



## Principles and Guidance for the Design of Foundation Degrees in the Undergraduate Regulatory Framework

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Undergraduate Regulatory Framework (URF) defines the regulations and requirements for all undergraduate awards at the University of Worcester. It is consistent with the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QAA, 2001/2008) which specifies the level of study required for specific types of awards, and also with the *Higher education credit framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England* (QAA, 2008) which sets out guidance on the minimum credit requirements for HE qualifications.
- 1.2. All University approved Foundation Degrees are subject to the Undergraduate Regulatory Framework. Sections 2 and 3 below set out the generic principles and requirements that apply when designing any course governed by the Undergraduate Regulatory Framework. Section 4 outlines some exceptions to these and the specific requirements and guidance for the design of Foundation Degrees. These apply to all University of Worcester approved Foundation Degrees, whether designed solely for delivery at the University or in partnership with Further Education Colleges or other organisations with whom we have formal partnerships.

### 2. General Principles for Course Design

- 2.1. The general principles for course design set out the standard requirements for courses governed by the URF. These requirements are regarded as the norm and courses must comply with the common design principles, structures and other requirements set out here. This ensures comparability of opportunity and experience, and consistency of treatment, for all students on undergraduate courses. In specific circumstances, where course teams consider they have a strong case to deviate from some aspect of these requirements, for example on the grounds of meeting professional body requirements, this must be made clear in the proposal put forward to University Executive for approval and any amendments are subject to the agreement of the Academic Registrar and the Director of Quality and Educational Development.

#### Principles of modular design

- 2.2. The achievement of awards within the URF is based on the principles of **credit accumulation** where credit is gained through the successful achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level(s). The amount of credit achieved relates to the amount of learning, with each unit of credit representing 10 hours of student learning. Each course is divided into discrete modules, which are credit rated and have specific learning outcomes. As students successfully take and pass modules they accumulate credit towards specific awards.

- 2.3. Courses within the URF are modular in design to provide flexibility and promote efficiency in course structure and delivery, to enable development of inter- and multi-disciplinary programmes of study, to facilitate student choice and to ensure equity of experience for students in terms of hours of study, assessment, etc. Modular courses also provide opportunities for accreditation of prior and/or experiential learning (APL/APEL), step on/step off points and intermediate awards for credit achieved.
- 2.4. All elements of a course which are summatively assessed and contribute to the achievement of the award should be integrated within a module which bears credit. This includes work-based learning which is formally assessed and contributes to the award. Similarly, placements in professional courses should be incorporated within a module which is credit-rated if they are formally assessed against specified learning outcomes and contribute to the final award<sup>1</sup>.

### Principles of curriculum design

- 2.5. The design of all courses must take account of the **UK Quality Code in Higher Education** (formerly the academic infrastructure composed of the FHEQ, subject and qualification benchmark statements, and the QAA code of practice), and where relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements.
- 2.6. In addition, curriculum design must be informed by the University [Curriculum Design Policy](#) and the [Assessment Policy](#) and other associated quality standards and policies (see documents under **Policy and Regulatory Framework** on AQU webpages <http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/658.htm> ), including the new principles underpinning the undergraduate curriculum outlined here.
- 2.7. In designing curricula, teams will need to ensure they have given due consideration to, and made explicit:
- the development of higher level cognitive skills, transferable skills and work-related skills, including those related to critical awareness, problem solving, research and enquiry
  - student employability and career management guidance and education, including implementation of the 'employable Worcester (post)graduate' framework
  - matters of inclusion, equality and diversity, and particularly inclusion for disabled students
  - learning experiences which develop international understanding and cultural awareness
  - embedding of academic tutoring
  - the research informed nature of the curriculum
  - developing graduates who are ethically and environmentally responsible.
- 2.8. Course teams are required to specify an **academic calendar for each year of the course** which will provide information regarding the activities to be scheduled for students. This will be an integral part of the course approval process.

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<sup>1</sup> In exceptional circumstances, approval may be given to the incorporation of placements within 'P modules' which are non-credit rated.

