Module Specification Guidance			
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Contents

1.0 Background

Module Specifications are important documents as they serve binding quality functions. They are legally binding in the sense that, once approved, they commit us to all the details contained in the specification for the forthcoming year. The University and our Validating Partners are opposed to changing specifications mid-session. It is therefore necessary to take great care with details in the specifications.

Those students who have optional choices will start by looking at module specifications and we show them to external interested parties as indications of our approach to Teaching and Learning. Thus the specifications must show clearly what the module is actually about in an informative and interesting way, which is consistent with our overall aims.

Both for external purposes (e.g. informing current and potential students) and for quality reviews, the module specification must show clear links to the appropriate progamme specifications. Indeed, it is the module specifications which are used to test whether the programme specifications are really being achieved.

The most important field to show these links is that labelled *Intended Learning Outcomes* or *ILOs*, although the *Aims* field is also important. It is hoped all staff will collaborate positively in ensuring that the *Aims* and *ILOs* sections on all our modules look professionally competent, sound and consistent. They should quite obviously and explicitly link to the *Aims* and *ILOs* published in the programme specifications. Also, where appropriate, links to other modules and progression should be indicated in *Aims*. The contents of the *ILO* fields should lead naturally and obviously to the types of assessment being used and ultimately to the structure and content of the examination paper. Thinking through these issues should be a productive exercise rather than just a chore because it can strengthen not only the module but also its delivery.

The following sections (2 to 9) indicate how module specifications should be completed. Section 10 provides a copy of the approved University Module Specification pro forma that must be used by all programmes. Section 11 provides guidance on developing appropriate assessment strategies.

1.0 Module specification table

All fields in the table should be completed:

Module Code:	**Title:**	
Level:	**Modular weight:**	**Faculty/Dept:**
Pre-requisite modules:		
Reassessment: *(Indicate if reassessment in the Summer Assessment Period is restricted)*		
Module Leader:		
Semester taught:		
Date of latest revision:		

Module Code

A code will be assigned by the Quality and Validation Office.

Title

The title of the module should be appropriate to the content and should be meaningful outside the context of an individual programme.

Level

The appropriate level should be indicated:

	Preparatory Year	**Degree Year 1**	**Degree Year 2**	**Degree Year 3**	**Degree Year 4**
BUE					
LSBU	S	4	5	6/7	6/7
LU	Prep	Cert	Int	Honours	Honours
QMU					

Modular weight

This indicates the credit value. 1 credit is equivalent to every 10 student study hours.

Faculty/Dept

This indicates which Faculty of Department is responsible for the module.

Reassessment

This indicates if reassessment is not possible in the Summer Assessment Period.

Module Leader

The module leader is the member of academic staff who is responsible for coordinating the teaching and assessment of the module.

Semester taught

Indicate in which semester the module is taught.

Date of latest revision

State when the module was last revised and approved.

2.0 Aims

The *Aims* field begins "*The aim(s) of this module is / are to*". It should then indicate the broad purpose of the module, including an indication of any prior modules or experiences it builds on and future modules or experiences for which it prepares students.

3.0 Intended Learning Outcomes

The *Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)* field should always begin with: "*On completion of this module students should be able to:".*

Following this there should be a limited but informative list of ILOs which link to the relevant programme specification and which are structured under the headings: Knowledge and Understanding (KU), Subject Specific Cognitive Skills (SSCS), Subject Specific Practical Skills (SSPS) and Transferable Skills (TS).

3.1 Knowledge and Understanding (KU)

The ILOs listed under KU should link quite clearly to one or other of the KU ILOs in the relevant programme specification(s). In addition they should link the cognitive skills in the programme specification(s) by using appropriate verbs and adverbs to indicate the appropriate level of cognitive and intellectual skills applied to the knowledge and understanding (eg: is it just listing facts? or is there evaluation and assessment of the knowledge? and maybe critical comparison?). These ILOs are the best place to incorporate the cognitive skills aspects of programme specification(s).

Hence the *KU ILOs* should be a series of phrases which specify the achievements that can be expected and will be examined in the module assessments. These should all begin with verbs which indicate the level of achievement expected. Appropriate verbs include:

Describe	Apply	Analyse	Compare	Assess
Explain	Calculate	Discuss	Contrast	Evaluate
Use	Compute	Debate	Distinguish	Appraise
Identify	Construct	Develop	Discriminate	Interpret
List	Create	Link		
Outline	Plan			

It is not acceptable to use verbs such as Understand or Appreciate. These are too general and vague, without sufficient precision to indicate the level of achievement expected or style of assessment that would be appropriate. (A good exam test of a KU ILO is whether its opening phrase matches the opening phrase of some past or proposed question on an exam paper for this module.)

3.2 Subject Specific Skills and Transferable Skills

The skills ILOs have to be specified under three separate headings:

1. Subject Specific Cognitive Skills (SSCS)
2. Subject Specific Practical Skills (SSPS)
3. Transferable Skills (TS)

It is necessary to develop skills ILOs, which should quite explicitly link to one of the Skills ILOs in the relevant programme specification(s). However, it is not appropriate to repeat the wording from the programme specification ILOs.

