Programme Design and Approval Handbook

2016/17

Extract for External Examiners

DECEMBER 2016

How to use this Handbook

The precepts, procedures and guidance contained in this Handbook are as proposed by the Approvals Group (AG) and approved by the Learning & Teaching Committee (LTC), reflecting changes agreed throughout 2016, in particular the University's Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy. They are designed to fulfil the expectations contained in chapters B1 (Programme design and approval) and B3 (Learning and teaching) of the QAA's *UK Quality Code for Higher Education* and may be subject to further revision during academic year 2016/17.

The whole contents of this Handbook, including separate electronic files of each individual form, are available on the Academic Quality Office website. During the currency of this Handbook, further guidance and samples of completed forms may be added to this website.

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with Leeds Trinity's Taught Course Academic Regulations (which include, for example, stipulations relating to the titling of awards and student progression within programmes), the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Principles and Guidelines and the Academic Collaborative Activity Handbook, all of which are available on the Academic Quality Office website.

All proposers of new or modified academic provision must at the earliest opportunity consult a member of the Academic Quality Office, Room AGB10.

Points for action by programme developers are highlighted in shaded boxes like this.

What's new in this Handbook (main changes)

- Box relating to where pro formas to be used are, relocated from Contents page, to front cover;
- Complex schedule regarding planning and approval process deleted and replaced by bullet point Stages in the planning and approval process (after Contents page);
- Addition of chart relating to Market Analysis Framework (after bullet point Stages);
- Inclusion of information on work-based learning programmes (A1.6, A2.3, B1.3)
- Addition of text regarding certification for collaborative arrangements (A2.3(ix));
- Clarification of format of Programme Learning Outcomes (A3.1);
- Inclusion of learning outcomes for subsidiary/fallback awards (A3.4);
- Clarification of "level-ness" of learning outcomes (A3.5);
- Strengthening of reference to the University's Equality and Diversity Policy (A4.1);
- Inclusion of checklist for programmes in relation to the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (A6.1);
- Inclusion of checklist for the design of modules in relation to the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (A6.2);
- Simplification of Section B and the procedures contained within;
- Inclusion of consultation with Director of International Development within consultation phases (NP2, etc);
- Change of format of NP2 (B5.6, etc);
- Introduction of School Scrutiny Panels (B5.6, etc);
- Funding, or not, by student loans (within questions in NP1);
- Amendment of Physical to Practical (within QAA taxonomy) regarding KIPEs (A3.3, section 3 of NP3);
- Inclusion of specific learning outcomes for subsidiary awards (normally 'fallback' awards) (section 4 of NP3 and A3.4);
- Deletion of 7b's grid regarding learning and teaching, assessment, etc within NP3, as most information is located elsewhere;

- Deletion of reference to TOEFL in section 8 of NP3;
- Inclusion of standard text in section 13 of NP3 in relation to students with disabilities/support needs;
- Removal of dates and retention of weeks in NP3a;
- Reduction in size of NP4a;
- Removal of KIPEs from Learning outcomes section of NP4;
- Emphasis on JACS codes on page 1 of NP4s;
- Inclusion of programme titles for which a module is approved, programme being proposed and School to which the module belongs on page 1 of NP4s;
- Inclusion within NP4 of information required regarding (a) module availability to visiting/Erasmus students (b) formative assessment for Level 4 modules (c) assessment for year-long modules if studied for only one semester;
- Addition of Final Approval Event Sign-off pro forma (Form NP5);
- Reduction in size of Form Mod1;
- PSRB process, within Part 3, reflects documentation scrutiny by a School/Institute, responsibility of PSRB lead within a School/Institute and role of AQO;
- Other minor amends, e.g. renaming of Approval Panel to Approval Event Panel, renaming of Academic Quality & Standards Office to Academic Quality Office.

Note re WBL Framework and Accreditation of Courses

In December 2015 a new institutional framework for work-based learning programmes and new procedures for the accreditation of courses/other learning activity were approved. The approval or recognition of provision under these schemes will follow specific procedures which follow the same principles as those embodied in this Handbook but involve some new forms of documentation and different approval bodies (reporting to LTC).

Academic Quality Office
September 2016

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SUMMARY OF PLANNING AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Proposals for new provision are required to undergo a 6-stage approval process (**see B3 onwards for full details**):

Stage 1: Market analysis

- consideration by Planning Committee of market analysis request form from School
- if request is approved, Planning & Information Office prepares market analysis
- consideration of market analysis by Planning Committee.

Stage 2: Planning

- design of programme by School
- completion of NP1 Part 1 by School
- consideration of NP1 Part 1 by School Board
- consideration of approved NP1 Part 1 by Planning Committee
- approval from Planning Committee to proceed to next stage.

Stage 3: Drafting of full documentation and Completion of resources information

- consultation with Academic Quality Office regarding documentation requirements; **then**
- formulation of Rationale Document (**A4 page)**/Programme Specification (**NP3**) (and accompanying **Programme Checklist** mapping the proposal documentation against the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy)/Assessment Matrix (**NP3a**)/Module Descriptors (**NP4s**)/Programme-level Assessment Descriptor (**NP4a**)/(Subject Descriptors (**NP4bs**) are completed for relevant teacher education programmes only)
- consultation by School with internal and external stakeholders (some of which might be undertaken prior to formulation of documentation) and completion of **NP2**
- completion of **NP1 Part 2** (resources information) by School.

Stage 4: School Scrutiny, followed by Planning Committee consideration of NP1 Part 2

- consideration of the following documents by School Board (or SB Scrutiny Panel)
- **Rationale Document (A4 page)/NP1 (Parts 1 and 2)/NP2/NP3 plus LTAS Programme Checklist/NP3a/NP4s/NP4a/NP4bs for relevant teacher education programmes only**, **followed by**
- consideration of approved NP1 Part 2 by Planning Committee (accompanied by Finance Office's spreadsheet – NP1a).

Stage 5: School Board and Planning Committee Sign-off

- School Board (or SB Scrutiny Panel) sign-off of any amendments to documentation requested at Stage 4, unless there were no amendments to be made at Stage 4 (in which case, sign-off would have taken place then). Minor amendments might warrant approval by the School Board Chair only. **Sign-off will take place within the NP2**
- consideration of approved NP1 Part 2 by Planning Committee (accompanied by Finance Office's spreadsheet – NP1a), if this has not already happened at Stage 4
- **by the end of this stage, approval from the Planning Committee should have been received for the NP1 Part 2. Without this approval, at this stage, documentation can only be forwarded to the Academic Quality Office with written approval from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. It is the School's responsibility to forward the DVC's approval and the School's full set of documentation (as set out at Stage 4) to the Academic Quality Officer responsible for the approval event. The NP2 should contain the signature of the Head of School (and date of approval of documents).**

Stage 6: Approval event and Completion

- circulation of full set of documentation by AQO to approval event panel, followed by approval event
- outcome of the approval event reported to the Approvals Group via the report of the event and then, via AG notes, to the Learning and Teaching Committee (this may happen later, dependent on timing of approval events)
- response from School to any conditions and/or recommendations forwarded to the Academic Quality Officer responsible for the approval event by the approval event deadline, for consideration by the approval event panel (or nominated representatives, including the Chair)
- final approval granted by the Academic Quality Officer gaining the Academic Board Chair's signature on the Final Approval Event Sign-off Form (NP5).

MARKET ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

Potential Market Analysis Framework Operating Timeline

Calendar Year	Year of Entry	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2016	2018												
2017	2019												
2018	2020												

- School New Course Proposals Raised
- Market Analysis Review Period
- MAF Working Party Recommendations
- Planning Committee 1
- School Programme Scoping (Post S1 approval)
- Planning Committee 2

Post-holders, January 2016

Throughout the document there are references to various post-holders whose input is required into the process of programme design and approval. The current incumbents and their 'phone numbers are:

Post	**Current post-holder**	**Ext**
Vice-Chancellor CHAIR OF UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE AND ACADEMIC BOARD	Prof Margaret House	101
Director of Finance & Planning CHAIR OF PLANNING COMMITTEE	Mr David Butcher	103
Deputy Vice-Chancellor CHAIR OF LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE (LTC)	Prof Ray Lloyd	104
Head of the School of Arts and Communication CHAIR OF APPROVALS GROUP & VICE-CHAIR OF LTC	Ms Catherine O'Connor	167
Head of Academic Quality	Ms Catherine Cobbett	337
Head of Partnerships & Placements	Ms Jess Sewter	182
Dyslexia & Disability Support Co-ordinator	Ms Jane Perekrest	486
Interim Head of Estates	Mr Andrew Bright	461
Director of International Development	Ms Louise McCarthy	188
Head of IT Services	Mr Matt Stirk	283
Director of Library & Learning Resources	Mr Nick Goodfellow	246
Director of Marketing, Recruitment & Communications	Ms Julie Dodd	275

Abbreviations used in this Handbook

AAO	Academic Administration Office
AB	Academic Board
AG	Approvals Group
AQO	Academic Quality Office
CH	Combined Honours
FD	Foundation Degree
FHEQ	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICE	Institute of Childhood & Education
JH	Joint Honours
KIS	Key Information Set
LTA	Learning, Teaching & Assessment
LTAS	Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy
LTC	Learning & Teaching Committee
LTSU	Leeds Trinity Students' Union
MAF	Market Analysis Framework
PC	Planning Committee
PDP	Personal Development Planning
PDPM	Professional Development & Placement Module
PLA	Programme-level assessment
PSRB	Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QCHE	UK Quality Code for HE (QAA)
SAC	School of Arts & Communication
SB	School Board
SEEC	Student Experience & Engagement Committee
SH	Single Honours
SSHS	School of Social & Health Sciences
SSAC	Student-Staff Academic Committee
WIS	Wider Information Set

Introduction

Context

In chapter B1 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QCHE) the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) defines 'approval' as 'the formal processes by which a degree-awarding body agrees that a programme may be offered for study by students.'. This is preceded by programme design and development, which at Leeds Trinity follows largely standardised processes, although there are variations that reflect the different types of academic provision.

