

School of Arts, Languages & Cultures Course Unit Descriptor Guidance

Note: This guidance document should be read before course unit directors complete the SALC Course Unit Descriptor form, which can be found here:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=34521>

The fields listed in Course Unit Descriptor form mirror those available on the online Course Unit Information Portal (CUIP / online course unit database). The information held on the Course Unit Information Portal is presented to both current students (via My Manchester) and to applicants (via the external programme marketing pages). The guidance provided by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) requires us to ensure that programme information accurately reflects what students will study and how they will be assessed. If we do not meet our obligations, we may be in breach of consumer law and risk enforcement action. It is therefore essential that the information presented to students and applicants reflects the reality of the course unit delivered to students.

All Course Unit Descriptors should be reviewed at least every two years and saved to the correct up to date form.

All proposals for new course units must be presented using the latest version of the Course Unit Descriptor form and submitted to the Subject T&L Committee and School UGC or PGTC Committee (and Faculty in some cases) for review as part of the programme approval process.

Please update course unit descriptors on the OneDrive folder [here](#). in the new OneDrive folder: SALC Programme and Curriculum Review/Course Unit Descriptors:

1. Aim of the School-level Course Unit Review Meeting

The aim of the review process by the School UG or PGT Committee is:

(i) to ensure that new and revised course units conform with SALC guidelines regarding contact hours, assessment types and word lengths, feedback points, etc.

(ii) to foster best practice in course unit design, e.g. in the formulation of effective course unit Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes

(iii) to help promote consistency across the School in course unit documentation

(iv) to ensure the effectiveness of programme-level Quality Assurance processes

As these points suggest, the aim is to complement rather than duplicate processes carried out at departmental level. For that reason, questions concerning the intellectual content, rigour or level of the units will probably not be discussed, although attendees are welcome to raise any issues of concern.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Credit rating	<p>In SALC the weighting for CUs is normally 20 credits at UG level, and 15 or 30 credits at PGT level.</p> <p>The credit rating for the course unit must comply with The University of Manchester's requirements (course 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).</p>
Course Unit Title	Course units should have a short descriptive title that will give students a clear indication of the area covered in the course unit.
Unit Code	Assigned by the Programme Administrator
Unit Level / FHEQ Level	<p>The level must be in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first year undergraduate is FHEQ level 4 • second year undergraduate is FHEQ level 5 • third year undergraduate is FHEQ level 6 • master's is FHEQ level 7
Contact Hours and other scheduled activity	<p>Example: Lectures: 1 hour weekly over 10 teaching weeks. Seminars: 2 hours weekly over 10 teaching weeks. Field trip: 3 hour UK-based field trip to a museum, in week 5. Contact hours do not include travel time.</p> <p>See further guidance regarding contact hours on page 7</p>
Teaching Period	e.g. semester long or year long
Teaching Staff	Identification of the key academic staff involved in the delivery of the course, specifically the course unit co-ordinator(s). This should normally always include a Course Unit Director, but in cases where the unit's staffing has not been finalized or is in doubt, the Programme Director's name can be given. Throughout its life history, each course unit needs a named member of staff as a point contact.
ECTS	<p>ECTS = European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. There are 2 UK credits for every 1 ECT credit, in accordance with the credit framework (QAA).</p> <p>e.g. a 20 credit unit = 10 ECT credits</p>

EXTERNAL FACING COURSE UNIT OVERVIEW

[prose: 150 words max – leave blank if the same as course unit overview, below.]

A general overview of the course unit should be given for the purpose of publishing a basic synopsis of the course unit, to applicants and prospective students. It should be clear and informative.

COURSE UNIT OVERVIEW

[prose: 150 words max]

The description is a concise summary of the course unit (e.g. indicating the context of the unit within the programme of study and the content covered by the unit).

Any distinctive features of the course unit have been clearly articulated.

The medium of language (where it is not English) in which the course unit will be taught or assessed should be noted here.

The proposed course unit should not unnecessarily duplicate the content of other course units offered. Where there is some overlap in the subject matter, there should be sound justification and the relevant course unit lead consulted?

AIMS and INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

AIMS

[bullet points: 150 words max]

The aims provide a brief, but clear, overall idea of the educational purposes of the course unit, articulating what the course unit intends to deliver and the rationale.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Please see Guidance for academic staff on writing aims and intended learning outcomes in their programme design: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=4713>

The ILOs of the proposed course unit are consistent with and do not replicate those of the programme(s) on which it will be offered.

The ILOs are designed so that they are achievable by a wide range of students including students where reasonable adjustments may be required. NB. 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).