It is expected that each module will list ILOs under each of the three Skills headings (SSCS, SSPS & TS). It is recognised that some modules may not have Subject Specific Practical Skills (SSPS) and that these are more likely to be relevant to modules in certain disciplines such as Engineering and ICS. Practical modules such as laboratories should specify ILOs under the heading Subject Specific Practical Skills (SSPS). If a module does not have Subject Specific Practical Skills (SSPS) then this section should be left blank.

If possible, skills ILOs should be specific for instance, in reflecting what sort of communication is encouraged, which IT skills are developed or which team skills are emphasised. Hence, these ILOs might begin with Verbs and phrases like:

Write	Make	Use	Analyse	Work in a team	Collect
Discuss	Plan	Solve	Explore	Organise a team	Record
Present	Persuade	Apply	Assess	Motivate others to	Test

Some example of ILOs that might come under one of the skills categories are listed below.

3.3 Subject Specific Cognitive Skills

On completion of this module students should be able to:

1. analyse verbal and written texts.
2. discuss mathematical and statistical material in a group setting.
3. critically assess output from computer packages.
4. assess and explain strategic choices in certain specific circumstances.
5. develop a plan or alternative strategies in a particular context.

3.4 Subject Specific Practical Skills

On completion of this module students should be able to:

1. calculate average precipitation stream flow and stage discharge relationship.
2. estimate evaporation rates and evapotranspiration.
3. use a flume to demonstrate energy losses due to hydraulic jump.
4. design hydraulic pumps and turbines for pipe networks and other appliances.

3.5 Transferable Skills

On completion of this module students should be able to:

1. learn and work independently.
2. work effectively in a small team on computer based projects.
3. organise a team to produce a substantial report on time.
4. make a short oral presentation of technical material to a small group of peers.
5. discuss and explain arguments in writing.
6. write a discursive essay assembling and structuring ideas from a variety of sources.
7. collect data and ideas from a range of sources.
8. explore and assess a range of alternative uses of resources.

4.0 Employability

A list should be made for every module that indicates how the learning experience or outcomes associated with the module contribute to employability. For more information see - *A University Process for the Auditing and Mapping of Employability Skills/Attributes, December 2015.*

5.0 Indicative Content

Having identified the aims previously, then contents should be concise. It should include the subject matter to be covered in a list of bullet points. It should give an indication of the topics to be covered. These should be written in general rather than specific terms and the statement should be brief. It should be expressed in terms which will remain valid over a period of time: within this approved framework, a more detailed statement of content may be given (for student information) in the module weekly plan for a particular year of delivery.

6.0 Methods of Learning, Teaching and Assessment

This section should include a description of the methods of learning and teaching and quantify the total student effort for the module by completing the statement:

- *Total student effort for the module: xx hours on average over xx semester/s.*

Typically one credit unit requires ten hours of student effort. So that:

- 10 credits requires 100 hours of student effort.
- 20 credits requires 200 hours of student effort.
- etc.

Student effort is specified as follows:

- Contact time: Number of hours per week for each of the following, namely lectures, tutorials, labs etc. This will usually amount to a third of the time to be spent on the module each week.

- Private study: This will include preparation for tutorials, coursework assessment, study for examinations, project and dissertation work, and additional reading and/or other study. It amounts to two thirds of the time to be spent on the module weekly.

For a 10 credit module the contact time will normally be 30 hours per semester, with 70 hours for independent study.

The Teaching and Learning section should be kept simple, normally with no mention of teaching week numbers. The number and frequency of the different types of teaching sessions should be specified in the boxes. The word "typical" should be used with hours per week.

6.1 Assessment

In this section all elements of assessment must be specified in the boxes below, with the percentage contribution of each element to the module mark. The length (in hours) of formal examinations and (in words) of written coursework assignments should be stated.

Assessment Type	Weight %	ILOs Assessed	Exam Semester	Exam/ Written Coursework Length

No mention should be made of dates for issue and collection of coursework.

The number of pieces of coursework, with their individual weightings and their general nature must be described, including which are group exercises and which individual; which are assignments and which are tests and which will involve presentations. The additional type specific information is required:

- Assignments - Specify if essay, report or computer based exercise.
- Essay/Report - Specify number of words or A4 pages - to indicate maximum length expected.
- Group Work - Specify range of group sizes, and WHO chooses the groups.

7.0 Methods of Feedback

There are two sections. Each section must have at least one entry, but preferably two or three entries (phrases). See below for further examples of phrases for both sections.

7.1 Feedback given to students in response to assessed work

For modules with an exam the default text is:

Generic written feedback on the examination will appear on module eLearning page after results are published.

7.2 Developmental Feedback generated through teaching activities

For modules with an exam the default text is:

Marking criteria and indicative answers discussed in class sessions.

