

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

HNC Business

This document applies to students who commence the programme in or after September 2017

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A
4.	Final award	HNC
5.	Programme title	HNC Business Management
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Standard taught programme, on site at University of Worcester
8.	Mode of attendance	The course is approved for part-time study.
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	QAA Honours degree Subject Benchmark Statement for General Business Management (2007)
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	May 2012 - Approved Audit and Review Committee February 2014 - Amended August and October 2014 - Amendment to regulations and changes made to section 13 (inclusion of practical skills relevant to employment). February 2015 – Updated. August 2015 - Updated to include the new Taught Courses Regulatory Framework August 2017 – AQU amendments

12. Educational aims of the programme

The HNC Business Management is designed to meet the needs of students who are looking for a vocationally oriented part-time study programme. With an applied and contextualised approach to learning, the curriculum explores the role of leadership and management in organisations in terms of effective management of self and others and through the more focused lens of the management of financial resources and the customer interface. The course emphasises personal and professional development, as well as preparing students to be effective lifelong learners and to make a valuable contribution in the workplace and wider community. It is therefore suitable to students who are preparing for a career in business, as well as providing a valuable career enhancement opportunity for those who have existing work experience.

In particular, the purpose of the programme is to provide students with the opportunity:

1. To explore the effective leadership and sustainable management of organisations within a changing external environment
2. To develop specific knowledge and skills in relation to the key stakeholder, customer and profit-oriented operational activities of an organisation which support its ongoing growth and sustainability

3. To engage with a future-oriented, academically coherent and appropriately balanced programme that has logic and intellectual integrity clearly related to the aims and learning outcomes of the programme whilst adopting a distinctive practical and vocational flavour.
4. To be able to apply learning in order to prepare for/ further develop and make an active contribution as part of a career in business and management with the potential for management positions.
5. To gain opportunities to improve self-awareness and engage in personal development planning processes by building a record of their learning achievements. This includes the encouragement of a positive and critical approach towards change so as to support ongoing business sustainability within a dynamic and business environment.
6. To develop an enquiring and self-aware approach to learning by encouraging independent judgement and critical faculties.
7. To benefit from wider participation in HE, experience good practice in relation to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the promotion of positive attitudes to equality and diversity, including race equality and equality for disabled people.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

The need for transferable skills is probably higher than at any time in the past, given the changes in organisations, technology and patterns of employment, the need for increased cultural awareness and development of citizenship. The use of the University's Virtual Learning Environment will underpin and promote the development of students' skills in all these areas and creative and innovative teaching will assist students in developing their learning and academic capability and also to develop as individuals.

The HNC Business Management gives students the opportunity to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes listed below by placing the modules within a practical context. The course will be delivered by lecturers who bring practical experience of their subject into the classroom. The design of modules emphasises the vocational approach to teaching and learning. One of the distinguishing features of this course is the additional academic support timetabled by way of tutorials across all of the modules.

Students will have access to computer laboratories during BUSM 2811 Accounting and Finance. Students will also have access to appropriate PC facilities throughout the programme in order to access learning and library resources and communication with tutors and other students. Applications from diverse applicants are encouraged and reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled students.

A grid plotting the following intended learning outcomes against the respective modules can be found at **Appendix 1** to the **Course Handbook**.

A. Knowledge and understanding

<p>The programme will provide a broad, analytical and highly integrated study of business and management. On successful completion of the course students will be able to:</p> <p>A1 Apply basic knowledge of business organisations and the changing environment in which they operate.</p>	<p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Interactive materials will be available on VLE. Discussion/ forum facilities are also enabled through the VLE.</p> <p>Flexible lecture patterns apply made up of</p>
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<p>A2 Demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding with regard to the operational areas of business organisations and explain how those different areas interact within the organisation.</p> <p>A3 Recognise the importance of people and the factors which influence behaviour in business organisations.</p> <p>A4 Explain how an organisation's resources and financial and customer assets are managed and contribute to the attainment of organisational objectives and sustainability and apply this to real-world situations.</p>	<p>formal lectures, practical workshops (comprising group work sessions) and individual and group tutorials and tasks with evidence-based research e.g. BUSM 1019 Business Challenge and BUSM 1812 Leadership and Management.</p> <p>Summative assessment takes place by a variety of means including written assignments and reports to assess knowledge and understanding. Particular assignments include group presentations to peers (BUSM 1019 Business Challenge), a practical skills audit (BUSM 2812 Marketing, Sales and Customer Management) to show how an individual can contribute to organisational objectives and examinations (BUSM 2811 Accounting and Finance) to allow students to demonstrate individual knowledge and understanding with subsequent oral and written feedback given.</p> <p>Formative assessment is specified for each of the modules.</p>
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B. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

