**Programme Specification – Foundation Degree Courses**

**for courses starting in Academic Year 2023/24**

A Programme Specification should provide the key information about a programme in a format that is clear and accessible. The audience ranges from peers in the approval/re-approval process, reviewers / inspectors from national bodies, to current students and potential students selecting their courses.

Programme Specifications must be **checked annually and updated to reflect any changes** which have been made to the course (either routine updating, or approved changes). The date in Section 11 should be altered with a note to indicate what section/or approved update has taken place.

The award map is a fundamental and integral part of the Programme Specification and must be included (and published) either as part of Section 15 (where the listing of modules, etc., is relatively succinct) or as an appendix (where the programme has greater choice of modules, etc.). It is the award map that is mostly likely to be updated, e.g. through the addition or removal of modules.

**All new awards, and all courses going through re-approval or included in a Departmental Periodic Review are required to map the course level learning outcomes to the main module/s in which they are achieved (Section 13).** In mapping learning outcomes to modules, course teams will need to take account of the relevant qualification descriptors, subject benchmark statements, and any other relevant external reference points, such as professional body statements. Particular attention must be given to the relationship with mandatory modules, since all students must achieve all course learning outcomes in order to achieve the award. **Details of any specific modules required to achieve a named exit award should be clearly shown in Section 19, Regulation of Assessment, under Requirements for Awards.**  
The Programme Specification should be written as a concise statement of key information about the course that will be accessible to potential students. Advice on completing the template is available from AQU Officers.

The following supplementary documents should be provided as part of the Course Handbook (not in the Programme Specification):

* Course schedule: start/end dates for terms/semesters/modules/ showing requirements for full and part-time study as appropriate, and detailing any half-terms in partner organisations if applicable or other key activities focussed in specific weeks
* Assessment map: summative assessments and weightings mapped to modules for each level, indicating mandatory and optional modules
* Assessment calendar/schedule: showing submission deadlines (e.g. date or week number) for each assessment
* It is helpful to include a grid showing how transferable skills are taught, practised and assessed in modules.

**Updated:**

November 2020: Section 17 hyperlinks corrected.

August 2021, Section 13, addition of 2021/22 learning and teaching statement

*Guidance on completing the Programme Specification template is provided below in italics.*

Standard text (which should be modified where appropriate) is provided in non-italic text.

*Replace the above statements with the course award title e.g.:*

**Programme Specification for FdSc Zoology**

**This document applies to Academic Year 2023/24 onwards**

Table 1 programme specification for FdSc Zoology

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Awarding institution/body** | University of Worcester |
| **2.** | **Teaching institution** | *(where joint teaching, list both institutions)* |
| **3.** | **Programme accredited by** | *(state if accredited by PSRB, otherwise N/A )* |
| **4.** | **Final award or awards** | *(e.g. FdSc, FdA, give generic award title only, not course title)* |
| **5.** | **Programme title** | *(As formally approved by APPG, e.g. Zoology, where a course offers descriptors in brackets, put the generic award here and also include the list of descriptors)* |
| **6.** | **Pathways available and/or Linked Honours Degree progression route/s** | *(Pathways are normally NA)*  *(Identify the title/s of approved Honours Degree/Top-Up degree progression route/s and cross reference to Section 20 for further information)* |
| **7.** | **Mode and/or site of delivery** | *(e.g. standard taught programme, block delivery, distance learning, flexible and distributed learning, on-line learning; state where and how programme delivered if not on the University of Worcester site)* |
| **8.** | **Mode of attendance and duration** | *(is the course approved for full time, part time or both? If both, ensure that Section 15 below details delivery arrangements. State if attendance is in evenings, weekends etc. – be as specific as possible and give normal period of study, e.g. 3 years full time).* |
| **9.** | **UCAS Code** | *Insert UCAS code, in consultation with Assistant Registrar (Admissions), and available from the* [*UCAS website*](http://search.ucas.com/)*.* |
| **10.** | **Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement** | *(e.g.* [*QAA benchmark statements*](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements)*,* [*Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement*](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/foundation-degree-characteristics-15.pdf?sfvrsn=ea05f781_8)*. Give full title and date of publication, and/or relevant professional statement – include all external required subject/professional reference points, such as PSRB or occupational standards)*  *Please contact Head of Collaborative Programmes for guidance if necessary.* |
| **11.** | **Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision** | *(For new courses, state month and year of first approval. For existing courses, include dates of any approved changes with reference to section and change made)* |