Approval processes

As a university, Leeds Trinity has authority to approve taught programmes and confer its own awards. The University's Academic Board has ultimate responsibility for the approval of provision. This is operationalised through the Learning & Teaching Committee (LTC) and specifically the Approvals Group, which acts on behalf of the Academic Board in considering proposals according to the detailed procedures for the design and approval of provision set out in the text in this Handbook. The more detailed planning and monitoring of programme approval activity and scrutiny of proposals are undertaken by the Approvals Group, reporting to LTC.

The University seeks to engage its students fully not only in their learning experience but in curriculum development. To this end, students' views are taken into consideration in relation to all proposals for new programmes and for modifications to programmes, through both wide consultation during the development process and the inclusion of student representatives on the various committees charged with scrutinising proposals. Details are provided throughout the approval and modification procedures and specifically in Annex 1.

Many sections of this Handbook describe norms for programme design rather than strict regulatory requirements. Variations from these norms are permissible but will require to be clearly documented (primarily in Forms NP2, NP3 and NP4) and justified by programme teams to the satisfaction of the bodies charged with approval.

Purposes

The purposes of programme approval are to:

i) ensure that the student learning experience is planned effectively and is fit for the appropriate award;

ii) generate curriculum information for relevant stakeholders, including that which is required to be in the public domain;

iii) create a definitive curriculum record which ensures continuity over time and across staffing changes;

iv) ensure that the curriculum is congruent with relevant external reference points, in particular the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements.

This Handbook is designed to be used by:

i) programme teams involved in the design and development of new or modified provision;

ii) members of the University's committees, standing groups and panels in their consideration of proposals;

iii) where appropriate, external consultants in consideration of proposals.

Review

These guidelines and procedures are reviewed by the Approvals Group and approved by the Learning & Teaching Committee annually, subject to oversight by the Academic Board.

PART 1 A – Guidelines for Programme Design

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A1 Academic programmes at Leeds Trinity University

A1.1 Awards framework

The Academic Board has approved an awards framework which takes full cognisance of QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QCHE) and is congruent with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). All taught programmes must be designed in accordance with this framework (see also the standard programme specification template, Form NP3 (at the rear of this Handbook).

A1.2 Academic strategies and policies

All programmes offered at Leeds Trinity University should manifest the values articulated in the Strategic Plan and implement objectives from the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy as appropriate. They must also be designed in ways which enable policies such as the Student Academic Engagement Policy to be implemented effectively.

A1.3 Academic regulations

All taught programmes should normally comply fully with Leeds Trinity's Taught Course Academic Regulations. Deviation from the standard provisions within these regulations for an individual programme must be brought to the attention of the Academic Quality Office prior to an approval event and be recorded clearly in the NP2, programme specification (and module descriptor(s) as appropriate).

A1.4 Modular programme structures

All programmes should normally be modular. These guidelines should be adapted, as appropriate for non-modular programmes. For example, Form NP4b (Subject Descriptor) should be used to document the phase and professional/subject studies aspects of PGCE (ITE) programmes.

A1.5 Foundation degrees

Foundation degrees have particular characteristics, such as a high proportion of work-based learning and sequential module delivery extending beyond normal term dates (presenting student progression issues), that necessitate some deviation in programme design from the norms for honours degree programmes (see sections A3.4iv), A7.6 and A13).

A1.6 Work-based learning programmes

Work-based learning programmes are developed in partnership with the learner and their employer (or other external stakeholder) to meet the needs of the workplace and of the learner, rather than being predetermined by a subject disciplinary curriculum. They are characterised by a negotiated learning plan and work-based learning projects.

The University's Work-based Learning Framework can be used to construct learner-specific programmes or to construct programmes mapped on to external standards, such as those for degree level apprenticeships. Work-based learning modules can also be integrated into subject specific taught programmes. The WBL Framework (which includes the approval process) and approved NP3 Programme Specification and NP4 module descriptors are available separately from the Academic Quality Office intranet page (see section A2.3(ii)).

A1.7 Complex programmes

New programmes are often developed in the form of suites of awards with overlapping content. Programme designers should obtain advice from the Academic Quality Office at an early stage about how to structure such complex provision and represent it clearly using the standard programme documentation.

A1.8 Short course provision

Programmes classified as 'short courses' (often Continuing Professional Development provision) comprise fewer than 120 undergraduate credits and fewer than 60 postgraduate credits. Successful students do not receive a University award but are issued with a record of credit. Such programmes need to be fully documented but the procedures for approving them are less elaborate than those for full programmes leading to University awards (see section B10).

A2 Award titles

A2.1 Aims

Award titles should be chosen carefully, be as simple and clear as possible and reflect programme content accurately. They should comply with the QAA's *Framework for HE Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)*.

A2.2 Multiple subjects

Where two subjects are combined in an honours degree award the following conventions apply:

i) **Joint Honours**: the two subjects should be linked by the word "**and**" in the award title. Section A5.4.1 outlines the credits required at each level;

ii) **Combined Honours**: the two subjects should be linked by the word "**with**" in the award title. Section A5.4.1 outlines the credits required at each level.

The use of "and" and "with" in single honours, foundation degree and postgraduate award titles should reflect the same approximate proportions of credit. Where more than two subjects are included in an award, the title '**Combined Studies**' should be used rather than trying to include all the subjects in the award title.

A2.3 Use of specific terminology

(i) ***Studies***: may be used, for example, to distinguish a new programme from an existing one covering the same broad area of study and/or to indicate that a programme does not have a standard combination of elements as required, for example, for recognition by a professional body. Examples: *Law* and *Legal Studies*, *Education* and *Education Studies*.

(ii) ***Professional***: to be used to emphasise where a programme has strong practical elements related to the practice of a profession, which would not otherwise be obvious from the rest of the words in the award title. Examples: BA (Hons) Professional Practice: Early Childhood Studies (Level 6 top-up to a Foundation Degree), Diploma of Higher Education in Professional Practice in Supply Chain Management (Work-based learning programme approved via the WBL Framework). Specific words and phrases used to describe professions (e.g. *Accountancy*, *Teaching*, *Therapy*) should not be used for awards which do not qualify graduates to join those professions.

(iii) ***[Top-up]***: this is an informal label which should not be included in a formal award title. *Top-up* or *Level 6* may be used in advertising material and internal documentation to distinguish an honours degree programme with direct entry

at Level 5 or Level 6 from a full three-level programme but will not appear on degree certificates.

(iv) **Teaching**: use of this word should be restricted to, but need not necessarily be used for, programmes which lead to Qualified Teacher Status.

(v) ***And***: 'and' should be used to denote a joint honours award, e.g. English and Media, as well as a single honours award, e.g. Business and Marketing.

(vi) ***[Accelerated]***: this expression should be used at the end of the title of a two-year full-time honours degree programme, to ensure that no confusion arises with a full-time honours degree programme which lasts the normal three years. It is not a part of the formal title and will not appear on degree certificates.

(vii) **Punctuation**: the use of brackets, colons and dashes in award titles should be avoided wherever possible.

(viii) **Reflection of content**: all words used in award titles, especially adjectives, must be closely related to the content of the programme. Generic descriptions should not be applied to programmes with very specific content and vice versa, so as not to mislead prospective students, employers of graduates and other stakeholders.

(ix) **Programme location**: while it may be helpful and, indeed, important to distinguish programmes delivered off-campus or through partner organisations by other means, the location of a student's studies should not be included in their award title. Where collaborative arrangements are approved, which require indication of location and/or language of delivery/assessment, the precise wording will be agreed and, if the wording is on the Diploma Supplement, reference to this should be included on the certificate.

Make sure that any proposed award title complies with these rules, is not misleading and will be meaningful to the target market. Check with Marketing & Communications.