7.3 Examples of Method of Feedback phrases

Feedback given to students in response to assessed work

Generic written feedback on examination will appear on module eLearning page after results are published.

a. Individual/Group written feedback on coursework
b. Individual coursework feedback on request
c. Oral feedback on group presentations
d. Discussion during poster presentations
e. Generic written feedback on coursework and tutorial tasks issued by email
f. Brief individual written comments on tutorial and coursework tasks
g. Individual oral feedback on assessed tutorials/coursework tasks available on request
h. Individual monitoring
i. Discussion of assessed tasks in lecture and tutorial sessions
j. Discussion of indicative /model answers to coursework in lectures
k. Results of IT based exercises.

Development Feedback generated through teaching activities

Marking criteria and indicative answers discussed in class sessions.

a. Coursework marking schemes explained in writing and in class session
b. Provision of specific marking criteria

c. Comments on coursework drafts/work plans/practice answers to past questions
d. Individual group interaction with staff in group coursework consultation sessions
e. Provision of model answers
f. Provision of solution notes to selected computational questions
g. Discussion of model answers in tutorials/lecture sessions
h. On-line solutions to additional exercises
i. Results of informal tests and quizzes or in-class exercises
j. Results of self-marked/peer marked informal tasks/tests
k. Results of Computer Aided Assessment
l. Discussion following informal revision tests
m. Group critiques of work presented/presentations
n. Dialogue between staff and students in tutorials/workshops/seminars/class sessions
o. Personal and individual counseling on students tutorial performance
p. Individual support, interaction and advice in tutorials/workshops/IT Lab
q. sessions/seminars/ practical problem classes
r. Individual support, interaction and advice during case study work
s. Individual monitoring and advice on tutorial attendance

8.0 Indicative reading list

Items listed should be current and a standard format used for listing items.

The indicative reading list indicates the level of work a student will be required to undertake and indicates the books that will be the major resource for the module. The indicative reading lists can be broken down into:

- core reading which is essential for completion of the module.
- background reading which is helpful to orient students to the content of the module.
- optional reading.

The reading list is indicative. It should be regularly updated in the module eLearning site. It may include non book sources, including CD-Roms and Websites.

9.0 Format to be used for module specifications

The module specification template should not be changed. Module specifications can be completed using the application on the Student Record System. The SRS application produces specifications in a defined format.

If a Microsoft Word version is required the following format should be used:

Font	Arial - normal for text and bold for headings
Font size	10
Line spacing	1.15
Spacing after headings	6pt
Spacing after paragraphs and sections	12pt
Margins	1”

10 Module Specification Template

Module Code:	**Title:**	
Level:	**Modular weight:**	**Faculty/Dept:**
Pre-requisite modules:		
Reassessment: *(Indicate if reassessment in the Summer Assessment Period is restricted)*		
Module Leader:		
Semester taught:		
Date of latest revision:		

Aims

The aim(s) of this module is / are to

Intended Learning Outcomes

On completion of this module students should be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

1.

2.

Subject Specific Cognitive Skills

3.

4.

Subject Specific Practical Skills

6

7.

Transferable skills

8.

9.

Employability

This module will provide opportunities for students to:

1.

2.

Indicative Content

-
-

Methods of Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Total student effort for the module: xx hours on average over xx semester/s.

Type of session	Typical Student Effort		
	Typical number in the semester/s	Typical hours per week	Total hours
Lecture			
Tutorial			
Laboratory			
Private study			

Assessment

Assessment Type	Weight %	ILOs Assessed	Exam Semester	Exam/ Written Coursework Length

Methods of Feedback

In response to assessed work:

-
-
-

Developmental feedback generated through teaching activities:

-
-
-

Indicative Reading List

11.0 Five Steps to Effective Assessment

Extracts from a report on 'Assessment of undergraduate work: assessment criteria in current use'
Caroline Smith, Quality Enhancement Officer

1. Identify intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the teaching

These statements should clearly describe the knowledge, understanding and skills which students are expected to possess as a result of their learning.

2. Based on the ILOs, formulate the assessment task

Select an appropriate assessment method and suitable task to enable the learning outcomes to be assessed. Issues of validity, authenticity and inclusivity need to be considered here. An assessment matrix, identifying the assessment methods in use across a programme can also be helpful in identifying where a particular assessment method is under/over used.

3. For each assessment task, create explicit assessment criteria

These assessment criteria may be generic, for example, department wide criteria or they may be developed specifically for each assessment task by the responsible examiner. However derived, assessment criteria should clearly identify how student performance in the assessment task will be measured. The assessment criteria will link to the ILOs but not
replicate them.

4. Ensure the explicit assessment criteria are understood by students

Activities designed to support students' understanding of assessment criteria (marking exercises using "dummy" work, self/peer assessment, using screen capture software to show students how staff assess work, developing criteria themselves) can provide helpful insights for students. Such activities need embedding within the programme and need to be planned carefully to avoid being misplaced and therefore mistrusted.

5. Using the assessment criteria, assess the work and provide feedback

Providing feedback which clearly states whether a student has met the assessment criteria can reduce some of the ambiguity which can exist