**12. Educational aims of the programme**

*Use this section to set out who the course is for, its basic philosophy/rationale and* ***any distinctive features of the course****. List the aims of the programme (what the course is designed to do) – normally between 6 and 10 specific aims. The University’s* [*Curriculum Design Policy*](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/CurriculumDesignPolicy.pdf) *is a useful reference point. Aims may not just be subject related but might relate to regional/professional/skills/employment or other objectives as well.*

**13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods**

*This section should take account of the University’s* [*Curriculum Design Policy*](https://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/CurriculumDesignPolicy.pdf)*,* [*Assessment Policy*](https://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/AssessmentPolicy.pdf) *and* [*Guidance on writing learning outcomes*](https://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/LearningOutcomesGuide-PrinciplesforCourseDesign.pdf) *and developing assessment criteria, as well as the* [*QAA’s Revised UK Quality Code*](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/revised-uk-quality-code-for-higher-education.pdf?sfvrsn=4c19f781_8) *(for FHEQ and subject/qualification benchmarks) and any professional body requirements.*

*List the learning outcomes for the award. Learning outcomes must be set at threshold level for the award, be distinct to the award and should include those relating to employability, generic and transferable/key skills as well as subject related skills, knowledge and understanding. Transferable/key skills should include information and digital literacy competencies, such as retrieving, evaluating and communicating information.*

*It is recommended that a grid showing how employability, key/transferable skills are taught/practiced and assessed within modules, be included in the student handbook developed for the course approval process.*

*Courses developed using largely existing modules need to ensure that the course aims and learning outcomes are different from any pre-existing courses. In the case of awards that are available with specific pathways, it must be made clear which learning outcomes relate to the different pathways, and similarly for awards with different descriptors.*

***Please complete the boxes below:***

*There would normally be 12-16 ILOs in total across the programme*. *Please number the Learning Outcomes using consecutive numbering.*

*Under “Module Code/s” list the module or modules in which each learning outcome is* ***primarily*** *assessed. Refer to guidance and/or AQU Officers for advice on this -* [Mapping course/programme learning outcomes to modules/exit awards - guidance](https://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Mapping_course_and_programme_level_learning_outcomes.docx) *Please add more lines if required and adjust column size where appropriate.*

Table 2 knowledge and understanding outcomes for modules/codes

| **Knowledge and Understanding** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LO**  **no.** | On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to: | **Module Code/s** |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |

Table 3 cognitive and intellectual skills outcomes for module code/s

| **Cognitive and Intellectual skills** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LO**  **no.** | On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to: | **Module Code/s** |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |

Table 4 skills and capabilities related to employability outcomes for module code/s

| **Skills and capabilities related to employability** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LO**  **no.** | On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to: | **Module Code/s** |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |

Table 5 transferable/key skills outcomes for module code/s

| **Transferable/key skills** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LO**  **no.** | On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to: | **Module Code/s** |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |

**Learning, teaching and assessment**

*Begin this section with a brief overview of the key approaches to learning, teaching and assessment that students will experience and the methods used to enable students to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes. This should include reference to modes of teaching (e.g. lectures, seminars, workshops, practical sessions, work-based learning etc.) and types of assessment. It should make clear how the course makes use of learning technologies such as the VLE and e-portfolios. If the course is delivered wholly or predominantly through use of learning technologies, this should be made clear, together with an account of expectations of students in studying at a distance.*

*This brief overview should be followed by more detail about teaching, contact time and assessment as provided on the course webpages. Some example text is given below, which should be adapted where necessary.*

**Teaching**

*State the main teaching methods, and provide a sentence about each, describing what is*

*involved/purpose in relation to student learning.  Include a statement about meetings with personal academic tutor.*

*If relevant, include a sentence or two about work-based learning and placements, and or access to specialist learning resources/facilities.*

Example text:

Students are taught through a combination of interactive workshops, lectures, seminars, laboratory practical sessions, fieldwork, practical activities, etc. Interactive workshops take a variety of formats and are intended to enable the application of learning through discussion and small group activities.  Seminars enable the discussion and development of understanding of topics covered in lectures, and laboratory practical sessions are focused on developing subject specific skills and applied individual and group project work.

