# University College Approach to Course Commissioning:

## Stage 1 – Expression of Interest:

Course unit proposers should provide a summary of their unit for initial consideration. This will enable the College to consider scheduling, check for similarities and bring potential teams together, and to provide initial feedback to proposers on any areas they feel will need particular consideration in the final proposal. This ‘Expression of Interest’ should include:

* Unit Title
* Unit Description
* Alignment to the Manchester Matrix
* A brief summary of proposed teaching, learning and assessment approaches with particular consideration given to the challenge of teaching a multidisciplinary cohort.
* Any indication of additional resource requirements (equipment, GTA support etc)
* Opportunities for working with teaching staff from other disciplines, and links with University and Greater Manchester cultural assets
* An indication that this has been discussed within the relevant schools and has indicative approval from the Head/s of School concerned.

Expressions of Interest should be sent to unicollege@manchester.ac.uk

## Stage 2 – Full Course Unit Specification:

Following initial approval course unit proposers should prepare a full unit specification. Template and guidance notes can be found in Appendices 1 (template) and 2 (guidance notes). The Purposes of a Manchester Undergraduate Education (the Manchester Matrix) is included as part of the template document.

## Academic Approval

Course units will be approved by the Academic Management Group acting as an Academic Board. There may be occasions when the Academic Management Group approves a unit but requests some changes. In these instances specific and detailed feedback will be given to the course unit proposer.

***School Approval***

All course units must be approved by the relevant Head/s of School or equivalent.Full Course Approval Document

Please read the attached guidance notes for each section.

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title |  |
| Unit code |  |
| Credit rating |  |
| Level |  |
| Contact hours | e.g. Lectures; Tutorials; Seminars; Workshops, Laboratory sessions |
| Other Scheduled teaching and learning activities\* | e.g. Revision workshops/surgeries; Online discussions/tutorials; Meetings with Academic Advisers; Field trips |
| Pre-requisite units |  |
| Co-requisite units |  |
| Excluded programmes |  |
| School proposing |  |
| Staff responsible |  |
| ECTS\*\* |  |
| Notional hours of Learning\*\*\* |  |
| Facilities required |  |

1. **AIMS**

Please give the general aims of the unit in the box below and then add any comments on how this unit meets the Purposes of a Manchester Undergraduate Education (the Manchester Matrix) in the following table.

*The unit aims to:*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [**The Purposes of a Manchester Education**](http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=9804) | **Graduate Attributes** | **Assessment Criteria** | **Unit Aims**  |
| 1. To develop critical thinking and higher order conceptual reasoning and analytical skills | Manchester graduates will have been encouraged to develop their intellectual curiosity, will have learned how to learn, will have a clear grasp of the fundamental differences between fact and opinion, truth and falsity, validity and invalidity, and will have acquired the basic intellectual tools of logical analysis and critical inquiry.  | Logical reasoningAnalysisSynthesisEvaluation |  |
| 2. To promote mastery of a discipline | Manchester graduates will have mastered the epistemological, methodological and essential knowledge base of at least one discipline or taught in the University, acquiring a basic understanding of the processes of inquiry and research through which existing paradigms are evaluated and new knowledge created in that discipline or disciplines | KnowledgeEpistemologyMethodologyComprehensionApplication |  |
| 3. To broaden intellectual and cultural interests | Manchester graduates will be encouraged to value knowledge for its own sake, and to appreciate virtuosity and creativity, whether in art, music, literature or any other medium through which human discourse and human culture are advanced and enriched. | Intellectual curiosityCultural awarenessUnderstanding of the historical development and cultural context of particular traditions, disciplines or bodies of knowledge |  |
| 4. To prepare graduates for professional and vocational work | Manchester graduates in professional disciplines will have the knowledge and advanced technical skills demanded in an increasingly sophisticated and rapidly changing professional workplace, and will have been provided with opportunities to develop accompanying skills of initiative, teamwork and professional communication. | Professional knowledgeProfessional SkillsProfessional QualitiesCommunication and Team work |  |
| 5. To challenge and equip students to confront personal values and make ethical judgements | Manchester graduates will have been provided with opportunities to develop personal qualities of independence of mind and to take responsibility for the values, norms, assumptions and beliefs that guide their behaviour as individuals and citizens.  | Ethical awarenessGrasp of ethical principlesAwareness of relevant professional ethics |  |
| 6. To prepare graduates for citizenship and leadership in diverse, global environments | Manchester graduates will have been encouraged and enabled to confront their own civic values and responsibilities as local, regional and global citizens. | Awareness of social, political and environmental issuesSense of social responsibilityLeadership skills |  |
| 7. To develop advanced skills of written and verbal communication | Manchester graduates will be equipped with advanced skills of written and verbal communication.  | Ability to communicate verbally and in writing lucidly, accurately, relevantly, succinctly and engagingly  |  |
| 8.To promote equality and diversity[[1]](#footnote-1) | Manchester graduates will have been educated in an environment that embraces and values cultural diversity, and that is fundamentally committed to equality of opportunity regardless of gender, race, disability, religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation or age. | A key consideration informing the design, development, delivery and assessment of all Manchester curricula |  |