## Principles of assessment design

- 2.9. Course teams are expected to take a **strategic approach to the design of assessment**, taking account of changes to the academic year structure and/or module size and the University's Assessment Policy and associated guidance. The Programme Specification requires a brief statement on course assessment strategy (advice is provided in the template).
- 2.10. In designing an assessment strategy, teams will need to ensure they have given due consideration to, and made explicit:
- balance and scheduling of summative assessment across the academic year
  - approach to formative assessment
  - relationship of assessment to learning and teaching and to course and module learning outcomes
  - range of assessment modes and progression
  - approach to assessment and grade criteria
  - arrangements for providing students with feedback on assessments
- 2.11. As well as the statement of assessment strategy within the programme specification, course teams will be required to provide for approval an **assessment map** showing the assessment modes for each module and an **assessment schedule** of summative assessment hand-in dates.

## 3. Course Design Requirements

### Modules in the Undergraduate Regulatory Framework (URF)

- 3.1. A **module** is a discrete unit of study leading to specified learning outcomes which are summatively assessed. Modules are identified by credit value and by level. The level<sup>2</sup> of a module is an indicator of the relative demand, complexity and depth of learning and learner autonomy and is demonstrated by the learning outcomes and the assessment.
- 3.2. Modules must have a specific code and title and be distinctive overall in terms of their aims, specific learning outcomes, content and assessment. This will be defined for each module in an approved definitive '**module specification**'.
- 3.3. Each module for courses in the Undergraduate Regulatory Framework has defined **learning outcomes** at either level 4, 5 or 6. Where a module is offered at more than one level (e.g. level 5 and 6) each version must be presented in a separate module specification with clearly differentiated learning outcomes and assessment.
- 3.4. Each unit of credit represents 10 hours of student learning and the **standard size of a module is normally 30 or 15 credits**. 30 credit modules are normally taken over a whole academic year, with 300 total learning hours; 15 credit modules of 150 learning hours are always taken in one semester.

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<sup>2</sup> For guidance on credit levels see Higher Education Credit Framework for England - HECF: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/england/credit/creditframework.pdf> ; Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer - SEEC: <http://www.seec.org.uk/academic-credit/seec-credit-level-descriptors-2010>; EWNI credit level descriptors (formerly NICATS) [http://www.nicats.ac.uk/about/prn\\_tlevel\\_descriptors.pdf](http://www.nicats.ac.uk/about/prn_tlevel_descriptors.pdf)

- 3.5. The distribution of student learning hours within a module is a matter for the professional judgement of the module leader/team. However, the **requirements for publication of information on learning and teaching activities**, necessitates that information is provided for each module of the amount of time spent in scheduled activity, etc. The revised module specification requires this information.
- 3.6. Modules of multiples of 15/30 credits are *exceptionally* permitted at level 6, as are 30 credit modules delivered in one semester, at level 5 or 6. Courses must establish the educational justification for inclusion of larger credit modules and these are normally only permitted where the subject matter prohibits meaningful use of modules of smaller size. For example, modules requiring practice placements and time for reflection or work-based learning over longer periods, and performance-related areas of curriculum.
- 3.7. Each module will have an assessment strategy which is aligned with the intended learning outcomes and learning activities, and all stated learning outcomes for a module will be summatively assessed at their designated level (for further guidance related to assessment see the UW [Assessment Policy](#)).
- 3.8. Within a course, a module may be specified as **Mandatory** or **Optional**:
- Mandatory modules must be taken and passed
- Optional modules provide choice for students and only have to be passed if they are a pre-requisite for a follow-on module
- 3.9. Each course must have an **Award Map** which lists all modules which are mandatory and optional for the course and any specific requirements for each award. This forms part of the Programme Specification (see the template for [HND/FD Programme Specifications](#) for a Sample Award Map).
- 3.10. Modules may also have **pre-requisites**, i.e. modules that must be taken and passed before another specified module can be taken. The use of pre-requisites must be educationally justified and specific to the module in which they are included, i.e. the pre-requisite is a requirement for the module and does not differ between awards. No module may be a pre-requisite for another module at the same level and careful consideration should be given to the use of pre-requisites in relation to progression through a course and from one level to the next.
- 3.11. Pre-requisites can take the following forms:
- a specific named module (or exceptionally two or more modules)
  - either module x or module y
  - one of module x, y, z, ...
  - any XXXX coded module.