<p>The programme will provide and develop those skills which with training will allow students to assume and accept significant responsibility within organisations. On successful completion of the course students will be able to:</p> <p>B1 Use cognitive skills of critical thinking, analysis, synthesis and reflection.</p> <p>B2 Engage in effective problem-solving and decision making and apply ideas and knowledge to a range of situations.</p>	<p>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</p> <p>All modules require learners to engage in discussion of key issues and the application of key concepts to current business and management scenarios.</p> <p>Cognitive and intellectual skills are assessed by means of a range of assessments, formative and summative, including written reports, oral presentations, group activities and presentations, and research-driven tasks with subsequent oral and written feedback given.</p> <p>Case study analyses and group discussions will be used to give students the opportunity to engage in theoretical and practical problem solving involving complex issues based wherever possible on real-world examples.</p> <p>Analytical skills will be applied to a variety of data such as business reports. BUSM 2811 Accounting and Finance raises issues in which judgement needs to be exercised and</p>
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B3 Conduct research into business and management issues	decisions made in complex and unpredictable areas with significant implications arising. BUSM1812 uses evidence-based research to explore how to improve leadership in practice
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C. Transferable/ Key Skills

<p>Students will develop the transferable skills and qualities to enable them to exercise personal and decision-making responsibility. On successful completion of the course students will be able to:</p> <p>C1 Communicate effectively orally and in writing using a range of media as used in the preparation and presentation of business reports.</p> <p>C2 Use numeracy and quantitative skills including data analysis to interpret and extrapolate business problems and models.</p> <p>C3 Communicate effectively using information technology for business applications.</p> <p>C4 Operate comfortably and effectively within a team environment employing skills such as leadership and team-building.</p> <p>C5 Develop effective interpersonal skills such as listening, negotiating, persuading and presenting.</p> <p>C6 Engage in self-management and self-reflection and become self-aware in relation to personal strengths and weaknesses including respect and sensitivity towards others</p> <p>C7 Engage in self-reflection and become</p>	<p>Examples of teaching, learning and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Students will have the opportunity to produce oral presentations, business reports and personal development plans.</p> <p>BUSM 1019 Business Challenge requires effective teamwork within the context of a group presentation exercise.</p> <p>BUSM 2811 Accounting and Finance involves the construction of a Trial Balance, Income Statement and Balance together with expertise to work with Sage 50 Accounts.</p> <p>Time management skills are conveyed as an integral element of timely completion of formative work, successfully completing assignments to deadline and examination techniques</p> <p>Group discussions and peer assessment (e.g. BUSM1812 Leadership and Management) are used to develop two-way communication skills as well as team building skills</p> <p>In-class activities and feedback to students are used formatively (e.g. BUSM 2811 Accounting and Finance) and summatively (e.g. BUSM1019 Business Challenge) to encourage self-reflection</p> <p>Personal and career development features in summative assessments in BUSM1019 Business Challenge, BUSM1812 Leadership</p>
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self-aware, particularly in relation to personal and career development	and Management and BUSM2812 Marketing, Sales and Customer Management
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D. Practical skills relevant to employment

<p>On successful completion of the course students will be able to:</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to synthesise appropriate theories, models and concepts and apply them to critically evaluate real world scenarios</p> <p>Gain experience in working individually and as part of a team</p> <p>Maximise the opportunity to utilise and share experience(s) and studies to produce concise documents of the kind used in the management decision making process</p> <p>Develop the intellectual and practical abilities required of business leaders and managers</p>	<p>Examples of teaching, learning and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Cognitive and intellectual skills are assessed by means of a range of assessments, formative and summative, including written reports, oral presentations, group activities and research-driven tasks with subsequent oral and written feedback given.</p> <p>Group exercises are used to develop two-way communication skills as well as team building skills e.g. BUSM 1019 Business Challenge.</p> <p>Analytical skills will be applied to a variety of data such as business reports (BUSM 2812 marketing, Sales and Customer Management). Further analysis of these reports will then be required for the purposes of formative or summative assessment as appropriate to the module.</p> <p>Time management skills are conveyed as an integral element of successfully completing a fund-raising task for BUSM 1019 Business Challenge.</p>
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14. Assessment Strategy