A3 Programme aims and learning outcomes

(NP3 sections 2-4 and NP4/4a)

A3.1 Learning outcomes

Programmes of study should have clear educational aims and a set of demonstrable objectives appropriate to the aims. Objectives should be expressed as learning outcomes and should assist in the achievement of the aims, e.g.

> *"On successful completion of the programme, students will have . . .*
>
> *. . . demonstrated an understanding of . . .*
>
> *. . . operated with . . .*
>
> *. . . analysed and commented on . . .*
>
> *. . . evaluated critically . . ."*

Programme aims are statements of what a student is expected to know, understand and demonstrate after a process of learning. Programme aims should relate to the KIPEs which are listed in A3.4. Modules should be designed to address the programme aims. Programme designers should ensure that all programme aims are

assessed through the modules that belong to a specific programme. Care should be taken to ensure that programme aims are not over-assessed. Programme-level Assessment should address the programme aims.

The programme learning outcomes are assessed via the learning outcomes of the modules i.e. in the summative assessment task(s) at the end of each module and, therefore, it is crucial that they are taught explicitly during teaching sessions. Students should not be assessed against learning outcomes which they have not been taught. Module learning outcomes should contain verbs e.g. synthesise, analyse.

It is good practice to keep module learning outcomes clear by avoiding words and phrases which are not measurable. For example, words such as 'appreciate' or 'understand' should be avoided because they lack specificity. There are different levels of appreciation and there are different ways of demonstrating understanding. The learning outcome needs to provide more specific information so that students are clear about what is expected of them.

Well-written learning outcomes are concise, clearly stated and specific enough to be observable and measurable and thus capable of being assessed. They are broad enough so as not to limit flexibility in achieving them and they are realistic given available time and resources.

A3.2 Coverage of learning outcomes

The learning outcomes of the programme must be covered by successful completion of the core and 'constrained option' modules (so that no student can graduate without having achieved all the specified learning outcomes).

A3.3 Categories of programme learning outcome

Each learning outcome should be identified with one or more of the following four categories:

- knowledge/understanding (**K**)
- intellectual/cognitive/'thinking' skills (**I**)
- practical skills specific to the subject (**P**) *
- employability skills (**E**)

***** Examples of practical skills would include physical and performance skills, manual handling skills and laboratory skills.

In section 3 of the programme specification each learning outcome should be allocated to a category and numbered (K1, K2, ... I1, I2, ... etc). These labels should then be very briefly reproduced in the table in section 7b) of the programme specification.

At least one category (K/I/P/E) must be identified for each learning outcome. Programme specifications include a matrix (section 7b) showing how the structure and content of the programme have been designed to enable the programme learning outcomes to be met.

A3.4 Generic programme learning outcomes

i) All programmes

All programmes of study should normally incorporate all the generic learning outcomes for honours, non-honours degrees and subsidiary/fall-back awards (below). Programme developers should enhance, embed, contextualise and/or make these

learning outcomes more specific as appropriate for all awards, including subsidiary/fall-back ones.

Programme developers should be mindful of Leeds Trinity's duty as a publicly-funded HE institution to promote equality through the involvement of people with protected characteristics on its programmes and through the inclusion of appropriate content in the curriculum. Standard programme learning outcome E9 below reflects this.

ii) Standard employability skills programme learning outcomes

The following standard employability skills learning outcomes should be incorporated in all programme specifications. Programme developers must provide a strong rationale if they do not include all of them.

E1 **Self-management** – the ability to plan and manage time; readiness to accept responsibility and improve their own performance based on feedback/reflective learning; the ability to take initiative and be proactive, flexible and resilient;

E2 **Team-working** – the ability to co-operate with others on a shared task and to recognise and take on appropriate team roles; leading, contributing to discussions and negotiating; contributing to discussions; awareness of interdependence with others;

E3 **Business and sector awareness** – an understanding of the key drivers for business success, including the importance of customer/client satisfaction and innovation; understanding of the market/sector in which an organisation operates; the ability to recognise the external context and pressures on an organisation, including concepts such as value for money, profitability and sustainability;

E4 **Problem-solving** – a capacity for critical reasoning, analysis and synthesis; a capacity for applying knowledge in practice; an ability to retrieve, analyse and evaluate information from different sources;

E5 **Communication** – the ability to present information clearly and appropriately, both orally and in writing, and to tailor messages to specific audiences and purposes;

E6 **Application of numeracy** – a general awareness of mathematics and its application in practical contexts; the ability to carry out arithmetic operations and understand data, to read and interpret graphs and tables and to manage a budget;

E7 **Application of information technology** – the ability to identify and use the appropriate IT package for a given task; familiarity with word-processing, spreadsheets and file management; the ability to use the internet and email effectively.

E8 **Entrepreneurship/enterprise** – the ability to demonstrate an innovative approach and creativity, to generate ideas and to identify and take opportunities;

E9 **Social, cultural & civic awareness** – embracement of an ethos of community and civic responsibility; an appreciation of diversity and ethical issues; an understanding of cultures and customs in the wider community.

iii) Honours degree programmes

The learning outcomes for all honours programmes should include contextualised statements based on the following:

On successful completion of the award students will have demonstrated:

K1	coherent and detailed subject and/or professional knowledge and understanding, including reference to recent scholarly resources and evidence, and the accurate use of scholarly conventions in so doing;
I1	secure use of analytical techniques appropriate to their discipline;
I2	critical evaluation of approaches to solving problems in a disciplinary context;
I3	consideration of ethics and values, including where appropriate sustainability, relevant to their discipline;
I4	effective communication of results and arguments;
I5	understanding of the limits of their knowledge and the consequent influence on their analysis;
I6	an ability to apply research skills to their own area of study

iv) Foundation degree programmes

The learning outcomes for all foundation degree programmes should include contextualised statements based on the following:

On successful completion of the award students will have demonstrated:

K1	knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles in their field of study and the way in which those principles have developed;
I1	the ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, and the application of those principles in a work context;
I2	the ability to use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis in their field of study and in a work context;
I3	an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge in their field of study and in a work context;
I4	knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in their subject(s), and the ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in their field of study and apply these in a work context;
E10	successful application in the workplace of the range of knowledge and skills learnt throughout the programme and the ability to utilise opportunities for lifelong learning

v) Masters programmes

The learning outcomes for all taught Masters Degree programmes should include contextualised statements based on the following:

On successful completion of the award students will have demonstrated:

K1 a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice;

K2 a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;

K3 originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;

I1 conceptual understanding that enables them to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;

I2 conceptual understanding that enables them to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses;

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

And holders will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

vi) Subsidiary/fallback awards

The learning outcomes for all subsidiary/fallback awards should include contextualised statements based on the following:

Generic Learning outcomes for the award of <u>Certificate of Higher Education</u>:

On successful completion of 120 credits at Level 4, students will have demonstrated an ability to:

i) interpret and evaluate data appropriate to the discipline;

ii) make sound judgements in accordance with basic disciplinary theories and concepts;

iii) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems within the discipline;

iv) communicate the results of their work coherently;

and will have had specific opportunities to display transferable skills relevant to employment related to the discipline.

Generic Learning outcomes for the award of <u>Diploma of Higher Education</u>:

On successful completion of 240 credits, including 120 at Level 5, students will have demonstrated, **in addition to the outcomes for a Certificate**:

i) critical understanding of disciplinary principles;

ii) application of concepts outside their initial context;

iii) use of a range disciplinary techniques;

iv) proficient communication of the results of their work;

and will have had the opportunity to develop transferable skills relevant to employment related to the discipline including successful completion of at least one professional placement or school-based training component.

Generic Learning outcomes for the award of an <u>Ordinary Degree</u>:

On successful completion of 300 credits, including 60 at Level 6, students will have demonstrated, **in addition to the outcomes for a Diploma:**

i) an ability to make flexible use of disciplinary concepts and techniques;

ii) critical evaluation of approaches to solving problems in a disciplinary context;

iii) an ability to work autonomously within a structured learning experience;

iv) effective communication of the results of their work in a variety of forms;

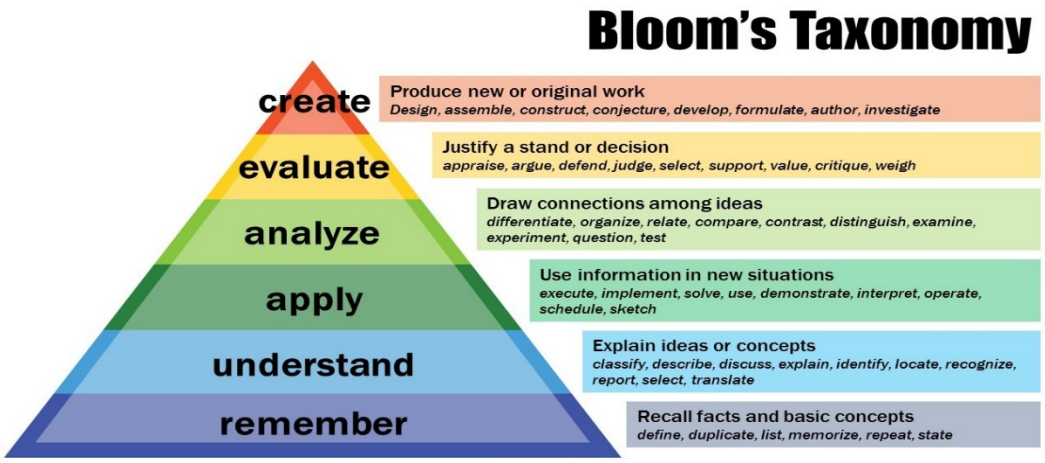
and will have had the opportunity to develop transferable skills relevant to employment related to the discipline including successful completion of two professional placements or school-based training placements.

