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| **GUIDANCE** |
| **Guidance for mapping course/programme level learning outcomes to modules and awards** |
| **Contact Officer** |
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| **Purpose** |
| The UK Quality Code makes it clear that qualifications must be awarded to mark the achievement of positively defined outcomes, not as compensation for failure at a higher level, or by default. This means that in order to be eligible for the award a student has registered for, they must not only achieve the associated credit requirements in terms of level and volume, they must also have achieved all of the course learning outcomes. Some courses – eg Integrated Masters, PG Cert, PG Dip, MA/MSc programmes, permit students to register for different awards, and in these specific cases, the learning outcomes must be specified for the different awards . This guidance describes the agreed approach for setting out how learning outcomes are aligned to modules and to related exit awards within programme specifications. |
| **Key Principles** |
| Learning outcomes:   * must be specified in terms of what a student will be able to do as a result of completing the award for which they are registered * that are specified for an award must be achievable by all students (which means these must be related to mandatory modules, or be part of all optional modules) * should be linked to the module or modules at the exit level of the award, in which they are primarily assessed (which will normally be a mandatory module or all optional modules) * for the highest level of award specified will be in addition to those for related lower level or smaller volume exit awards.   Specific learning outcomes must be identified for the following related sets of exit awards:   * Integrated Masters, BA/BSc (Hons) degree, PG Certificate, PG Diploma, and Masters degree. |
| **Drafting learning outcome statements: guidance** |
| 1 The first task for the course team is to agree the learning outcome statements for each award. Teams are encouraged to do this under four headings (see below, although this is not a requirement). Learning outcome statements must take account of the qualification descriptors in the FHEQ, subject and/or professional body benchmark or standards statements, QAA qualification characteristic statements, and the University Curriculum Design Policy.  2 The University recommends learning outcomes at course level be developed in relation to the following:  2.1 Knowledge and understanding  Learning outcomes that are related to the subject discipline in terms of concepts and principles, theoretical understanding, methodologies and techniques, and current research etc that enable students to develop and sustain arguments, pose and solve problems etc. Higher level study will relate increasingly to breadth, systematic and specialist knowledge and understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and will give emphasis to evaluation and application of knowledge and understanding, with a focus on originality at Masters level.  2.2 Cognitive and intellectual skills  Learning outcomes that are related to demonstrating ‘higher order’ analytical, evaluative, problem-solving and application skills, which may involve creativity, data collection and analysis, information processing etc in order to carry out projects, sustain arguments, and critique the research and arguments produced by others and by oneself. Higher level study increasingly focuses on what is happening at the forefront of the discipline or field of professional practice, and the ability to deploy skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.  2.3 Practical skills related to employment  Learning outcomes that may be subject/discipline related or more generic but are clearly relevant to future employment (this is generally very clear in courses leading to vocational or professional qualifications). As well as covering professionally related skills (which may relate to using specific types of techniques or equipment, or demonstrating specific capabilities), these might cover research related skills, knowledge and understanding of ethical principles, inter-cultural understanding, working productively with others, as well as demonstrating the ability to work independently, show initiative and develop new skills.  2.4 Transferable/key skills  These often overlap with practical skills related to employment. It is advisable at course level to focus on those transferable/key skills which are really important abilities of graduates of the course, and are expressed at an appropriate level (for example, all graduates would be expected to demonstrate effective communication skills to some degree, but this might be more or less important than some other transferable/key skills, such as team work, leadership, problem-solving etc depending on the discipline and course aims). Moreover, expressing a learning outcome for communication could be *communicate the findings of personal research accurately* or *communicate complex issues, problems and potential solutions systematically and creatively to both specialist and non-specialist audiences via social media* depending on level.  3Please note: drafting learning outcomes and mapping them to modules and to awards is likely to be an iterative process – course teams may well find that adjustments have to be made through the design process.  4 For the sake of consistency, clarity and accuracy an agreed approach for presentation has been established. Tables for the presentation of learning outcomes for specified awards and mapping to modules are included in [programme specification templates](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/662.htm). If a course team wishes to adapt this, it should be discussed with AQU in the first instance.  