**Course Handbook guidance**

**for courses starting September 2017 onwards (2017/18 academic year)**

Most recent changes are highlighted in yellow (updated July 2017)
***(Please note the removal of reference to attendance requirements was approved by Academic Board in July 2017).***

The Course Handbook is used, together with the programme specification and module specifications as a key element of the course planning and approval process.

**(Please note the programme specification and module specifications should be separate documents to the Course Handbook).** The course Handbook is also the key document for students in providing information about their course. The document itself should be tailored to your students, and the presentation and organisation of material is up to you.

The guidance below indicates what **must be included** in the Handbook (and, where appropriate, the standard text to include). It then outlines **suggested content**, but courses are free to adapt/edit/add to this as appropriate. Care must be taken to ensure that information for students is current and accurate and reflects what has been approved. In relation to **regulatory matters**, please use standard text and/or hyperlinks and avoid rewording or summarising.

For some courses there is information that is important for the purposes of course approval or operation, e.g. about course management structures or cross-moderation processes, but is less directly relevant to students.  It may be appropriate to locate such information in annexes.

**The course handbook must contain the following:**

1. **Details of the course structure, organisation and requirements, including those relating to assessments, work placements or work-based learning,**

**and mode of attendance/weekly timetable.**

1. **A course calendar for the year.**
2. **A hyperlink to the Programme Specification and to the AQU web pages (**[**http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/662.htm**](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/662.htm)**) where students can find the concise definitive and approved specification for all key aspects of the course as approved at course approval or periodic review.**

**4. Information about submission deadlines and mechanisms (e.g. electronic submission), arrangements for return of student work and feedback (including a statement about the provision of electronic feedback normally being within 20 working days), and statement about late assignments as per standard text (please see below).**

**5. A statement about external examiners as per the standard text (please see below) and details of current external examiner/s for the programme.**

**6. Links to key University regulations (please see below).**

**7. Arrangements for approval of assessment items and moderation of assessments. This must be provided as an annexe to the course handbook. It is important for the purposes of course approval, but it must also be included for students so that they are aware of the arrangements for assuring the accuracy of grades, etc., and why we do not permit appeals against grades.**

**Please refer to the** [**University Assessment Policy**](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/AssessmentPolicy.pdf)**, sections 11, 13 and Annexe 6 for requirements and guidance on approval of assessment items and moderation of assessments.**

1. **A grid mapping assessment types and weightings across all levels of the programme (See Section 3 below) plus an assessment schedule for each year of the programme showing assessment hand in dates (See Appendix 1 for template).**
2. **In the case of HNC/Ds, where a Pearson BTEC award exists with a closely related title and/or content to the UW award, a grid mapping the core units of the BTEC HNC/D to the UW modules should be appended.**

**Please note:** Attendance requirements are **not to be included** in the handbook or any other course documentation from September 2017. However **if you wish to include a generic statement about attendance**, the following wording is suggested: “*You are expected to participate fully in your programme of study, engage actively with learning opportunities, and attend all scheduled sessions.  If you are unable to attend a particular session, we expect you to contact the module leader in advance where possible, or in any case, in the week following the session.  Your engagement with your programmes of study is monitored.  Persistent failure to engage may result in you being withdrawn from your course”.*

(Optional statement added for information only, July 2017)

The following guidance is provided to assist in drawing up a new course handbook; it is not intended as a prescriptive list of sections or content. It is up to you how you organise materials and what you regard as important.

1. **Course Team and Course Calendar**

This section might include:

* a welcome from the course team and contact details (including the link tutor for collaborative courses). You may wish to include photographs of the course team here.
* an introduction to the course and reference to any specific features or requirements (e.g. work-based learning focus of a Foundation Degree), including reference to different pathways (single hons, joint hons, major, minor, where appropriate) or opportunity for progression (e.g. from FD or HND to Honours Degree);
* induction arrangements.
* a detailed course schedule specifying how modules are delivered over the academic year and any detailed information including start/end dates for terms/semesters/modules, and any other information as appropriate (e.g. half terms in partner organisations, Worcester weeks, or other key activities focussed in specific weeks). Where the course can be either full time or part time or is non-standard in delivery – e.g. delivered in blocks or through blended learning\*, a statement explaining how this works should be included. \*See also the [UW Quality Standards for Flexible and distributed learning](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/QSforFlexibleDistributedLearning.pdf).
* the methods used to communicate with students in emergencies, policies on ‘office hours’ and details of how students can book tutorials and make appointments with staff.
1. **Course Learning Outcomes and Structure**