1. **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIT**

\* Defined as ‘any activity that a student has to attend or undertake at a fixed point and that has no flexibility for when it is undertaken, and where the student also has access to an available staff member’ (“Provision of Information about Higher Education: Outcomes of consultation and next steps” June 2011/18)

\*\* ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System): There are 2 UK credits for every 1 ECT credit, in accordance with the Credit Framework (QAA). Therefore if a unit is worth 30 UK credits, this will equate to 15 ECT.

\*\*\* Notional hours of learning: The number of hours which it is expected that a learner (at a particular level) will spend, on average, to achieve the specified learning outcomes at that level. It is expected that there will be 10 hours of notional study associated with every 1 credit achieved. Therefore if a unit is worth 30 credits, this will equate to 300 notional study hours, in accordance with the Credit Framework (QAA).

1. **INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category of outcome** | *Students should/will (please delete as appropriate) be able to:*  |
| Knowledge and understanding |  |
| Intellectual skills |  |
| Practical skills |  |
| Transferable skills and personal qualities |  |

1. **LEARNING AND TEACHING PROCESSES (INCLUDING THE USE OF E-LEARNING)**
2. **ASSESSMENT (INCLUDING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT, E-ASSESSMENT, and INFORMATION ABOUT FEEDBACK)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment task** | **Length** | **How and when feedback is provided** | **Weighting within unit (if relevant)** |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEEDBACK *TO* STUDENTS**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

1. **OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEEDBACK *FROM* STUDENTS**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

1. **INDICATIVE READING LIST**

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| --- |
|  |

The Library’s reading list software [Link2Lists](http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/academicsupport/informationandadviceonlink2listsreadinglistsoftware/) provides an alternative to the use of traditional word-processing packages and makes it easy for you to create linked **resource lists**, including both bibliographic references and various multimedia resources. Support and guidance is available from library staff.

1. **APPROVAL**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Role (please add names)** | **Signature**  | **Comments** |
| Head of School |  |  |
| Chair of College Academic Board |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date of current version** |  |

**Guidance Notes for the University College Unit Specifications Template**

**Introduction**

Programmes of study are divided into programme units; and each unit must have a specification. The unit specification provides a concise summary of the unit to provide a central record, to assist programme design and to inform students. Handbooks and information provided to students when they enrol on the unit will include more detailed documentation, e.g. a breakdown of learning hours, bibliography etc.

This guidance document has been amended to reflect the principles of the University College but is aligned to, and compliant with, University policy and procedures.

**Notes on the completion of the template**

Please be concise and do not feel that you have to fill all the space provided!

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

* Unit Code: Please indicate if there is an existing code (i.e. this is a request to co-code a course unit with the College) or if a code is required.
* Credit rating: units for undergraduate programmes are 10 credits or integral multiples thereof, and for masters programmes are 15 credits or integral multiples thereof; in Year 4 of integrated master’s programmes, 10 and 15-credit units may be mixed. The University College is primarily interested in commissioning 10-credit units although if there is a good case for only delivering a unit in a 20 credit block they will be considered. The College will not be running 15 or 30 credit units.
* Level: the notion of levels has changed slightly with the introduction of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), published in 2001 and revised in August 2008 - <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/FHEQ08.pdf>

Different levels should align to those in the FHEQ. *Previously*, first year undergraduate was viewed as being at level 1; second year undergraduate, level 2; third year undergraduate, level 3; masters, level 4. Foundation Year was level 0.