The overall purpose of the assessment regime is to enable students to:

- Demonstrate the intellectual rigour commensurate with a course of this nature and to develop the analytical skills expected of study at Levels 4 and 5 ([Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)).
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise appropriate theories, models and concepts from a range of modules studied on the course and apply them to critically evaluate real world scenarios
- Gain experience in working individually and as part of a team
- Maximise the opportunity to utilise and share experience(s) and studies to produce concise documents of the kind used in the management decision making process
- Receive continuous, regular and appropriate feedback throughout the module/ course
- Develop the intellectual and practical abilities required of business leaders and managers

Modules are assessed using a variety of academic and practical assessment activities and methods designed to enable the student to demonstrate achievement of the programme

aims, learning outcomes and the development of transferable skills. As such they are intended to develop and assess the practical knowledge and skills relevant to practising managers in the business sector. The expectation is that as well as being able to do the things they are supposed to do, students also know about the world around them.

A grid plotting the various assessment methods proposed for each of the respective modules, along with the appropriate weighting for each method of assessment (and whether the assessment is individual or part of a group exercise) is set out in the Course Handbook.

In recognition of the credit value of the award and that some students on this programme are likely to be working whilst studying, the majority of the summative assessments are completed on an individual basis, although there is a group presentation included as part of BUSM 1019 Business Challenge because group work is an important feature of the learning experience.

Formative assessment is itself an important element of the programme to help learners learn more effectively and to improve their performance [QAA Quality Code, Chapter B6](#) and opportunities for formative assessment are included in each module. Many of the formative assessment opportunities involve group work. In this way students learn from each other, establish relationships that will help them through the rest of their studies and engage in the 'lived experience' of managing peers.

There are some examinations, notably in BUSM 2811 Accounting and Finance, where assessment is exclusively by way of different types of examination. This is primarily to allow students to obtain optional SAGE accreditation.

In testing student understanding, considerable use is made of relevant and up-to-date case studies, based on real-world examples wherever possible, that encourage students to synthesise, distil and apply theories, models and concepts and then reflect on these.

In line with University requirements, wherever practicable, coursework will be marked anonymously. In marking assessed work, moderation and double marking is standard practice. Where there is some doubt as to the authorship of an assessment, University of Worcester has its own published policy for investigating plagiarism.

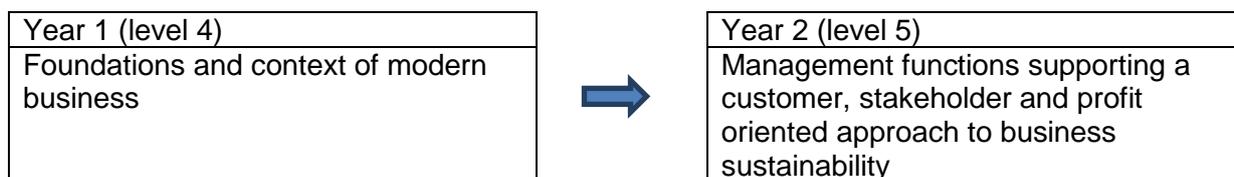
15. Programme structures and requirements

The programme is made up of 4 (30 credit) modules each taught across two semesters (2 modules per year). It has been designed to enable students to gain the foundation knowledge, and to introduce them to the practical skills and contexts they will meet in the world of business.

At year 1 (Level 4), BUSM 1019 Business Challenge is of particular relevance as the 'launch module' for the programme. Its rationale is to develop key skills and knowledge that will be built upon throughout the course. Many of these skills are crucial to graduate employability. BUSM 1812 (Leadership and Management) exposes students to the working environment via effective management and leadership of self and others. These modules are underpinned by realistic real-world business scenarios to begin the development of students' commercial awareness, and business acumen before they progress to the more specialised modules in year 2.

Year 2 (Level 5) further develops students' knowledge, understanding and practical skills in relation to key operational activities of an organisation which support its ongoing growth and sustainability. Students explore the key business management functions required to support a profitable (BUSM2811 Accounting and Finance), customer-focused (BUSM 2812

Marketing, Sales and Customer Management) approach. In this way, the students become acquainted with the some of the tools to manage a business within the context of a changing and challenging external environment.