This section might include the following:

(to ensure appropriate cross-reference to the programme specification, use hyperlinks wherever possible):

* course aims and learning outcomes
* approach to learning, teaching and assessment
* the award map and details of mandatory and optional modules
* any subject-specific ILS support
* opportunities for work-placements or study abroad
* arrangements for personal academic tutoring (PAT) and for PDP
* employability and sustainability
* inclusion and support for disabled students
* for FDs/HNDs: the progression arrangements and procedures for application and any specific requirements related to each, including reference to bridging programmes where applicable, for progression from FDs or HNDs to the approved linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up degree
* for FDs/HNDs: arrangements to support transition from FDs and HNDs to the approved linked Honours Degree(s). This should be distributed through the course at appropriate points depending on the activities. Specific events could be included in the course calendar. Transitional support could include planned study skills development, visits from staff and/or students from the Honours degree, preparation and advice for choice of progression route and subsequent module choices, Independent Study preparation, specific induction arrangements for the Honours/Top-Up degree.
* it is recommended that a grid, developed for the course approval process, be included showing how the programme learning outcomes are mapped to modules, and a grid showing how key/transferable skills are taught/practiced and assessed within modules. Increasingly mapping of subject benchmark statements to course content is also provided for approval purposes – these can be included in annexes for the final version of the handbook.
* If the course is to be delivered through flexible or distributed learning (including e-learning), you should refer to [UW Quality Standards for Flexible and Distributed Learning](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/QSforFlexibleDistributedLearning.pdf) which contains advice on information needs of students
1. **Assessment**

This section might include:

* assessment schedule detailing assignment deadlines, and return dates, examination weeks, etc. (a template for this purpose is appended to this document, which you can adapt or use, if you wish)
* information about how assessments are marked and moderated and expectations about return of assignments and timing and format of feedback
* assessment criteria
* approach to formative assessment and feedback
* policy/approach to word limits and anonymous marking
* information about avoiding plagiarism/academic misconduct
* information about assignment submission (see below for standard text)
* information about the Independent Study, or equivalent.

[**UW Regulations and Procedures**](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/649.htm)

The full regulations governing assessment for all undergraduate and postgraduate awards are to be found in the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/TaughtCoursesRegulatoryFramework.pdf).

Any variations to regulations specific to this programme are to be found in section 20 of the Programme Specification.

**The Programme Specification for this course can be found here:**[Course Leader to add relevant programme specification hyperlink/s here – these are available from the Academic Quality Unit and there may be different links for different years].

Programme specifications for this course and other UW courses can be found on the [Academic Quality Unit webpages](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/662.htm)

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

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| Module | Essay  | Training Programme | Practical Assessment  | Written Assignment | Case Study | Journal | Research Review | Within Module Test | Research Abstract | Practical Investigation | Presentation | Exam | Log Book | Project | Practical Report | Research Proposal | Independent Study |
|  | Percentage weighting of assessment |
| EG1001 |  |  |  | 50 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 50 |  |  |  |  |  |
| EG1002 |  |  | 30 |  |  | 30 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 40 |  |  |

A section setting out the arrangements for internal and external moderation of student assessments should be included. All Institutes and/or course/subject teams must have a formal statement of procedures for the internal and external moderation of marking which takes account of the University stated minimum requirements, and the specific assessment strategy of the course/subject (for example arrangements for moderation will vary for different kinds of assessment). Institute and course/subject policies and procedures should be subject to regular review and formal approval through Institute Quality Committees and should be included as an annexe to the Handbook.

Detailed information about processes for exam board practice and external examination, particularly in the case of more complex or collaborative courses can also be located in annexes where appropriate.

**[The following standard text on regulatory matters should be included in the handbook as shown below. If you feel that any of this is not relevant please discuss with a member of Registry Services or AQU]**

**Submission Deadlines and Late Assignments**

If you submit assignments within 5 five days of the deadline date your work will be marked but will be capped to the minimum pass mark. Please note that you must submit work within **5 actual days** of the deadline date NOT working days.

All assignments submitted later than 5 days will be graded ‘L2’ and will not be marked.

You are expected to submit all assignments by the due date. If you have [mitigating circumstances](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/679.htm) preventing you from meeting the deadline you should submit a claim by the appropriate date. You will be expected to provide evidence to demonstrate mitigating circumstances for the period immediately leading up to the assessment and in addition demonstrate if the work is not submitted why it was not possible to submit the assignment within 14 days of the deadline.