In addition, meetings with Personal Academic Tutors are scheduled on at least four occasions in the first year and three occasions in each of the other years of a course.

The University places emphasis on enabling students to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement.  A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from Student Services and Library Services, and also the Personal Academic Tutoring system enables students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful.

**Contact time**

In a typical week students will have around [xx – xx] contact hours of teaching. The precise contact hours will depend on the optional modules selected and in the final year there is normally slightly less contact time in order to do more independent study.

Typically class contact time will be structured around:

* …
* …

**Independent self-study**

In addition to the contact time, students are expected to undertake around [xx] hours of personal self-study per week. Typically, this will involve …..

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

**Teaching staff**

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes …..

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy, and [x number] of lecturers on the course have a higher education teaching qualification or are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy.

**Assessment**

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or ‘formative’ assignments. Each module has one or more formal or ‘summative’ assessment which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade.

Assessment methods include …..

The precise assessment requirements for an individual student in an academic year will vary according to the mandatory and optional modules taken, but a typical formal summative assessment pattern for each year of the course is:

Year 1

Year 2

**14. Assessment strategy**

*This section should set out the* ***overall approach of the course to assessment,*** *demonstrating that the approach to assessment for the course has been considered holistically. The* [*University’s Assessment Policy*](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/AssessmentPolicy.pdf) *is an important point of reference and provides specific guidance on course assessment strategies.*

***Please do not duplicate information from Section 13,*** *however the following are examples that can be included: relationship of assessment to learning; range of assessment methods/tasks; balance of formative/summative assessment and feedback; use of diagnostic assessment; setting of assignment briefs; use of assessment and grade criteria, e.g. are assessment criteria/grade descriptors provided for each item of assessment, for different types of assessment, or has the team developed subject specific criteria and descriptors benchmarked to the University generic descriptors, plus any particular innovations etc.*

*A grid showing assessment methods and weightings mapped to modules at each level, together with an assessment calendar of submission dates must be included in the Course Handbook.*

**15. Programme structures and requirements**

*This section should include an award map using the standard award map format below, and showing for each level of the course: module code, module title, credit value, module status mandatory or optional), requirements for specific pathways and for awards with specialist descriptors.*

*This section must also include, where necessary, a statement of any requirements or completion of periods of placement, etc., that may be required in addition to completion of the modules.*

*Where the course can be either full time or part time or is non-standard in delivery – e.g. delivered in blocks or through blended learning, a statement explaining how this works should be included. The detailed schedule for the course showing how modules are delivered over the academic year and any detailed information about full and part-time study should be set out in the course handbook.*

**Award Map for a Foundation Degree**

*The programme learning outcomes shown in Section 13 describe the knowledge, understanding and skills that students will have demonstrated on achievement of their intended qualification award. Students who do not complete their full programme of study may qualify for an alternative award and the approved exit awards for this programme are listed in section 20 of this Programme Specification. For a Foundation Degree, exit awards are available at Level 4 (Certificate of Higher Education).*

Table 6 heading for course title

|  |
| --- |
| **Course Title:** |

|  |
| --- |
| **LEVEL 4** |

Table 7 level 4 award map for FdSc Zoology

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module Code** | **Module Title** | **Credits** (Number) | **Status**  Mandatory (M)  or Optional (O) | **Prerequisites**  (Code of Module required) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

*Delete unused columns*

*Note that where prerequisites are stated, students must have passed named modules in order to be able to take that requiring the prerequisite. This is also important with regard to scheduling of modules, as such passes must be ratified by an examination board prior to enrolment on a module requiring prerequisites.*

**Requirements at Level 4**

Students must take the … mandatory modules, i.e. …. plus … optional modules from those listed above. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at Level 4.

|  |
| --- |
| **LEVEL 5** |

Table 8 level 5 award map for FdSc Zoology

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module Code** | **Module Title** | **Credits** (Number) | **Status**  Mandatory (M)  or Optional (O) | **Prerequisites**  (Code of Module required) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

*Delete unused columns*

**Requirements at Level 5**

Students must take the … mandatory modules, i.e. …. plus … optional modules from those listed above. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at Level 5.