A3.5 Level descriptors in relation to module learning outcomes and progression through the levels of a programme, as well as appropriate language at each level of a programme

An approval event panel will need to be satisfied that the proposed programme requires students to achieve appropriate standards of work at each level of the award. Credit level descriptors provide a template against which the learning outcomes of the modules within any given programme can be tested to establish whether they are appropriate to the level at which the module is located. Programme developers are recommended to refer to the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors 2010 (produced by the Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer).

Programme developers should also take cognisance of the tables below based on Bloom's Taxonomy of cognitive learning. The lower level skills are positioned at the bottom of the taxonomy. In higher education, we want students to demonstrate the higher level skills further up in the taxonomy. Programme developers should design module learning outcomes which are progressive in level of challenge. By the end of a programme, students should be demonstrating higher level skills such as analysis and evaluation. Programme developers may want students to cover some of these

skills early in a programme in order to challenge students. Some of the 'lower level' skills in the taxonomy become complex skills when applied to specific tasks and some of the higher level skills may be relatively easy to demonstrate in tasks which are lacking in challenge. However, Bloom's taxonomy provides a starting point for thinking about the "level-ness" of learning outcomes across a programme.

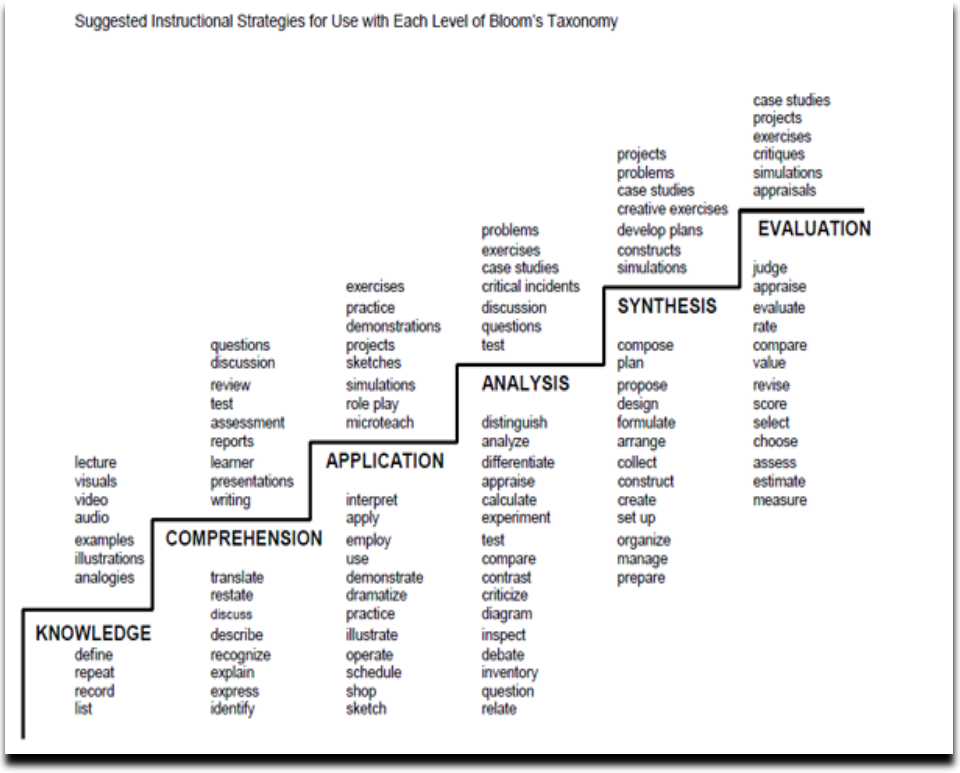


Possible words for use in module learning outcomes – NOT TO BE USED INFLEXIBLY

"Understand" is a word to be used carefully. At the lower levels combine in a phrase, e.g. "understand the range of…".

Bloom's Levels / HE Levels	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Level 4	Define, describe identify, label, list, match, name, outline, recall, recognise, state, show an awareness of	Convert, distinguish, estimate, explain, extend, generalise, give examples of, infer, interpret, paraphrase translate, transform, predict, re-write look at advantages and disadvantages	calculate, change, compute, demonstrate, discover, manipulate, measure, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, show, solve, use	break down, differentiate, distinguish, illustrate, infer, point out, outline, select, separate, sub-divide, compare and contrast, analyse	categorise, combine, compile, compose, create, design, devise, discuss, organise, précis, synthesise	appraise, conclude, compare and contrast, criticise, discriminate, explain, judge, justify, interpret, summarise, evaluate
Level 5						
Level 6						
Level 7 (M)						

Programme developers may also find Leeds Trinity's generic marking criteria helpful to bear in mind as they devise module learning outcomes.



Make sure that all programme learning outcomes are:

(a) congruent with the generic learning outcomes and marking criteria;
(b) pitched at a level which is appropriate to the award;
(c) accurately mapped to module learning outcomes.

A3.6 Subject benchmark statements

To enable approval event panels to ensure that the subject content of a proposed programme is both up-to-date and relevant to its target market, it is important to include in section 3a of all programme specifications a clear and succinct statement in note form of:

(a) the national subject benchmark statements which are relevant to the programme;

(b) how those statements relate to each other;

(c) how the programme aligns with those statements.

Particular care should be taken to explain briefly situations where there is not a direct match between all the subject content of a programme and one or more subject benchmarks, which will normally be the case for combined and joint honours programmes.

Relevant PSRB stipulations should also be detailed in this section, as should any aspects of equality legislation which are particularly pertinent to the programme.

Copies of all relevant subject benchmark statements and PSRB regulations should accompany any new programme specification submitted by a School.

Subject benchmark statements need to be considered early on in the programme design process – don't just complete this section of the programme specification as an afterthought.

A3.7 Input by employers

The University aims to maximise the employability of its graduates by offering programmes which align with the needs of employers. As part of the design process programme developers are expected not only to incorporate in all programmes the standard employability skills learning outcomes set out in section A3.4 above but actively to consult relevant employers to obtain an up-to-date 'real-world' perspective on their proposals. This should normally be done through the relevant Employers' Forum.

A3.8 Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies

The University aims to have as many of its awards as possible accredited by PSRBs. Information about such accreditation should be included in section 3a of the programme specification. Given that, normally, the details of accreditation will not have been finalised before the programme is approved, the statement may initially refer to intentions and/or reasonable expectations, as long as they are clearly identified as such. Once accreditation has been confirmed, the statement should be amended (and the KIS for the programme updated). This can be done by the School notifying the Academic Quality Office, providing supporting evidence from the PSRB, without the need for the normal full programme modification process. The members of groups convened to scrutinise documentation prepared for professional re-accreditation processes are described in Section F of this Handbook.

A3.9 Subsidiary awards

All of the University's honours degree programmes include the facility for students who fail to complete the full programme, for whatever reason, to leave with either a Certificate of Higher Education after successful completion of Level 4 or a Diploma of Higher Education after successful completion of Level 5. Similarly, students who fail to complete foundation degree programmes may leave with a Certificate of Higher Education after Level 4. Students who fail to complete a masters programme may leave with a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate. These subsidiary awards and the learning outcomes associated with them should be specified in section 4 of Form NP3. In the past, the same standard generic learning outcomes were used in all programme specifications. It is now a requirement that learning outcomes tailored to the subject of the award are detailed in section 4. Any other subsidiary awards to be offered as part of a programme must be specified in sections 1 and 4 of the programme specification.

A4 Programme content
(NP3 section 5 and NP4/4a)

A4.1 University's Equality and Diversity Policy

The University's Equality and Diversity Policy states that members of the University should:

- treat all employees, students and applicants equitably, regardless of age, colour, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital or parental status, nationality, religious or political belief, race, sexual orientation or socio-economic background
- respect dignity, diversity and difference
- challenge and prevent prejudice
- prepare students to live and work in a diverse society and to strive for social justice

- maintain a motivated and committed community of staff where everyone is valued and take action to remove inappropriate inequalities, make reasonable adjustments as necessary and redress failings.