If you submit the assignment within 14 days of the due date and successfully claim [mitigating circumstances](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/679.htm), your work will be marked as if on time.

**PLEASE NOTE**:

* You must submit all items of assessment for a module in order to pass.
* If you do not submit an item of assessment, you will automatically fail the module regardless of any overall mark achieved.

A transcript of results will be available on-line via your [SOLE page](https://login.worc.ac.uk/) once marks have been agreed. To view your results click on the ‘My Results’ Tab when using your SOLE page.

**External Examiners**

All courses delivered in Universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in the UK have an external examiner.  An external examiner is normally an experienced academic from another University or HEI, or in some cases a senior professional practitioner.   The external examiner’s role is to provide confirmation that the academic standards of your course are similar to those on comparable courses at other Universities, and to give an external perspective on the quality of your course. They do this in a number of ways:

* They are involved in reviewing course work assignments and examination questions set for the course and providing an independent view of how appropriate they are for the course.
* They are involved in moderating student work. They do this by receiving a sample of student work from across the different grades for each module/unit. The purpose of moderation is to check the standards of marking and to form a view on student achievements.
* They attend the University’s assessment (examination) boards, which is where grades for modules are confirmed.
* They provide an annual report to the University, on the academic standards, assessment arrangements and quality of the course. This report is written for your tutors but is also made available to students on the course, and is discussed with Student Academic Representatives at Course Management Committee meetings.
* They meet with the course team and may meet with students to talk about the course.

The current External Examiner(s) for your course is/are

Name:

Position:

Institution:

Please note that it is not appropriate for you to contact the external examiner directly and that external examiners do not discuss individual student performance. If you have concerns, please refer them to your Personal Academic Tutor or Course Leader in the first instance.

If you would like to know more about the external examiner system, then you may wish to look at the [University Handbook for External Examiners](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/EE_handbook_final.pdf).

**UW Regulations**

The following hyperlinks provide information on [UW policies and procedures](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/649.htm) relating to alleged academic misconduct, mitigating circumstances, complaints and appeals.

[Investigation of cases of alleged academic misconduct](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/Proceduresforinvestigationofallegedacademicmisconduct.pdf)

[Exceptional mitigating circumstances](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/Proceduresformitigatingcircumstances.pdf)

[Student complaints procedures](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/Studentcomplaintsprocedures.pdf)

[Student academic appeals procedures](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/ProceduresforAppeals.pdf)

1. **Course Management and Student Representation**

This section might include:

* information about the course management committee
* information about the student representative system
* student feedback and module evaluation and how this is used and responded to
* University Student Survey and National Student Survey
* Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body links

**Useful reference points:**

[Student Academic Representation](http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/stars/) (StARs)

[Course Management Committees](http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/stars/aboutstars/coursemanagementcommittee/)

[Module Evaluation Policy](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Module_Evaluation_Policy.pdf)

1. **Work-Based or Placement Learning**

If there are elements of work-based or placement learning, it is expected that students are provided with specific details of operational management, in line with the guidance contained within the University policies. A specific handbook or placement guide for students detailing all aspects is normally expected – cross reference to this can be made here.

**All courses are expected to complete at the point of approval or next periodic review a work-based/placement learning audit record, and to update and maintain this document as an annexe to the course handbook.**

**Useful reference points:**

Placement and Work-based Learning Policy:
[Policy on the Management of Placement and Work-based Learning](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/UW_Policy_for_Management_of_Placement_and_WBL.pdf)

1. **Resources**

It may be helpful to outline the learning resources that will be made available to students, including where they are and any restrictions on their use. This could include reference to physical and online resources e.g. the use of the VLE (Blackboard) and/or other learning technologies.

In the case of collaborative provision, it is important to make clear what resources are available to students at various sites and what is available from the University and the Partner respectively.

The following section gives useful generic UW information which you may wish to include. Contact your Academic Liaison Librarian for further specific information for your course. Further information on Resource Lists can be found here: <http://resourcelists.worc.ac.uk>

\* For directly funded courses, where the Resource Lists system is not available, please continue to provide details of Set Texts, Essential Reading and Further Reading in the module specification.

# Library Services

# <http://library.worc.ac.uk>

Library Services supports students and staff and provides books, journals, online resources, IT, print services and study spaces. Students automatically become members of the library on registering, and can use their student ID card as a library card.