*However, under the FHEQ*, first year undergraduate is now seen as level 4; second year undergraduate, level 5; third year undergraduate, level 6; masters, level 7. Foundation Year is level 3 under the FHEQ.

The College is primarily commissioning courses at Level 2 (level 5 under the FHEQ) although units at other levels will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

* Pre-requisite units: units that must have been taken previously. It is not recommended that University College units have pre-requisites. If you are proposing a unit with pre-requisites please discuss it with a member of the College Academic Board in advance.
* Co-requisite units: units that must be taken at the same time. It is not recommended that University College units have co-requisites. If you are proposing a unit with pre-requisites please discuss it with a member of the College Academic Board in advance.
* Excluded programmes: if this unit covers a specific subject area already taught within a specialist degree programme or pathway but is of wider interest then students on those degree programmes or pathways should be excluded from this unit. Please note all programme codes that should be excluded.
* School proposing: the School with responsibility for proposing the unit. There may be multiple schools involved in the delivery of teaching and they should all be listed here. The School of the unit convenor should be highlighted.
* Staff responsible: Please list all staff responsible and their school. Please indicate which member of staff will be acting as the course convenor. Requirements for GTA support should be noted here. If there are unusual administrative requirements (e.g. organisation of placements or field work) these should be noted here and should include an indication of whether this is existing resource or not. Unit leaders should use this section to demonstrate excellence in teaching as this is an important facet of the College offer to students. Please indicate in this section if you intend to use external speakers.
* ECT: (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System): There are 2 UK credits for every 1 ECT credit, in accordance with the Credit Framework (QAA) - <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/creditframework.pdf> . Therefore if a unit is worth 30 UK credits, this will equate to 15 ECT.
* Notional hours of learning: The number of hours which it is expected that a learner (at a particular level) will spend, on average, to achieve the specified learning outcomes at that level. It is expected that there will be 10 hours of notional study associated with every 1 credit achieved. Therefore if a unit is worth 30 credits, this will equate to 300 notional study hours, in accordance with the Credit Framework (QAA).
* Facilities required: Please indicate what facilities you will need for teaching and learning activities on this course unit.

2. **AIMS**

A set of statements about the purpose of the unit, usually expressed in terms of what you intend as the provider. The unit aims should be mapped to the Purposes of a Manchester Undergraduate Education (The Manchester Matrix).

3. **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIT**

Please provide a concise description of the unit with particular reference to interdisciplinary content and skills development opportunities.

4. **INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

You do not have to include outcomes under every heading, but rather to state the main things you expect a student to do on successful completion of the unit. Outcomes are normally expressed at typical or modal level (i.e. an ‘average’ student **should** attain all of the outcomes) although some disciplines where competence is essential use the threshold level (i.e. all students **will** attain each outcome).

In addition to the general University guidance above, University College unit proposers should also consider the nature of a multidisciplinary cohort and be cautious about assumptions of prior knowledge in specific subject areas.

ILOs should be expressed in terms of academic competencies, personal development and transferable skills within the context of the subject matter.

5. **LEARNING AND TEACHING PROCESSES**

A brief description of the learning and teaching methods employed on the unit, including the use of eLearning. All College units should meet, and where possible, exceed the minimum eLearning specification. Innovative curriculum design is encouraged but is not a requirement.

6. **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment task: an indication of the nature of the task (e.g. unseen examination, coursework essay, portfolio, including any use of eLearning).

Length of task: expressed using an appropriate measure (e.g. word count; length of examination; expected number of hours of student effort).

Weighting of task: in addition to summative assessment, this section may describe any formative assessment that does not directly contribute to a student’s grade on the unit.

In addition to the University guidance above unit proposers should take into consideration the academic support needs of students when designing assessment tasks. For example, some students will not come from disciplines where essay writing is common and may need additional guidance. Taking into consideration the notes on ‘Intended Learning Outcomes’ unit proposers may wish to design skills or competency based assessments for the majority of the assessment tasks to ensure that students from different disciplinary backgrounds are not disadvantaged

1. Note: This Educational Principle has been added to the President’s list of “The Purposes of Higher Education”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)