In mapping modules to course learning outcomes, course teams should consider the following:   * Course level learning outcomes are normally achieved at the highest level of the award and therefore should be mapped to modules at that level primarily * Course level learning outcomes must be achieved by all students in order to gain the award, and therefore it is likely that these will be assessed in mandatory modules, or be achievable through successful completion of any optional module (implies teams should be clear about the role/purpose of optional modules within a course and how they relate to course level learning outcomes) * Mapping learning outcomes to modules involves thinking about the assessment mode of the module/s as well as content and skills * Course level learning outcomes should be related to one or two specific modules (ie the module/s in which the learning outcome is primarily assessed. If the team finds they are mapping to ‘all modules’ then the learning outcomes for the award are probably expressed very generically, and consideration needs to be made to making these more specific, so that they do clearly relate to specific modules.   **5 Cert HE, Dip HE and non-Honours degrees**  5.1 In specifying the learning outcomes for the exit award of a non-Honours degree based on  300 credits including 60 credits at level 6, the learning outcomes will normally not include reference to independent study/project work and associated module. Normally students exiting with a non-Honours degree will be expected to have passed at least 60 credits of the mandatory modules (excluding the independent study or project module) at level 6, where the award structure includes mandatory modules.  5.2 It has been agreed that specific learning outcomes related to the exit awards of Degree  (non-Honours), Dip HE and Cert HE are not required. The programme specification will include the following statements to define eligibility for these awards:   |  | | --- | | **Learning Outcomes: Degree (non-Hons) [*insert name of exit award*]**  In order to be eligible for the exit award of Degree in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 300 credits in total, including 60 credits of mandatory modules (not the independent study or project module) at level 6 as specified on the award map. The precise requirements for this award are stated in section 19 below. |  |  | | --- | | **Learning Outcomes: Diploma in Higher Education [*insert name of exit award*]**  In order to be eligible for the exit award of Diploma in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 240 credits in total including the mandatory modules for level 4 and level 5 of the award as specified on the award map. |  |  | | --- | | **Learning Outcomes: Certificate in Higher Education [*insert name of exit award*]**  In order to be eligible for the exit award of Certificate in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 120 credits in total including the mandatory modules for level 4 of the award as specified on the award map. |   **6 Joint and Major/Minor awards**  6.1 Programmes which offer joint, major and minor awards should be checked to ensure that the modules undertaken by students will justify the award title, with the following in mind, which will be standard statements within relevant programme specifications.   |  | | --- | | **Learning Outcomes: Joint Pathway**  Students following a joint pathway will have met the majority of the learning outcomes for the subject, although the range of knowledge and discipline specific understanding in terms of options or specialisms will be more restricted than for a single or major Honours student. |  |  | | --- | | **Learning Outcomes: Major Pathway**  Students following a major pathway will have met the learning outcomes for the subject but will have focused their studies in relation to subject options or specialisms. |  |  | | --- | | **Learning Outcomes: Minor Pathway**  Students following a minor pathway will have met some of the learning outcomes for the subject (as indicated by the modules studied), and will have focused the development of their knowledge, understanding and subject specific skills in particular aspects of the discipline. |   7 **PG Certificate, Diploma and Masters awards (including Integrated Masters)**  7.1 In relation to PG awards, course teams will need to specify the learning outcomes for each award (this can easily be done by mapping the course level learning outcomes to modules and then awards and thinking about this ‘cumulatively’, ie how the PG Dip builds on the PG cert and the Masters on the PGDip).  7.2 The specific requirements for each award should be clearly stated in section 19 of the programme specification.  7.3 In relation to Integrated Masters awards, the learning outcomes for the Hons Degree award and the level 7 Integrated Masters award must be set out separately in the programme specification.  7.4 Some programmes will be able to specify the modules that must be completed for the  PG Certificate award, whilst others will be more flexible about the modules which can lead to the award. Clearly there must be alignment with the learning outcomes specified for the Certificate award. |

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| **Amendment Dates** | 12/01/2017 Annexe removed and links to programme specs added  28/11/2018 document reviewed and updated for currency due to changes to mapping of honours/non honours awards |
| **Date for Next Review** | 25/05/2019 |
| **Related Policies, Procedures, Guidance, Forms or Templates** | [Programme Specification templates](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/aqu/662.htm)  [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/TaughtCoursesRegulatoryFramework.pdf)  [Curriculum Design Policy](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/CurriculumDesignPolicy.pdf)  [Principles for course design: Guide to writing learning outcomes and developing assessment criteria](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/LearningOutcomesGuide-PrinciplesforCourseDesign.doc) [Principles for course design:  Guidance for Design of Undergraduate Courses](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/PrinciplesandGuidanceforDesignofUndergradCoursesURF.pdf) - updated May 2014  [Principles and guidance for the design of Foundation Degrees](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/PrinciplesandGuidancefortheDesignofFDs.pdf) |
| **Guidance superseded by this version** | n/a |