**16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality**

*Statement on the academic level of the course with reference to how the relevant* [*FHEQ qualification descriptor*](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf?sfvrsn=170af781_14)*,* [*Subject Benchmark Statement*](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements) *and/or relevant* [*Characteristics Statement*](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/the-existing-uk-quality-code/part-a-setting-and-maintaining-academic-standards) *(describing the distinctive features of various qualifications) has been applied. Specific reference must be made to the* [*QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement*](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/foundation-degree-characteristics-15.pdf?sfvrsn=ea05f781_8)*. This section can also include reference to PSRB requirements and/or other professional or national reference points where applicable; provide full title and date of any relevant benchmarks in each case.*

*This section must include an explicit statement:*

This award is located at Level 5 of the FHEQ.

**17. Support for students**

*This section should set out the course arrangements for Personal Academic Tutoring (including detail of its purpose, and how it is integral to the academic programme for the specific course) together with any course specific support arrangements, e.g. mentors for work-based learning, specialist tutors or workshops, induction etc.*

*For Foundation Degrees, this must include reference to arrangements to support work-based learning and students’ transition to the linked Honours Degree/Top-Up route (cross-referenced to detail in Section 20).*

*It should NOT include general University wide support, but the following hyperlinks should be included.*

[*https://www2.worc.ac.uk/firstpoint/*](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/firstpoint/)

[*https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx*](https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx)

*[https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/" \o "UW Disability and Dyslexia service)*

**18. Admissions**

*Please use the following headings:*

**Admissions policy**

*Please state the policy on admissions (who the course seeks to recruit, for example young people leaving school/college, adults in work, international students; whether you interview or have other processes for selecting applicants), together with any commitments to widening participation, equality and diversity, and inclusion.*

**Entry requirements**

*Specify the entry requirements for the course in terms of the minimum standard entry qualifications (e.g. GCSE and A level requirements) and any professional or other requirements (e.g. being in relevant work and having employer support). The University’s minimum requirements are stated below – modify/add to these as appropriate. Do not include the current UCAS tariff point offer – note reference to publication in prospectus.*

The normal minimum entry requirement for Foundation Degree courses is the possession of 4 GCSEs (Grade C/4 or above) and 1 A Level (or equivalent Level 3 qualification).

The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW website <https://www.worc.ac.uk/journey/a-z-of-courses.html>

See [Admissions Policy](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/AdmissionsPolicy.pdf) for other acceptable qualifications.

*Modify the above, if you require English/Maths GCSE and/or specific subjects at A level, and add any further requirements. If the course is mainly aimed at people in work with few formal qualifications, say this.*

***The entry requirements shown in this section must be consistent with the information provided on the University webpages.***

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements***If enhanced disclosure is required for the course, or for a specific work-based/practice-based module, please check that this complies with the latest guidance in the* [*Admissions Policy*](https://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/AdmissionsPolicy.pdf) *Sections 18 & 19. Where a satisfactory DBS is a prerequisite for the course (or a placement/WBL experience that is a required element of the course), this must be clearly communicated to students prior to selection of modules.*

**Recognition of Prior Learning**

Details of acceptable Level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University webpages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at

<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

**Admissions procedures**

*State the arrangements for making applications and considering applications – i.e. are applicants invited for selection interviews, information visits, are they required to undertake selection/admissions tasks etc.*

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (*insert course code*)

Part-time applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW)

**Admissions/selection criteria**

*Set out here the process and criteria for making an offer of a place to applicants. There is no need to repeat the entry requirements; this section is about the criteria used to determine whether or not a place on the course is to be offered. Criteria must be clear, specific and transparent.*

*Insert standard text below:*

See Section 20 of the Programme Specification for information regarding the admissions arrangements for progression to the linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s).