Careful consideration should be given to the use of pre-requisites, and where possible they should be kept to a minimum. Where a module does not have a pre-requisite it will indicate that it can be taken by a student who has not completed any modules from the preceding level.

- 3.12. Pairs of modules at the same level may be specified as **co-requisites**, i.e. a module required to be taken at the same time as another module. Co-requisites must be educationally justified and specific to the module(s) in which they are included, i.e. the co-requisite is a requirement for the module(s) and does not differ between awards. Careful consideration should be given to the use of co-requisites in relation to progression through a course and may have specific implications for part-time students. The use of co-requisites is extremely rare.
- 3.13. It will no longer be necessary to designate modules as 'open' or 'closed'.
- 3.14. Modules may be shared by more than one course, i.e. although offered by a particular subject/discipline they can be identified as part of a course leading to an award in other subjects/disciplines where they are deemed relevant to the overall aims and learning outcomes of that award. Any shared modules will be listed in the award map for a specific course within the programme specification. Modules that are shared across courses in this way must retain the module code designated by their host subject/course.
- 3.15. Modules with substantially similar content should be identified by specifying that they are an **excluded combination**, i.e. a student is not permitted to study both modules as part of their programme of study.
- 3.16. There is no longer a requirement for a mandatory Independent Study module in Honours degree programmes. Where a course/subject does include such a module it is normally 30 credits value at level 6 and can be taken over one or two semesters. Use of the term 'Independent Study' in the URF is reserved specifically and exclusively for this purpose.

#### 4. General Requirements for Foundation Degrees

- 4.1. Foundation Degrees are **Level 5 qualifications** within 'The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)' (see Annexe 1 for the FHEQ Qualification Descriptor for Level 5 - Foundation Degrees). Foundation Degrees have a number of **distinctive features** as outlined in the **QAA Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (FDQB)(QAA, 2010)**. These differentiate the Foundation Degree award from other Level 5 qualifications including Diplomas of Higher Education and HNDs<sup>3</sup>.
- 4.2. Foundation Degrees<sup>4</sup> are intended to **integrate academic and work-based learning** through close collaboration between employers and programme providers. They are vocational higher education qualifications that are designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge relevant to employment and reflect the needs of employees and employers, with a view to meeting regional and/or sector skills requirements. Hence significant emphasis is placed on employer involvement and work-based learning integrated throughout the course/curriculum. Foundation Degrees should also promote inclusion and widening participation and provide a route into higher education for non-traditional learners, with further opportunities for progression to Level 6 of an Honours degree.

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<sup>3</sup> HNDs are normally work-related in knowledge and skills but not work-based. Whereas FDs have a requirement for the integration of WBL, either through relevant employment or sustained work experience, which may be through voluntary work or long placements to enable learning through reflection in and on work.

<sup>4</sup> This definition is informed by the QAA Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (QAA, 2010)