**Library Search**

Access to all library resources<http://librarysearch.worc.ac.uk/>

# Library Subject Guides

<http://library.worc.ac.uk/subject-guides>

**Reading lists**

Reading and resource lists for most UW courses will be made available through the Resource Lists system (previously referred to as Talis). <http://resourcelists.worc.ac.uk>

**Referencing**

The latest guidance and policy relating to referencing at the University of Worcester is available at <http://library.worc.ac.uk/guides/study-skills/referencing>.

**The Hive** (joint academic/public library), near City Campus open 8:30 – 22:00, 7 days a week (excluding bank holidays) <http://www.thehiveworcester.org>

*If logging in to a computer at the Hive, prefix your student ID with* ***uni\***

*e.g. uni\OTHA1\_16*

**Peirson Building**, **St Johns,** 24/7 PC access, study space, Firstpoint

**Riverside Learning Exchange,** PC access Mon-Fri 8:30 – 21:30, Sat and Sun 8:30 – 15:30

**Charles Hastings, City Campus,** 24/7 PC access, social study space

**Jenny Lind Building, City Campus,** PC access is available during standard opening hours, Mon-Fri 8.00 – 18.30. 24/7 PC access is available with student card – check with St John’s Reception/Security for details (01905 85 5000).

**Library enquiries** askalibrarian@worc.ac.uk

**ICT enquiries desk** on Level 1 of Peirson Building or via student/staff portal: <https://www.worc.ac.uk/ict/>

**ICT Major Incident Procedure** In the event of a major system failure, communications will be via the email system and/or the UW web pages.

**E-Learning Support Team** (including Blackboard) eos@worc.ac.uk

**Videos, screencasts and Facebook:**

[www.youtube.com/worcesteralt](http://www.youtube.com/worcesteralt) (Library resources)

<http://quiler.omeka.net/> (Library Resources collection)

[www.facebook.com/uwlibservices](http://www.facebook.com/uwlibservices)

<https://twitter.com/uwlibservices>

1. **Services**

You may wish to outline the nature of other services available to students.

In the case of collaborative provision, it is important to make clear what support services are available to students at various sites and what is available from the University and the Partner respectively.

**Useful reference points:**

[Registry Services](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/) is the central academic and administrative support department of the University for staff and students.

[Student Services](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/) is the central department that provides non-academic support of students ranging from accommodation, through to welfare, disability and careers services.

[Firstpoint](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/your-home/firstpoint.html) is the first point of contact for all student enquiries, e.g. accommodation, fees and finance, registration, ID cards, disability support, study abroad, module choice or any other matters concerning student life at Worcester. This service is based in the Peirson Study and Guidance Centre on the St John's Campus.

[The Language Centre](http://www.worc.ac.uk/your-home/language-centre.html) offers a range of options to help students improve their English, learn a new language or develop the knowledge and skills needed to teach English as a foreign language.

**Appendix 1**

**Template for mapping indicative assessment hand-in dates (2017/18)**

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|  | **Academic Year by Week (2017/18) - Semester 1** |
| **Module Code** | (week 1 commences Mon 24th Sept 2017; week 14 ends Fri 19th January 2018) |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |  | 13 | 14 |
|  | 25/09/17 | 02/10/17 | 09/10/17 | 16/10/17 | 23/10/17 | 30/10/17 | 06/11/17 | 13/11/17 | 20/11/17 | 27/11/17 | 04/12/17 | 11/12/17 |  | 08/01/18 | 15/01/18 |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Worcester Week |   |  |  |   |   |   | Christmas break18 /12/17- 5/1/18 |  | Assessment Week |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |   |   |   |  |
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| **Module Code** | **Academic Year by Week (2017/18) - Semester 2** |
| (week 15 commences Mon 22nd January 2018; week 32 ends Fri 8th June 2018) |
|  | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |  | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 |
|  | 22/01/18 | 29/01/18 | 05/02/18 | 12/02/18 | 19/02/18 | 26/02/18 | 05/03/18 | 12/03/18 | 19/03/18 |  | 09/04/18 | 16/04/18 | 23/04/18 | 30/04/18 | 07/05/18 | 14/05/18 | 21/05/18 | 28/05/18 | 04/06/18 |
|   | Worcester Week |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Easter break 26/3/18– 6/4/18 |  |   |   |  | Assessment Week | Assessment Week |   |   |   |
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