Programme developers should embed social justice into programmes, for example through developing curriculum content and modules which introduce students to diversity. The curriculum should, where possible, provide opportunities to challenge prejudice. Programme developers should also seek, where possible, to internationalise the curriculum to make it relevant to the needs of international students. To be compliant with the principles of the Equality Act (2010), module leaders must be able to demonstrate that reasonable adjustments have been made to support students with disabilities. In addition, programme leaders must be able to demonstrate that students with protected characteristics are not directly or indirectly discriminated against. Protected groups are listed below:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

A4.2 Professional Development and Placement Modules [PDPMs]

NB: All honours degree programmes should have at least two extended work placements embedded within them, in line with the Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy 2015-2020. A strong rationale is required for any variation from this norm.

A4.2.1 Objectives

PDP module objectives, expressed as learning outcomes and contextualised as appropriate, should **include**:

- relation of University learning to the development and placement experience;
- some form of evaluative activity;
- satisfactory performance across the placement period.

Module objectives should **not include**:

- contribution to the organisation;
- the ability to make a more informed career choice.

A4.2.2 Learning and teaching

Indicative content of the preparatory professional development programme should be included in the module descriptor. This should include at Level 4:

- introduction to PDP;
- CV drafting and presentation;
- interviewing skills (including role-play if possible);
- career, career entry, sector and/or job analysis;
- briefing on Placement Office procedures and finding one's own placements;
- meeting with placement tutor/development tutor;
- contributions from experienced students, graduates, employers.

and might also include at Level 5:

- team-working;
- problems in organisations;
- appraisal processes;
- contributions from experienced students, graduates, employers.

Student contact should normally be at least 9 hours for the preparatory element. The structure of delivery must be specified in terms of calendar weeks.

A4.2.3 Work experience

It has been the norm that students undertake a block of full-time work as part of a PDPM. As an alternative, Schools may offer students the opportunity to undertake the work placement element in a volunteering context in smaller segments over a longer period. All undergraduate programmes must include at least two extended work placements embedded in their programme of study.

A4.2.4 Assessment of PDPMs

Assessment of Professional Development and Placement Modules should consist of a 4,000-word portfolio made up of a number of tasks which may take place before, during and after the placement, including the intensive preparation block at Level 4.

Portfolio tasks may include the production of:

- a job / sector analysis;
- a draft CV;
- a letter of introduction to placement employer / host;
- a self-reflective analysis: job applications and interviews;
- a reflective analysis of work-based problems;
- a team role / exercise evaluation.

Where performance on placement itself is assessed, this should be on a Pass / Fail basis by the appropriate Leeds Trinity tutor after satisfactory communication on the placement from an employer.

Summative *student placement reports* should be designed to be substantial but realistically achievable and should be based on the assumption that students could start work on the assignment *during* the placement period rather than having to wait until afterwards.

Marks should be assigned to the portfolio tasks. The assessment for the module should be described in each relevant NP4. Successful completion of PDPMs and of modules that are alternatives to them is mandatory for progression – condonement of marginal module failure and compensation do not apply to such modules.

A4.3 *Learning through Work* modules

These Level 6 modules build on Level 4 and Level 5 PDPMs and enable students to develop and negotiate learning outcomes and assessment modes that provide the flexibility for them to apply theoretical understanding and practical work-based development to a chosen context. This may include a work-based project or intervention or an alternative professional development project within their work setting.

Consider including a flexible work-based learning module at Level 6 of an honours programme to enhance the development of employability skills.

A4.4 Dissertations and research

A4.4.1 Honours programmes

All honours programmes should normally include a dissertation, research project or similar module that provides students with an opportunity to undertake a sustained piece of work at Level 6. A strong rationale must be provided for omitting such a module from a programme. The normal assessment loading of such modules is set out in A7.2 below.

A4.4.2 Restrictions on students choosing to undertake dissertations

Certain honours degree programmes may incorporate a 'constrained option' choice between a full-scale dissertation (or other 40-credit module) and a smaller research project (typically worth 20 credits). Where any restriction is to be imposed on students undertaking a dissertation (or any other module for that matter), a strong rationale must be provided and the School must publish to students well in advance the criteria on which any decisions made by programme staff concerning individual students' choices will be based.

A4.4.3 Masters programmes

All programmes leading to a taught Masters degree will include a dissertation module (or equivalent), normally worth 60 credits. Students progressing on to the dissertation stage of a Level 7 programme may be required to pass a certain combination of taught modules and/or may be required to have achieved certain grades at the Postgraduate Diploma stage. Any such requirements must be set out in the programme specification.

A4.4.4 Research proposals

Each School has procedures for the approval of students' research proposals and feasibility studies, whether for traditional Level 6 and 7 dissertations or for other research-based modules. These must ensure compliance with the University's research ethics procedures. Individual module descriptors and the programme specifications of the awards to which they contribute must specify in broad terms how ethical approval is obtained and in detail how any research proposal or feasibility study contributes to the assessment of the module (e.g. the weighting of this component in the overall module mark) (see section A7.2). Students' submissions for ethical approval themselves should not be treated as an element of summative assessment and therefore not contribute to the overall module mark.

A5 Programme structure
(NP3 section 6)

A5.1 Total programme credits

Award	Credits	FHEQ Level(s)
Certificate	40	4
Certificate of Higher Education	120	4
Diploma	180	4 & 5
Diploma of Higher Education	240	4 & 5
Foundation Degree (FdA / FdSc)	240	4 & 5
BA / BSc (Hons) (3 year full-time or part-time equivalent)	360	4, 5 & 6
Postgraduate Certificate	60	7
Postgraduate Diploma	120	7
Taught Masters (MA / MBA / MSc)	180	7

A5.2 Part-programme credits

Levels 4, 5 and 6 of undergraduate programmes shall each comprise 120 credits.

A5.3 Module credit weighting

Undergraduate programmes: modules will each normally carry 20 credits.

Postgraduate programmes (Level 7): modules will each normally carry 30 credits. Research modules for MA programmes may each carry 60 credits.

A5.4 Allocation of credits

A5.4.1 Honours degrees

i) for **Joint Honours** programmes students must have taken:

- *over Levels 4 and 5, a minimum of 100 credits in each subject*
- *at Level 5, at least 40 credits in each subject*
- *at Level 6, at least 40 credits in each subject*;

ii) for **Combined Honours** programmes (Major/Minor combinations) students must have taken:

- *at Level 5, at least 40 credits in the major subject and at least 20 credits in the minor subject*
- *at Level 6, at least 40 credits in the major subject and at least 20 credits in the minor subject*
- *at least 120 credits in the major subject and at least 80 credits in the minor subject over both Levels 5 and 6 together.*

A5.4.2 Foundation degrees

The following structural guidelines must be observed for foundation degrees:

i) a programme of study of not less than two years' duration;

ii) a programme consisting of 240 credits in total;

iii) a minimum of 240 credits obtained by a student to be eligible for the award, including:

iv) a minimum of 120 credits obtained at the final level (Level 5).

Programme proposers should consult the Academic Quality Office at the outset of the design process. See also section A13.

A5.4.3 Other pre-honours programmes

As well as Foundation Degrees, pre-honours programmes include Certificates, Certificates of Higher Education, Diplomas and Diplomas of Higher Education. Such programmes must be designed in compliance with the FHEQ (see section A1.1).

A5.4.4 Postgraduate programmes

Details of the standard structures of PG Certificate, PG Diploma and taught Masters Programmes are contained in Leeds Trinity's Taught Course Academic Regulations. Any deviations from the standard disposition of credits and requirements for progression to the Masters stage of a programme must be brought to the attention of the Academic Quality Office in advance of an approval event and detailed in the NP2 and programme specification.

A5.4.5 ECTS

Leeds Trinity has adopted the standard UK CATS credit system (120 points per undergraduate level, 180 points for a Masters degree). Nevertheless, European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System credit values (60 credits per level, 90 points for a Masters degree) should also be shown on all module descriptors, at whatever level.

A5.5 Part-time programme delivery

Programme approval and modification proposals are required to be explicit about delivery modes. It is not acceptable for a part-time mode to be advertised as available on a programme that is designed for full-time delivery, with part-time students merely expected to fit around that delivery pattern rather than a genuine part-time delivery pattern being offered. The approval of programmes is specific to the proposed mode(s) of delivery. An approval event panel may decide, for example, to approve a programme in full-time mode but not in part-time mode, if it considers that inadequate provision is being made for part-time students' needs.

Make sure you either design a tailored part-time route through your programme or provide a strong rationale for not offering it part-time. All new programme proposals should include a diagram which shows visually the schedule/pattern of delivery of modules for each delivery mode.

A5.6 Top-up programmes

Where the establishment of a top-up programme does not involve the creation of new modules the major modification process may be used (with approval by AG or a sub-group of it, not just AG Chair's action). Where the proposed new provision includes any new modules a full approval process involving an approval event panel is required. In either case a Form NP1 should be submitted for planning and resources approval.