- 4.3. There is no single model for the modular structure of a Foundation Degree. However, all programmes have a total credit value of 240 credits (120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5) and lead to an award of either FdA or FdSc with an exit award of Cert HE (see URF).
- 4.4. As with other undergraduate awards, the number of mandatory modules in any course is discretionary within the confines of the credit requirements for each level of the award. Typically, Foundation Degrees have a more defined programme of modules, with few or no optional modules. Where appropriate, course teams are encouraged to consider a 'framework' approach if developing more than one related Foundation Degree, with the opportunity for the sharing of common 'core' modules and specifying 'pathway' specific modules for individual awards. In this case, each programme of modules must be sufficiently distinct to justify a discrete award title, with a minimum differentiation of 30 credits at Level 5 (excluding any 30 credit WBL module).
- 4.5. UW Foundation Degrees must normally be designed to ensure that at least half of the student's programme of studies at each level is composed of 30 credit modules delivered over the academic year. However, a case can be made during planning and course approval to deviate from this expectation in cases where there is a clear employer need or professional requirement that requires an alternative structure.
- 4.6. The Foundation Degree curriculum must ensure that students are prepared for progression to Level 6 Honours degree study (and further professional development). Thus, the Foundation Degree **must be designed with at least one identified Level 6 Honours/Top-Up degree progression route in mind** during course approval. Consideration should be given to the appropriate alignment of subject content, academic and work-related skills, modes of study, approaches to learning and teaching, types of assessment and professional expectations. In cases where progression will be to Level 6 of an existing Honours degree (rather than a bespoke Top-Up degree), it may be necessary to approve additional modules at Level 6, for example, a WBL version of the 'Independent Study'. Depending on the identified linked L6 Honours degree progression route, it may also be necessary to include a bridging programme or module.
- 4.7. Where Foundation Degree programmes include some form of work-based or long project module this must **not** be referred to as an 'Independent Study'. Use of the term 'Independent Study' in the URF is reserved specifically and exclusively for the purpose of Honours Degree programmes.
- 4.8. There is no expectation of the inclusion of 'Worcester Weeks' in the academic year for a Foundation Degree programme. However, careful consideration must be given to the **structure of the academic year** to ensure a minimum of 12 weeks module contact (or equivalent) per semester and a minimum total of 28 weeks devoted to student learning across an academic year. Two additional weeks are normally set aside for student assessment at the end of Semester 2 (Weeks 29 and 30).
- 4.9. **University semester structure and dates** should be observed in collaborative provision wherever possible<sup>5</sup>. It is particularly important to preserve the changes to the academic year (introduced for 2010-11 onwards) which situated the main point of reassessment at the beginning

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<sup>5</sup> It is recognised that partner colleges/institutions may operate half terms for their HE students at different points in the academic year to those set out for 'Worcester Weeks' in the University academic calendar (and see Section 4.8)

of July and completion of the academic year (and reassessment boards) by the end of July. Exceptions to these arrangements must be discussed and agreed with the Academic Registrar and Director of Quality and Educational Development in advance of the course approval.

## 5 Key Characteristics of University of Worcester Approved Foundation Degrees

5.1 The distinctiveness of Foundation Degrees depends upon the clear and planned integration of the following **key characteristics**, underpinned by work-based learning, as set out in the **Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (QAA, 2010): employer involvement; accessibility; articulation and progression; flexibility; and partnership**. The University expectations related to each are identified below in Sections 5.2-5.7.

### 5.2 Employer Involvement

5.2.1 Foundation Degrees should be developed to meet the **employment needs of a particular sector**, and should equip students with the combination of academic knowledge and vocational and transferable skills. Thus, employer involvement is fundamental to ensure that courses deliver an appropriate mix of academic, generic, work-based and technical or sector-specific skills for the relevant sector, workforce or niche market.

5.2.2 Course Teams should involve employers, local organisations, service users or stakeholders (where appropriate), relevant professional bodies and/or sector skills councils during the development and approval of the award. Consultation should be used to establish the demand for the award and to shape the curriculum and delivery of the award. Employers should, where possible, be involved in the delivery and assessment of the course, in monitoring student performance in the workplace and in on-going development and review of the award.

5.2.3 Course approval documentation must make clear the ways in which employers have been involved in the design of the Foundation Degree and the arrangements for their continued involvement through the delivery and review of the course.

### 5.3 Work-Based Learning (WBL)

5.3.1 The University draws on the definition of work-based learning (WBL) provided in the QAA UK Quality Code (see the UW [‘Policy on the Management of Work-based and Placement Learning’](#) for further explanation and a definition of placement learning):

**Work-based learning** is learning that is integral to a higher education programme, and which is based in the workplace and assessed and credited as part of the University programme. It is achieved and demonstrated through engagement with a workplace environment, and normally includes the assessment of reflective practice and of professional competencies and skills associated with employability.

5.3.2 Authentic and innovative **work-based learning (WBL)** must be integral to the Foundation Degree course design and delivery and uses the work environment as a vehicle for the achievement of learning. The work-based elements of the course must be defined in the aims and learning outcomes of the course and assessed.