Award map for Higher National Certificate:

Title: HNC (Part-time)

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)
BUSM 1019	Business Challenge	30	M
BUSM 1812	Leadership and Management	30	M

Requirements at level 4

HNC Business Management students must pass 60 credits in total at level 4 from the above modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)
BUSM 2811	Accounting and Finance	30	M
BUSM 2812	Marketing, Sales and Customer Management	30	M

Additional academic support by way of tutorials will be given across all modules at level 4 and level 5.

Requirements at level 5

HNC Business Management students must pass 60 credits in total at level 5 from the above modules.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at level 5 of the FHEQ.

The QAA Honours Degree [Subject Benchmark Statements for General Business and Management \(2007\)](#) have been referenced to identify the key areas of knowledge, understanding and skills and to guide the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for this programme.

The programme has also been designed to meet both the QAA [FHEQ Descriptors](#) at levels 4 and 5 and [NICATS General Level Descriptors](#) such that successful students will be able to:

- Use a wide range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis (see Intended Learning Outcomes B1, B2, B3 and C2)
- 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 (see Intended Learning Outcomes C1, C2, C3 and C5)
- Develop existing skills and acquire new competencies that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations (see Intended Learning Outcomes B2, C4, C5 and C6)
- Generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at abstract level, with a command of specialised skills and [will have the ability to formulate] responses to well defined and abstract problems (see Intended Learning Outcomes B1, B2, B3, and C2)
- Analyse and evaluate information (see Intended Learning Outcomes B1, B2 and C2)
- Exercise personal judgement across a broad range of functions (see Intended Learning Outcomes for B1, B2, C4, C5, and C6)
- Accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal and/ or group outcomes (see Intended Learning Outcomes C4, C5, and C6)

17. Support for students

Throughout the course students will be allocated an Academic Tutor who will:

- Support academic development and progress. This will include guidance in relation to Personal Development Planning
- Act as the first point of call for any issues or problems arising whilst at University
- Provide an official University reference

The provision of additional formal sessions for academic tutoring and support across all of the subject areas is the key feature of this course. Typically meetings with each subject tutor will take place once each semester and with the Academic Tutor will take place at least four times during the course of the academic year, although some of these meetings may be in groups. However, contact with tutors is encouraged at any time as required.

A further important feature of this course is access to Future Weeks each semester. These will provide the opportunity to maintain and update a self-reflective learning log alongside a CV.

Additionally, the following resources will also support learning during the course:

- Bespoke induction programme including inputs from Student Services as well as course staff
- Course Handbook and module outlines which include details of the weekly learning schedule, reading list, assignments etc
- A dedicated Librarian for the course
- A bespoke VLE to provide access to learning materials, exercises and discussions

- Email (via student email address) to access the Course Leader and module tutors
- Student representation on School committees, including the Course Management Committee, to address course-wide issues and offer feedback (from students on all modules)

18. Admissions

Admissions Policy

The admissions policy for this programme seeks to be inclusive and to encourage participants from a wide and diverse range of backgrounds through equal opportunity.

Entry requirements

The normal minimum entry requirement for HND courses is the possession of 4 GCSEs (Grade C/4 or above) and 1 A Level (or equivalent Level 3 qualification).

The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW website <https://www.worc.ac.uk/journey/a-z-of-courses.html>

See [Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications.

For students for whom English is not their first language, a sufficient standard (IELTS 6.0 or equivalent) must be reached for admission onto the course.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University webpages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>.

Admissions/ selection criteria

Applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW) and applications will be checked by the Admissions Officer.

The University admissions procedures provide opportunities of study to as many students as possible, provided that they have evidence that they have the ability to benefit from study in HE (for example through interview and/or short essay task) and there is a reasonable expectation of achieving an award.

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards, include:

- Module feedback questionnaires – mid module and end of module
- Annual Course Evaluation Report completed by Course Leader
- Periodic (quinquennial) course review including external scrutiny
- Peer Learning Through Observation
- External examiners' reports

- Academic staff annual appraisal
- Feedback from employers
- Course Management Committee
- Meetings with academic and module tutors
- On-line tutorial support systems
- A range of staff development activities provided by WBS designed to improve teaching and learning
- Research - many of the staff involved in teaching on this course will be engaged in the process of research and will use that research to inform their modules

20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#).