The Leeds Trinity's Recognition of Prior Learning Principles and Guidelines state that "the maximum credit claimable through advanced standing is two thirds of the total credits for an award." Thus, individual students may be admitted straight into Level 6 of an existing honours degree programme or the dissertation stage of a Masters degree programme. Where a high level of demand for such entry with credit means that a group of RPL students can be taught separately to the cohort undertaking the full programme, a distinct programme tailored to their specific needs should be set up.

A5.7 Accelerated honours degree programmes

A5.7.1 Initial consultation

Accelerated delivery of honours programmes presents a range of programme design issues not specifically addressed elsewhere in these guidelines. Programme development leaders must consult the Academic Quality Office before completing Form NP1. Once planning approval is given they should take further advice concerning completion of Forms NP3, NP3a, NP4 and NP4a and other programme documentation.

A5.7.2 Structure and delivery mode

Accelerated delivery can be characterised as more-than-full-time. Programme proposals must therefore make explicit how each programme component is to be delivered, e.g. whether there is blended learning, intensive block delivery, WBL, etc. (Details need to be included in section 2 of Form NP1, sections 1, 6, 7a, and 12 of Form NP3 and the header section of Form NP4.) A clear diagram of each

programme's delivery pattern must be provided to the approval event panel to facilitate its understanding of the proposed programme.

A5.7.3 Programme levels and progression

Programme proposals need to detail either how the levels and progression points of a two-year programme will fit into the traditional academic timetable or how normal arrangements for assessment and progression decision-making will be adjusted to cater for a different timetable. This will necessitate extra detail and clarity in sections 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12 of Form NP3.

A5.7.4 PDPMs

It is not expected that two-year degree programmes will include PDP modules involving placements at the same time as is the norm for three-year programmes. Whether placements take place as full-time blocks at different times in the year or following the 'serial' pattern of regular part-time work experience, they must be clearly described in section 2E of Form NP1, sections 6, 7a and 12 of Form NP3 and the header and L&T methods sections of the Forms NP4 describing the relevant module(s).

A5.7.5 Programme documentation

Where an accelerated degree programme leads to the same award and shares all or the majority of its modules with a conventional programme, it is not necessary to produce a separate new programme specification. However, each delivery mode must be clearly and separately described, especially in relation to the timing of modules. A single module descriptor may be used but again the distinct details of each delivery mode must be made clear within it.

Accelerated degree programmes raise many issues for programme developers to address, not all of which may be immediately obvious. Programme proposals will not be accepted without clear evidence of consultation of staff with relevant experience either within Leeds Trinity or in another HEI.

A5.8 Personalised registrations

In certain circumstances, the University permits students to undertake combinations of modules that are not provided for within a programme specification. This may be occasioned, for example, by a module no longer being offered or not being appropriate to take a second time during a student's repeat year. To secure approval for a personalised programme of study a student must initially discuss their idea/request with their programme leader. The programme leader will then draft a detailed proposal for the Head of School's approval. This is then forwarded to the Academic Quality Office to obtain approval by the University's Approvals Group, which will normally be given by Chair's action and then ratified at the next meeting.

Where a pattern develops of personalised registrations on a specific programme, the programme leader is advised to consider whether to modify the programme to cater for a need which is common to a number of students, e.g. by providing an optional student-negotiated learning module.

Wherever possible one of the two schemes for Optional modules at Level 6 should be used rather than the scheme described above (see section A11.5).

A6 Learning and teaching
(NP3 section 7)

A6.1 LTA Strategy[1]

The University's Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy 2015-19 states that all undergraduate programmes should:

- adopt a pedagogical approach that emphasises active enquiry and collaboration, allowing students to both shape and be responsible for their learning;
- provide and support relevant technologies and learning spaces that give opportunities for flexible approaches to provision, enabling students to exercise choice in relation to where, when and how they manage their learning;
- provide an educational experience that is student-centred and responsive to the needs and attributes of individuals;
- retain a key role for applied learning through placements and volunteering opportunities, developing a range of employability skills;
- develop critical thinking and analytical skills, enabling our graduates to make sense of an increasingly data rich world;
- embed ethical practice, social responsibility and sustainability into the Programme.

Checklists to help programme leaders and module tutors ensure that they address all the expectations of the LTA Strategy are available on the Programme development page of the AQO section of the Intranet. The checklist for the Programme is also shown below. This should be completed, in brief, by all programme developers for all undergraduate programmes as part of the programme development process and should be forwarded to the Academic Quality Office with the submission documentation for the approval event.

	√[2]	Evidence/comments
The Programme is responsive to students' needs	C	
The Programme provides students with significant workplace experience through working as volunteers in a range of settings including two extended work placements	9	
Critical thinking and analytical skills are embedded into the Programme	E	
Ethical issues for professional practice are embedded into the Programme	F	
Social responsibility is embedded into the Programme	F	
Sustainability is embedded into the Programme	F	

[1] The LTA Strategy (2015-19) is being introduced incrementally from 2015. The Academic Quality Office or Head of Academic Development will advise on those aspects relevant to the academic year in which the programme is to be first delivered.

[2] This column relates to references in the LTA Strategy.

Regular progress reviews enable students to understand their current progress, their strengths, weaknesses and areas for development	ii	
Students have opportunities to shape their own learning in the Programme	A iii	
Students have opportunities to participate in one multidisciplinary team project each year	3	
The Programme provides content which is contemporary and relevant	7 vii	
The Programme provides students with established professional networks	x	
All students have access to an external mentor	xi	
The PDP process is fully embedded into each year of the Programme through e-portfolios	8	
Level 4 students participate in a single University-wide module	7	
The programme is reviewed annually in terms of content and delivery	10	
All students undertake a programme level assessment in each year	11	
All students are involved in peer assessment at least once each semester	12	
In at least one module per level the mode of assessment is negotiated with students	13	
There is an assessment matrix and accompanying narrative that clearly explains the rationale for each assessment, both content and type.	15	

A6.2 Design of modules

Module titles serve a variety of functions. Titles should be succinct, distinctive and attractive, whilst reflecting accurately the content of modules. Every module should have an appropriate number of specific objectives expressed as learning outcomes (see A3.1 above). The learning outcomes for each module should be linked to the learning outcomes of the programme(s) to which the modules contribute and the latter should be detailed within section 7b of the programme specification. The information regarding learning and teaching should be expressed in a manner which makes evident how the objectives will be achieved. The assessment should be appropriate for testing how well the objectives have been attained.

To ensure alignment with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, module leaders should plan modules which address the elements of the Strategy. The grid below should be referred to by each member of the programme team as part of the School's programme design process for all modules in an undergraduate programme.

	√[1]	Evidence/comments
Active enquiry is the prime pedagogical approach to learning	A 2	

[1] This column relates to references within the LTAS.

In the majority of sessions students learn through collaboration/ small group activity	1	
Student-led enquiry is the main pedagogical approach	2	
The session content is responsive to students' needs	C	
Critical thinking and analytical skills are embedded into the module	C	
Sessions are planned to facilitate very high levels of student engagement	i	
Technology is used effectively throughout the module to support students' learning	4	
The module content is both contemporary and relevant	vii	
Pedagogical approaches are inclusive	F	
Formal lectures are available via appropriate technology (video/ podcast etc.)	4	
All hand-outs are downloadable in advance and include a summary of intended learning outcomes	5	
All non-lecture sessions are followed by a student-led summary of discussion posted on Moodle	5	
Weekly directed activities support students' learning	6	
All students undertake a formative assessment	14	
The module is reviewed annually	10	

A6.3 Learning and teaching methods (NP4)

Staff are encouraged to be innovative and to build into all programmes a variety of delivery methods appropriate to their subject content. Active learning and e-learning components should be incorporated wherever feasible. All proposals for new modules should be accompanied by a rationale for the selected learning and teaching approach. Programme developers are encouraged to use more specific descriptions of types of teaching session in programme specifications and module descriptors than simply, for example, 'lectures' and 'seminars'. The successful implementation of the Student Digital and Information Literacy Strategy will form an essential part of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

A6.4 Study time

The study time expected of students (including student contact time, independent study, exam preparation, revision and assessment) is 10 hours per credit, resulting in a total of 1,200 hours p.a. for a full-time undergraduate student and 1,800 hours p.a. for a full-time taught postgraduate student.

Key Information Sets: In order directly to inform KISs ***Total study hours*** need to be specified for each learning/teaching method in module descriptors. 'Guided

independent study' will provide the balancing figure that brings the total number of hours for a module up to the notional number of study hours. This will often be as large as 160 out of the 200 hours total for a 20-credit module.

The three categories of learning/teaching methods for KIS purposes are:

- Scheduled learning and teaching activities;
- Guided independent study;
- Placement / study abroad.

Additionally, development teams must provide explanatory statements/rationales for the approach taken, for inclusion in the prospectus on the University website. Drafts of these statements should be submitted within Form NP2 as part of the approval process (see section B5.6).