- 5.3.3 **WBL** should be appropriate to the specific needs of an employment sector or type of employer and courses should provide opportunities for learners to develop and demonstrate their knowledge and skills both in the workplace and through reflection in and on the real world of work and to gain credit for doing so. In contrast, **work-related learning** uses work as a focus for learning but this is removed from the physical location of the workplace and may employ a range of college or university based activities such as practical or technical skills development, case studies, scenario or problem based learning, simulation and guest speakers from industry.
- 5.3.4 University Foundation Degrees have a requirement for the **integration of WBL** throughout the curriculum, achieved either through **relevant employment or sustained work experience**, which may be through voluntary work or long placements. This may include the use of 'real work' environments within the teaching institution (e.g. travel agency, salon). WBL may be supplemented (but not replaced) by the use of a variety of work-related activities, including work-based projects and simulation.
- 5.3.5 **Work-based learning outcomes** may be delivered both through discrete work-based learning modules or integrated throughout a number of modules. Typically, specific practice or WBL modules take the form of 30 credit modules delivered across an academic year and are undertaken primarily in the workplace. It is expected that **a minimum of 30 credits at both Level 4 and Level 5 will be work-based**. Additional simulated, work-related and learning for work activities must be over and above these 30 credit modules.
- 5.3.6 Approaches to WBL, placements, supporting students in their WBL, related WBL assessment, and relative roles and responsibilities of the University, partners, students, mentors, and employers are normally outlined in a course specific **WBL Handbook** or specific section of the course handbook (see the UW ['Policy on the Management of Work-based and Placement Learning'](#), 2012)
- 5.3.7 Central to the effective management of work-based learning and placements is the **assessment of risk**. The University has produced a **risk assessment tool** to assist course teams with this (see the [Work based and Placement learning - Risk assessment guidance and tool](#)). The maintenance of a **WBL/Placement audit record** is also required for each Foundation Degree (see [Work based and Placement learning - Audit record](#)). This will be an annexe of the course handbook, and will be considered as part of course approval and periodic review. It is recommended that the team considers the risk assessment tool before completing the WBL audit record.
- 5.4 **Accessibility**
- 5.4.1 Foundation Degrees are intended to attract a range of learners from different starting points, to encourage **widening participation and access** into higher education and to provide learners with the opportunity to 'earn, learn and study' close to their homes or workplaces.
- 5.4.2 Consideration must be given to the fair and equitable implementation of the University's admissions policy and procedures, particularly where these are being implemented across a range of partners and/or locations. Given the nature and intention of Foundation Degrees, applicants may come from diverse backgrounds and with varying qualifications. Admissions procedures must be designed to allow students to demonstrate their capacity to benefit from the



Foundation Degree while also providing information, advice and guidance for students who may need further preparation. For further guidance see the University's [Admissions Policy](#).

5.4.3 Programme Specifications should provide clear details of the admissions policy and procedures, entry criteria and admissions criteria for the Foundation Degree and how the University's policy and principles for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL, APCL and APEL) will be implemented.

5.4.4 Consideration must also be given to providing an **equitable student experience** and to meeting the challenges in curriculum design and programme management, especially **in achieving the WBL**. This is particularly relevant when students may be either already in appropriate employment when they enter the Foundation Degree or who progress directly from Level 3 study and require assistance in establishing appropriate placements/work experience.

## 5.5 Articulation and Progression

5.5.1 **Articulation and progression arrangements** are key characteristics of Foundation Degrees and the Foundation Degree Qualifications Benchmark (FDQB)(QAA, May 2010) states that awarding institutions should guarantee progression to at least one bachelors degree with honours, that a bridging programme may be necessary to ensure adequate preparation and that admissions policies and procedures for progression should be implemented consistently and fairly. All such arrangements should be established at approval of the Foundation Degree to ensure that learners progressing onto the next programme are adequately prepared and informed. The key arrangements to support transition to the linked Honours Degree/Top-Up route(s) and any bridging programme necessary for progression must also be identified. For further explanation of the University expectations for progression from Foundation Degrees see the '[Policy for Progression Arrangements from Foundation Degrees to Top-Up/Honours Degrees \(2012\)](#)'.

