.	The proposed award title should be confirmed as subject to approval by the Course Scrutiny Group. New awards must be advertised as subject to approval.
9	Entry requirements	Normally entry requirements will be the same as for BA/BSc related programmes, but where justified can be higher.	
10	Marketing	Programmes can be marketed and promoted as specified new 4 year Integrated Masters awards (eg MZoo) or as MZoo/BSc (Hons) Zoology (ie with option of 3 or 4 year studies).	
11	Admissions	Students will apply and register for either a MZoo or a BSc (Hons) Zoology.	Students will need to choose initial award aim, but can transfer at any point up to the end of year 2 (or year 3 if they are on a related BA/BSc programme and meet the progression requirements).
12	RPL	RPL for 240 credits (Levels 4 and 5) only.	This is norm for Integrated Masters; level 7 cannot be used as a 'top-up' year. Students on a related BA/BSc Hons programme may opt to progress to the Integrated Masters Level 7 year if they meet the progression requirements.
13	Regulations	Regulations to be set out in Regulatory Framework.	Agreed in principle (subject to approval) there will be a single Regulatory Framework for all taught awards. This will be based on the use of grades (not %) for assessment purposes.
14	Module pass mark	Module pass mark for all modules regardless of level will (subject to approval) be D-.	This will require re-calibration of assessment and grade criteria to ensure the threshold for pass is secure at M level.
15	Progression	Progression requirement for level 7 (subject to approval) to be 240 credits at level 4 and 5, plus 90 credits at level 6 .	
16	Exit awards	Exit award of BA/BSc (Hons) for students who fail to meet progression requirement for level 7, or who fail to	This award must have positively defined learning outcomes.

		meet requirements for Integrated Masters award, or who wish to exit after 3 years. [Note: No exit awards of PG Cert or PG Dip].	
17	Dissertations/projects etc	All students must take and pass a Dissertation or other substantial piece of independent work in order to be eligible for a Master's degree.	
18	Award classification	Integrated Masters award to be classified on similar basis to BA/BSc (Hons).	2 methods applied to levels 6 and 7.
19	Shared modules	Modules may be shared between IM and MA/MSc programmes where appropriate.	This will normally involve shared teaching and learning. Where the same module is delivered in different modes, then careful scrutiny at approval must be given to the equivalence of the learning opportunities available to students.
20	Progression to further study	Integrated Masters graduates may apply for RPL for advanced standing against MRes and Professional Doctorate programmes. RPL will not normally be granted against MA/MSc programmes.	
21	Programme specifications	A single programme specification should be used for BA/BSc/IM awards.	A template is in preparation.
22	External Examiners	Usual principles apply: each award must have an external examiner and individual modules must be considered by one external examiner regardless of the award.	The allocation of an external examiner for a IM programme may be complex if the programme shares modules with existing courses. Colleagues should consult with AQU.

Making the business case for Integrated Master awards

This guidance is produced for colleagues in compiling a Course Scrutiny Group proposal for a new Integrated Masters award.

The development of Integrated Masters Awards provides the opportunity to be creative and innovative in the design of programmes that offer students clear value added. This might be in the form of internships, placements, or other work-based learning opportunities, a more personalised research oriented study year, and/or study abroad opportunities. There is also potential to develop programmes with international partners on a 2 + 2 basis.

- 1 It is expected that a range of proposals are likely to come forward in due course, including:
 - entirely new IM awards (including interdisciplinary awards) based on a set of new modules for all levels
 - IM awards based on an existing Hons degree with new free-standing Level 7 modules
 - IM awards based on existing Hons degree with shared existing Level 7 modules.

The viability of the Level 7 modules is the key consideration and this will depend upon the extent to which they are shared with existing M level modules that contribute to a standard MA/MSc, the approach and focus of the module/s (eg whether research/enquiry based, work or practice based or taught (including whether online, blended or face to face).

A small intake to level 4 (circa<50 students), may not sustain a Level 7 set of free-standing traditionally taught modules.

Where proposals are linked to modules in current MA/MSc awards the possible impact on recruitment to those awards needs to be considered.

- 2 Where IM proposals are based on existing Hons degrees, it is expected that the proposal provides full information about recruitment and retention over the last three years, and the conclusions of careful 'market research' with eg existing cohorts to ascertain potential interest and take-up.
- 3 It is expected that the proposal presents market intelligence about similar proposals offered by other UK HEIs and where possible their recruitment and track record.
- 4 Proposals will be expected to have a strong rationale and to take account of the IM design specification.
- 5 Proposals should include:
 - The proposed award title (eg MZoo)
 - Clear indication of any shared and new modules
 - Proposed length of study period for Level 7.

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