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#).

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

Requirements for Progression

- Students studying this course take modules with a designation of Level 4 or 5. Students will not be subject to the standard regulations regarding progression from Level 4 to Level 5 in order to complete this award.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
HNC	60 credits at Level 4 (BUSM 1019, BUSM 1812) 60 credits at Level 5 (BUSM 2811, BUSM 2812)

This award is not classified.

Institute-level Assessment Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Board of Examiners considers students' mark profiles to make decisions about awards and classifications as appropriate.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

- The University of Worcester holds the Investors in People kitemark renewed in 2011.
- The annual National Student Survey 2013 indicated an overall satisfaction score of 4.0 (out of a total of 5)
- Student evaluation of HNC/HND Business Management modules during 2013-14 indicated an average satisfaction rating of 81%
- Student progression rates within HNC/HND Business Management in 2013-14 were approximately 86%. This figure was in line with comparable programmes both run and overseen by the university.
- Careers Destination Surveys – 95.2% of 2013 Business Management graduates were reported as employed or otherwise engaged within six months of graduating
- Many members of Worcester Business School staff engaged in developing the programme are actively engaged in relevant research, consultancy and professional practice in the disciplines of business management
- The External Examiner's report for the programme was extremely complimentary particularly with respect to student achievement.

22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Progression

The course provides the opportunity to apply to progress to another University of Worcester management qualification such as HND Business Management or the University Diploma in Leadership and Management. Alternatively, the HNC qualification can lead to a career in business or management and/ or further development opportunities with universities and professional management associations. For example, the [Chartered Management Institute \(CMI\)](#), and the [Institute of Leadership and Management \(ILM\)](#), provide management and leadership awards at Levels 5, 6 and 7.

Graduate Destinations

The HNC Business Management course has a strong vocational orientation with a key focus on developing knowledge and skills to support your future employability and enhance your career. It therefore provides an excellent foundation for progression.

The course also offers the opportunity of [Sage 50 Accounts Certification](#) at level 1 - this is the only accredited performance-based certification approved by Sage to demonstrate expertise to work with Sage 50 Accounts. It provides official proof that students are competent Sage users and is a valuable qualification to add to a CV.

Student Employability

This HNC provides all students with the opportunity and ability to:

- Demonstrate the application of relevant subject knowledge;
- Research and solve real world problems in their discipline(s);
- Analyse critically and apply sound principles of logic and reasoning;
- Communicate effectively and actively with lecturers, peers and others;

- Become numerate in a variety of formats by seeking out, evaluating and engaging with a wide range of information resources effectively and ethically in the process of critical engagement with their discipline(s);
- Manage their learning and development in a manner which will allow continual and lifelong progress to be made;
- Become adept in using interpersonal skills to deal with others in a professional and effective manner;
- Work as a valuable and valued team member;
- Communicate effectively through a variety of media and enhance their communication skills through written and oral presentation opportunities as appropriate when coupled with appropriate feedback;
- Extend their skills in the use of information and computing technology (ICT)

Worcester Business School has developed a set of Employability Standards in consultation with employers. Details of opportunities to develop these within each module are included as separate items to **Appendix 1** to the **Course Handbook**.

Links with Employers

This course has been designed with the advice and assistance of employers. Many of the assignments will replicate the tasks and skills which will be encountered in employment and regular contact with employers will be maintained by, for example, inviting guest speakers to address students.

- Worcester Business School has a Director of Business Development in order to promote closer links with employers, and this role is supported by a Business Development Manager and the University's Enterprise Manager. These individuals, together with the Course Leader will be responsible for external liaison. Worcester Business School also has an employer advisor to guide and advise upon course development.
- The School has strong working relationships with a variety of organisations that have supported previous courses over time through sponsorship of employees.
- The Business School's specialist research and consultancy centre, the Centre for People at Work, has a wide range of projects and opportunities to provide links with employers.
- The School has been an important focus of projects linked with the West Mercia Police Constabulary through the Shared Police and Higher Education (SPHERE) partnership. Similar arrangements exist with other organisations e.g. Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service for research or consultancy purposes.
- University of Worcester Careers Advisory Service provides on-going support for students

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and the Course Handbook.