Remember that the number of hours of 'guided independent study' is a balancing figure used to fill the gap between scheduled activities and the total study hours for a module. Don't forget to provide for each module both the amount of time planned to be spent in lectures, seminars and similar activities and an indication of the size of group for each learning activity**.**

A6.5 Student contact time

The amount of staff-student contact time that is appropriate for an individual module will depend upon factors such as the subject content, the level of the module, the use of different learning technologies and the size of teaching groups. Programme developers need to provide a rationale for the delivery mode(s) that they choose in Form NP2.

A6.6 Learning resources (NP4)

For approval purposes an indicative list of essential books, journals and internet resources needs to be provided in each module descriptor. It is stressed that this list is not intended to be exhaustive. Nor will it normally be revised before the module is either modified in other ways or re-approved. The list will form the starting-point for the production of a full reading list for inclusion in the module handbook(s), which should be updated annually. In the module descriptor, a learning resources list should not normally need to exceed a dozen items.

Lists should be checked with Library & Learning Resources before being submitted for approval/modification and should not normally include more than ten text books. Unless there is a valid academic reason otherwise, the current edition of a work should be listed. Any works that are both out of print and unavailable digitally should not be included. Lists should use the latest approved style of referencing for the subject area – Leeds Trinity Harvard for all academic areas apart from Psychology, which uses Leeds Trinity APA. The latest approved versions for the University are on the Library website.

Restrict the resources list in Form NP4 to essential items and make sure that it is up-to-date and formatted correctly.

A7 Assessment

(NP3 section 7, NP3a and NP4/4a)

A7.1 Assessment methods

A7.1.1 Programme developers are encouraged to incorporate a variety of assessment methods in all programmes in order to cater for the needs of different students and to take a holistic view of assessment across entire programmes, not just consider modules individually.

A7.1.2 LTA Strategy

The University's Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy 2015-19 states that:

- all students will undertake a programme-level assessment in each year;
- all students will be involved in peer-assessment at least once in each semester;
- all programmes will have at least one module per level where the mode of assessment is negotiated with students;
- all students will undertake formative assessment in every module studied;
- all programmes will publish an assessment matrix and accompanying narrative that clearly explains the rationale for each assessment, both content and type.

Checklists to help programme leaders and module tutors ensure that they address all the expectations of the LTA Strategy are available on the Programme development page of the AQO section of the Intranet and are also outlined in sections A6.1 and A6.2.

A7.1.3 Key Information Sets: In order directly to inform KISs, each assessment component detailed in a programme specification and/or module descriptor needs to fall into one of the following three categories of assessment used in KIS data:

- Written exams;
- Coursework;
- Practical exams.

Programme developers are reminded of the distinction between 'exams' and tests' as explained on the *Examination Information for Staff* page of the Student Administration Intranet site.

Advice on categorising different elements of teaching and learning (especially work-based learning) and assessment (especially practical or performance components) should be obtained from the Academic Quality Office before completing Form NP4/4a.

A7.2 Assessment loading

Academic judgement should be used in setting limits. The norms are normal maximums. The rationale for any variation needs to be set out in the NP2, the assessment strategy of a programme (in section 7a of Form NP3), be scrutinised by the relevant School Board and be brought to the attention of the Academic Quality Office in advance of the approval event.

There should normally be no more than two components of assessment in a 20-credit undergraduate module or a 30-credit postgraduate module, or one component in a

15-credit postgraduate module. Where there is more than one component of assessment, a student will not be required to achieve a pass in each component in order to pass the module, unless this is explicitly specified.

i) Undergraduate modules

Normal assessment loadings are as follows:

Essays, reports, posters and portfolios[1,2]	*4,000 words or equivalent per 20 credits* *2,000 words per 10 credits*
Examinations (seen and unseen)	*3 hours per 20 credits* *1.5 hours per 10 credits*
Oral presentations[3]	*10 minutes per 10 credits*
Dissertations and research projects (unless assessed in other ways – eg. journal article)[4]	*8,000 words or equivalent per 40 credits* *4,000 words per 20 credits*
Other means of assessment or a combination of methods	*Equivalent pro-rata loadings*

Remember to specify in the Assessment section of Form NP4 (i) if all assessment components must be passed and (ii) which assessment components and/or methods are excluded from the University's marking conventions, e.g. marginal condonement, compensation.

ii) Postgraduate modules

Normal assessment loadings are as follows (pro-rata):

Essays, reports, posters and portfolios [1,2]	*6,000 words or equivalent per 30 credits* *3,000 words per 15 credits or equivalent*
Examinations (seen and unseen) Poster and oral presentations	*3 hours per 30 credits* *2 hours per 15 credits*
Oral presentations[3]	*15 minutes per 15 credits*
Viva voce	*15 minutes per 15 credits*
Dissertations and research projects (unless assesses in other ways – e.g. journal article)[4]	*12,000 words per 60 credits* *6,000 words per 30 credits*
Other means of assessment or a combination of methods	*Equivalent pro-rata loadings*

Notes:

1. References, reference lists, bibliographies, in-text quotations, footnotes, tables, figures and diagrams are normally excluded from word counts.
2. For assessment purposes a portfolio is normally treated as a single piece of work arising from a collection of related activities. No individual activity is awarded a separate mark or grade. The whole portfolio is given a single mark for the assessment. A fail mark will require the whole portfolio to be represented at the re-assessment opportunity.
3. An oral presentation should normally constitute 50% of the total assessment for a module. The expectation is that every presentation will be filmed.

4. Ethics approval for research projects must be sought and granted. Dissertation and research project modules are assessed on the basis of the dissertation or research report itself and any other summative component such as a presentation at the end of the module. There will be no research proposal assessment component.

Don't forget to link up all the module learning outcomes described near the top of Form NP4 with all the assessment components listed near the bottom of the form.

A7.3 Assessment timing

The assessment requirements for a module should normally be completed before the start of the semester following the completion of the teaching. Consideration should be given to variations in the deadlines for assignments in order to avoid students having several simultaneous deadlines. Programme development teams are required to submit a programme assessment timetable matrix (Form NP3a) with each new programme proposal, which supplements section 7 of the programme specification by charting on which weeks each assessment component of the whole programme falls and thus showing visually any peaks in student workload. This should include an explanatory narrative (for approval purposes, not to become a formal part of programme documentation).

A7.4 Feedback to students

The provision of timely and constructive feedback to students on their work makes a vital contribution to their learning. Sufficient timely formative feedback should therefore be included in all programmes.

All undergraduate programmes must include an element of formative assessment at Level 4 on which feedback is provided to students before the end of their first term.

The dates by which feedback on formal assessments should be returned to students must be included in all module handbooks and on this understanding do not need to be included in the programme specification.

A7.5 Combined and Joint Honours degrees

Particular care needs to be taken in the design of combined and joint honours degrees to ensure that:

i) there is an appropriate variety of assessment methods employed across all the modules of both subjects;

ii) the submission deadlines of individual assignments are well spaced out;

iii) students are fully aware of any differences between the academic conventions that may apply to the two halves of their programme (e.g. essay structures and referencing styles).

A7.6 Foundation degrees

Forms of assessment on foundation degree programmes are likely to include both academic essays and assignments arising from work-based learning. Assessment word-norms equivalent to BA/BSc programmes should be maintained. However, the likely sequential structure of the FD means that the first assessment for a complete module might be due within six weeks of embarking on higher education study. The working and personal context of probably mature learners should also be taken into account. Accordingly, particular care should be taken to address study skills needs and to break down early assessment tasks.

The academic calendar for FD students generally extends beyond that for honours programmes in Level 4, with decisions on their progression made by the September meeting of the Board of Examiners. Programmes must be structured in ways that enable work and feedback to be returned to students in a timely manner. Where necessary, progression requirements have to be handled flexibly. Level 4 resits are undertaken concurrently with ongoing registration and Level 5 study. All results from both years of study must be complete for determination of the award of a pass, merit or distinction.

A8 Entry requirements
(NP3 section 8)

A8.1 Standard wording

All programme specifications must include the entry requirements for the programme. Standard sets of wording for honours degree, foundation degree and postgraduate programmes are provided in the Form NP3 pro forma (see section B). It is important that programme developers complete the standard wording in section 8 of Form NP3 by detailing any specific 'A' level or GCSE subjects required, as well as any non-certificated requirements.

A9 Progression, classification and award requirements
(NP3 sections 9 and 10)

A9.1 Specifying requirements

Programme developers are required to specify in sections 9 and 10 of the programme specification any specific modules which must be passed for progression and award (therefore excluded from condonement and compensation), any specific module(s) which must be passed before a student is permitted to enrol on a specific module at a higher level (pre-requisite modules), and any deviation from or addition to Leeds Trinity's standard regulations for assessment, progression and award classification.