**19. Regulation of assessment**

*This section must include the standard text below. Please highlight for course approval/re-approval any different or additional regulations or requirements which specifically apply to the course. Variations to these standard regulations must be agreed with the Academic Registrar and Director of QED and approved by ASQEC.*

**The course operates under the University’s** [**Taught Courses Regulatory Framework**](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/TaughtCoursesRegulatoryFramework.pdf)

**Requirements to pass modules**

* Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
* The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
* A student is required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
* Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

**Submission of assessment items**

* + A student who submits course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
  + A student who submits work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
  + For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

**Retrieval of failure**

* + A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
  + Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
  + If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
  + A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

**Requirements for Progression**

* A student will be permitted to progress from Level 4 to Level 5 if, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4. Outstanding Level 4 credits must normally be studied in the following academic year.
* A student who, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, has failed 90 credits or more (after exhausting all reassessment opportunities) during the academic year, will have their registration with the University terminated
* If a student has not passed at least 90 credits by the reassessment Board of Examiners, the student is not permitted to progress to the next level and will be required to either complete outstanding reassessment or retake the failed modules the following academic year. Students will be able to carry forward any passed modules.

This course is subject to the University’s fitness to practice procedures *(delete if not required)*

**Requirements for Awards**

*Please include the following statements to define eligibility for these awards (including any specific mandatory modules which need to be passed to achieve the exit award, where applicable):*

Table 9 requirements for cert HE and FdSc awards

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Award** | **Requirement** |
| Cert HE | In order to be eligible for the exit award of Certificate in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 120 credits in total including the mandatory modules for level 4 of the award as specified on the award map. |
| Foundation Degree FdA/FdSc | 120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5 as specified on the award map. |

These awards are not classified.

*This section must also include details of any regulations which specifically apply to the course and/or are different to the standard regulations of the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework. Such regulations must be agreed with the Academic Registrar and Director of QED and approved by ASQEC.*

**20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers**

*This section should provide clear information about the kinds of employment and/or further study graduates take up, how the course prepares students for graduate employment, and the links with employers/professional bodies, etc., that assure the relevance of the course.*

*Please use the following headings:*

**Graduate destinations**

*Provide brief information about the career openings/progression routes/ further study opportunities for students who successfully complete the course, with actual statistics if appropriate. Include information about the employment market if appropriate. If the course is designed to have a progression route, give full details as below.*

**Progression to Linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s)**   
*For guidance on University expectations for Foundation Degrees see the ‘*[*Policy for Progression Arrangements from Foundation Degrees to Top-Up/Honours Degrees in the Planning, Approval and Operational Management of New Foundation Degrees*](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/ProgressionfromFoundationDegreestoTop-Up.pdf)*’.*

*Details here should include:*

* *Title(s) of approved linked Honours awards (these may be Level 6 of an existing award/s or a new bespoke Level 6 Top-Up award)*
* *Admission arrangements, procedures for application and any approved specific requirements for progression to each identified Honours Top-Up/Level 6 Honours Degree (for Foundation Degrees there should normally be guaranteed entry to at least one identified Honours Degree on successful achievement (pass) of the UW approved FD)*
* *Identification of any bridging programme necessary for progression*
* *Identification of key arrangements to support transition to the linked Honours Degree/Top-Up route(s), for example, study skills development, visits from staff and/or students from the Honours degree, preparation and advice for choice of progression route and subsequent module choices, Independent Study preparation, specific induction arrangements for the Honours/Top-Up degree (more detail should be provided in the course handbook).*

**Student employability**

*State how the course prepares students for employment, through the development of employability skills and attributes (including enterprise and entrepreneurship), opportunities for work-related learning (including WBL, placements, work experience), careers education, workshops, support for preparing applications, for interviews etc. This section should articulate the course strategy for developing student employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship.*

**Links with employers**

*Describe links with employers or professional bodies and how they have informed the design and development of the course, and /or are involved in the delivery or review of the course.*

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.