5.5.2 The **admission arrangements**, procedures for application and any approved specific requirements for progression from the Foundation Degree to each identified Honours Top-Up/Level 6 Honours Degree must be clearly outlined in Section 22 of the Foundation Degree Programme Specification (see the [Programme Specification for FD/HND Courses, Revised September 2012](#)).

5.5.3 **Prospectus entries** for Foundation Degrees (and thus web-based course entries) must identify the approved linked Honours progression route(s) and their associated entry criteria/admissions arrangements for progression to the Top-Up degree and/or direct entry to L6 of an Honours degree.

5.5.4 The **arrangements to support the transition of students** to the linked Honours/Top-Up degree must be set out in the Course Handbook (see [Course Handbook guidance](#)). This 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. This should be scrutinised through the approval process.

## 5.6 Flexibility

5.6.1 Foundation Degrees should provide **flexibility in the student experience**, and may include:

- flexible delivery modes and study patterns, including full time, part-time, distance, work-based, and web-based learning,;
- flexible admissions requirements;
- flexible progression routes, including links with other professional awards and honours degree programmes.

5.6.2 Where **flexible, blended or distributed learning approaches** are employed, particular attention must be paid to the provision of student information and guidance and the planning of support arrangements (see the University [‘Quality standards for Flexible and Distributed Learning \(including distance, e-learning and blended learning\)’](#)).

## 5.7 Partnerships

5.7.1 Partnerships are seen as central to the concept of Foundation Degrees and the successful development and delivery of Foundation Degrees will depend upon a number of formal and informal partnerships, which may include the University, Further Education Colleges, students, employers, and Sector Skills Councils, employers’ organisations and/or professional bodies. Partnerships help to ensure that the programme includes a relevant and appropriate mix of academic and vocational outcomes.

5.7.2 Within the partnership, the University as the degree awarding body has **overall responsibility for the academic standards** of any awards granted in its name and for the quality of learning opportunities delivered wherever these take place and whoever provides them, including those associated with WBL. Thus all Foundation Degrees are subject to the University’s academic regulations and quality processes. Where the Foundation Degree is to be delivered in whole or in part by a partner organisation (typically but not exclusively a further education college) the relative roles and responsibilities will be outlined in the **formal partnership and course agreements**.

5.7.3 Course approval documentation should evidence the ways in which partners have been involved in the design of the programme and the collaborative arrangements for the on-going delivery and operational management of the course. Additional information will be required where a course is approved for delivery by more than one partner, for example, the arrangements to support consistency in the student experience, for the standardisation of assessment practice and for external examining. An [indicative checklist for collaborative arrangements](#) is provided with the course approval documentation. Reference should also be made to the QAA UK Quality Code for HE and to Section B10: ‘Managing Collaborative Arrangements’ (QAA, 2012<sup>6</sup>).

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<sup>6</sup> Under consultation; due for publication Dec 2012

**Contact details**

For further advice and guidance please contact Dr Sue Cuthbert, Head of Collaborative Programmes. Proposals for the development of new Foundation Degrees should be discussed at the earliest opportunity with the Institute and the Head of Collaborative Programmes.

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## Revision History

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Change</b>

**Annexe 1 – FHEQ Qualification Descriptor for Level 5 - Foundation Degrees (pp16-18)****Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 5: Foundation Degree**

The descriptor provided for this level of the FHEQ is for any Foundation Degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other level 5 qualifications, including Diplomas of Higher Education, Higher National Diplomas, etc.

**Foundation Degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

**Typically, holders of the qualification will be able 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
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

**And holders will have:**

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

34 The Foundation Degree is an example of a qualification that meets, in full, the expectations of the qualification descriptor (and the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*)

35 Holders of qualifications at this level will have developed a sound understanding of the principles in their field of study, and will have learned to apply those principles more widely. Through this, they will have learned to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems. Their studies may well have had a vocational orientation, for example HNDs, enabling them to perform effectively in their chosen field. Holders of qualifications at this level will have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.