A9.2 Condonement of and compensation for marginal failure

Condonement and compensation are not allowed for PDPMs and modules offered as alternatives to them. Schools may specify other modules which are also excluded from the University's marking conventions, e.g. modules which are required for PSRB accreditation. This information must be included in both programme specifications and module descriptors, as appropriate (definitions of condonement and compensation may be found within the Taught Course Academic Regulations).

A9.3 Pre-requisite modules

A pre-requisite is a requirement that, in order to undertake a module, a student must have passed another module or hold specified previous qualifications or experience. Care should be taken to ensure that the pre-requisites are clearly expressed and that unnecessary restrictions are not placed in the way of students. Development teams will be required to provide a clear justification for any pre-requisites.

Unless otherwise stated in the programme specification, students' progression between undergraduate levels or from the PG Diploma to the dissertation stage of a Masters programme will be solely dependent upon the achievement of the requisite number of credits from a standard selection of modules. Any requirement for a certain level of achievement within a specific module (e.g. 'must have achieved 60% overall in module X') must be clearly stipulated in the programme specification.

For every module remember to specify in sections 6 and 10 of Form NP3 and the header and Assessment sections of Form NP4 (i) if all assessment components must be passed, (ii) if the module has any prerequisites and (iii) if any assessment components and/or methods are excluded from the University's marking conventions, e.g. marginal condonement, compensation.

A9.4 Award classification (NP3 section 9)

Please see relevant Progression and Award sections of the Taught Course Academic Regulations. The case for any deviation from the norms set out in the Regulations must be made in Form NP2 and be brought to the attention of the Academic Quality Office in advance of an approval event.

It is vital to record any deviation from the norms contained in the Taught Course Academic Regulations in the programme specification. Otherwise, no formally approved record of it will exist and confusion may arise on the part of both staff and students.

A10 External examining arrangements (NP3 section 11)

A10.1 Consideration as part of programme design

Programme designers need to give consideration in advance of programme approval to what arrangements for external examining will best fit the new programme and existing programmes in the same subject area.

A10.2 New/extended appointment

Schools generally need to choose whether to (a) extend the workload of an existing examiner or examiners, or (b) appoint a new examiner. If they choose (a) they then need to determine which programmes to link together for external examining purposes and how to allocate modules to individual examiners. Factors they need to take into account include the anticipated size of the student cohort, the academic breadth of the new programme, parallel developments with cognate programmes and the dates of the appointments of existing examiners.

A10.3 Description of intended arrangements

The School's intended arrangements should be described in the programme specification and will be subject to scrutiny by the approval event panel. While it is not advisable to detail the arrangements for every individual module, the information provided should refer to different subject areas and/or categories of module, enabling easy interpretation both at and following the approval event. Details of any requirements imposed by PSRBs should be included.

A11 Other considerations

A11.1 Staff expertise (NP3 section 12 and NP4)

Careful consideration should be given to the range of staff expertise available with a view, among other things, to minimising the vulnerability of a programme to unplanned staff absence. To this end, wherever possible:

i) responsibility for delivering core modules, especially at Level 6 or Level 7, should not fall on one member of staff; and

ii) delivery of core modules should be within the competence of more than one member of staff.

A11.2 Module Co-ordinators (NP4)

It is vital that the delivery of all programmes and their constituent modules is managed effectively. To this end all programme leaders and module co-ordinators must be 'permanent' members of Leeds Trinity staff, even if a proportion of the actual delivery of content is by either visiting lecturers or members of staff of partner organisations. It is acceptable to indicate in a draft NP4 presented for approval that the name of a module co-ordinator is yet 'to be confirmed', e.g. where a staffing change is anticipated or the necessity of a new appointment has been agreed as part of the planning and resources approval process.

A11.3 Coding of modules (NP3 sections 6 & 7 and NP4/4a)

Student Administration must be consulted prior to the approval event regarding the codes to be assigned to new modules and the wording to be used in the programme structure section of the programme specification.

A11.4 Student surveys (NP1 section 1A, NP2 and Mod1)

Programme teams are encouraged to be responsive to the results of student learning and experience surveys, especially Module Evaluation Questionnaires, in designing new and modified academic provision. It is important, where relevant, to make reference to survey results in the rationales presented for new and modified programmes and individual modules (in section 1A of Form NP1 and Form Mod1). Such evidence can be acceptable in lieu of more specific student involvement via Student-Staff Academic Committees or letters/emails to students.

A11.5 Optional modules at Level 6 (NP3 sections 10 & 12)

Two schemes have been established to allow greater flexibility in honours degree students' programmes of study at Level 6:

i) students are permitted to study one 20-credit optional module from outside of their prescribed programme of study which counts towards their 120 credit Level 6 diet;

ii) students are permitted to study one 20-credit optional module in addition to their 120 credit Level 6 diet, with no requirement for assessment, and not bearing any credit.

The first scheme includes a stipulation that any option choice made by a student must not affect their ability to achieve the learning outcomes for their programme. The modules from students' programmes that may be substituted are therefore only 'free' options, not 'constrained' options (typically 'pick one from two', formerly referred to as 'core preference'). Programme designers are therefore advised to take great care in structuring their module offerings at Level 6, to ensure that it is clear to students which module(s) they would be allowed to drop in favour of an out-of-programme module.

The second scheme has no impact on programme structures, so does not need to be reflected in programme specifications and module descriptors. It is anticipated that students will often choose Level 4 modules as their additional options.

Students availing themselves of either scheme must comply with normal module pre-requisite requirements. Programme designers are therefore advised to take great care in determining pre-requisites and providing details in section 10 of the programme specification. Any further constraints on students' optional module choices should be detailed in section 12 of the programme specification.

A11.6 Internationalisation and Study Abroad (NP3 section 12)

Leeds Trinity is seeking increasingly to broaden the experience of its students, both by developing its partnerships with overseas institutions (e.g. to provide student exchange opportunities) and by bringing international perspectives to bear within its own curriculum.

Any established programme-specific arrangements for students to undertake part of their studies at another HEI or a work placement abroad should be described in section 12 of the programme specification. For students undertaking any part of their programme as 'study abroad', the Taught Course Academic Regulations will apply. Programme developers should consider the implications of students failing assessments while studying abroad and may wish to develop generic re-assessment applicable across relevant programmes in their academic area. The availability of a 'study abroad' option also needs to be indicated in Form NP1 (Part 1).

Where modules are not available to visiting students, this should be indicated at the end of each relevant NP4.

Programme developers should identify clearly within their proposals how they have addressed the internationalisation agenda in terms of the ordinary content of the curriculum.

A11.7 Delivering provision as approved

The University bases the Key Information Set data about learning and teaching and assessment methods for its degree programmes on the information set out in programme specifications (Form NP3) and module descriptors (Form NP4/4a). It is therefore vital that the actual delivery of programmes matches the information contained in the approved programme documentation. Any change must be duly authorised through the programme modification process (see section C of this Handbook).

A12 Students with additional support needs

(NP3 section 13)

A12.1 Information for students

Careful consideration should be given to enable students with additional support needs to make informed choices about their ability to complete the programme. Programme designers should ensure that no unnecessary barriers are placed in the way of students, whether in terms of access to teaching and resources, assessment methods or other potential impediments.

A13 Foundation degrees

A13.1 The nature of foundation degrees

Foundation degrees [FDs] are intended to be designed in close collaboration with employer or equivalent organisations. The programme structure and disposition of credits may vary considerably, subject to certain limits below, from other undergraduate norms and from FD to FD. FDs will normally include high proportions of work-based learning. Approval event panels will consider programme proposals on their own merits, supported by clear evidence of consultation, response to needs and articulation of design outcomes in the documentation.

In practice, this means designing FDs around the situation of learners continuing in work whilst studying, perhaps with some employer-release. Such learners probably gain more traction by studying modules in sequence rather than concurrently as in the University's BA/BSc programmes and by being assessed predominantly by coursework as they proceed.

Leeds Trinity has approved several FDs, mostly in the Children, Young People and Families [CYPF] area. These are structured as six 20-credit modules per year

delivered sequentially rather than concurrently, designed to fall neatly within many students' work patterns of school half-terms.

Contact hours may vary from BA/BSc norms but care must be taken to ensure that work-based learning is indeed that; in other words, structured, assessable learning and not simply an alternative description of (private) study time. Approval event panels have in the past asked for evidence of planned work-based learning tasks. Total study hours per module should maintain equivalence with BA/BSc programme norms.

A13.2 Parity of the student experience

Designers of foundation degree programmes should bear in mind the following:

a) the need to provide an overall student experience on a par with that provided for honours students;

b) the need to create programmes with contents and structures that facilitate student progression (especially on to honours 'top-up' programmes);

c) the particular needs of foundation degree students in terms of on- and off-campus facilities and learning resources.

A13.3 Onward student progression

Arrangements for the progression of students on to cognate honours degree programme(s) must be established for all foundation degree programmes and the opportunities available to students recorded in section 9 or 12 of the programme specification.