The ILOs (knowledge; understanding; intellectual skills; practical skills; subject specific skills; transferable skills) align with the [FHEQ](#) and are appropriate in relation to any relevant [subject benchmark statements](#) and / or professional body requirements (normally the subject-level committees would be expected to be familiar with the subject benchmark statements).

If the course unit is related to a placement element of a programme it is clear how the placement learning fits into the design of the course unit.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Details should be listed of the specific expected learning outcomes, for a student studying this course unit, in relation to the students' knowledge and understanding of the subject.

[2 - 5 bullet points]

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

Details should be listed of the specific expected learning outcomes, for a student studying this course unit, in relation to the students' intellectual skills.

[2 - 5 bullet points]

PRACTICAL SKILLS

Details should be listed of the specific expected learning outcomes, for a student studying this course unit, in relation to the students' practical skills.

[2 - 5 bullet points]

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

Details should be listed of the specific expected learning outcomes, for a student studying this course unit, in relation to the students' transferable skills and personal qualities.

[2 - 5 bullet points]

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

150 words max

Details should be listed of the employability skills which a student can expect to gain from successfully taking this course unit.

For guidance on embedding employability in curricula, and in ILOs, see:

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/humanities/teaching-support/quality/programme-development/employability/>

SYLLABUS

It is possible, though not essential, to include a brief week-by-week breakdown of class topics in this section. It should be stated clearly when these are representative examples only (for example, if some topics are not covered every year).

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The teaching and learning methods proposed (including the use of eLearning) should be appropriate and support students in achieving the ILOs in terms of knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, subject specific skills, transferable skills, progression to further study and/or employment and personal development etc.

If any innovative teaching methodology is being proposed the appropriateness of this should be considered and whether any significant resourcing requirements can be met (e.g. equipment, appropriate teaching rooms etc.).

General information can be found on the Faculty of Humanities e-learning web pages:

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/humanities/teaching-support/elearning/>

Descriptors should provide information on the use of Blackboard within the course unit.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Please consider the SALC Guide to Assessment when designing the course unit:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=18550>

Assessment type, length, weighting etc. should all adhere to Faculty guidelines, which are outlined on page 7-9 of the SALC Guide to Assessment.

Please indicate which parts of the assessment are formative only, formative and summative, and summative only.

All types of assessment should be included; including the associated weighting value for each type (these should add up to 100% in total for the course unit).

The medium of language (where it is not English) in which the assessment will be assessed should be noted here.

Assessment task	Formative or Summative	Length	Weighting within unit (if summative)

RE-SIT ASSESSMENT

Assessment task	Length

FEEDBACK METHODS

In this section, details should be given on how students will receive feedback on assessed and non-assessed work.

The timing of the release of feedback for summative assessments must be compliant with the University's Policy on Feedback to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=6518>

For all formative assessments and assessed coursework, feedback will normally be provided within 15 working days after the final submission deadline or exceptionally, and subject to prior approval by

the faculty, within 20 working days after the final submission deadline; extensions to 20 working days will be approved on academic grounds only and must be clearly communicated to students in advance.

For single pieces of assessed work carrying a credit weighting of 30 credits or more, the maximum time for feedback to be given is normally 30 working days after the final submission deadline.

Feedback method	Formative or Summative

REQUISITES

Available on which programme(s)?	The programmes for which this course unit specifically forms part of the curriculum, should be noted here.
Available as Free Choice (UG) or to other programmes (PG)?	<p>Flagging a course unit as being 'Available as Free Choice' identifies whether or not it is available to students taking free choice units, outside of the standard curriculum for their program of study and/or School/Faculty.</p> <p>'Yes' is the default assumption. As with prerequisites, staff should not normally impose restrictions on admittance to course units except on pedagogical grounds.</p>
Pre/Co/Antirequisite units	<p>Listing Pre/Co/Anti-requisite units informs student choice when selecting units and supports the Programmes Administrator with monitoring a student's course unit selection.</p> <p>Pre-requisite unit – list any course unit which must have been taken before a student can register for this unit.</p> <p>Co-requisite unit – list any course unit which must be taken alongside this unit.</p> <p>Anti-requisite – list any course unit which cannot be taken in conjunction with this unit.</p>
Medium of language	Please note here the medium of language in which the course unit will be taught or assessed.

RECOMMENDED READING

The indicative reading list contains core texts most relevant to the course unit.

No more than 5-8 items should be listed

NOTIONAL HOURS OF LEARNING (CONTACT HOURS, OTHER SCHEDULED ACTIVITY AND INDEPENDENT STUDY)

All course units' notional hours of learning must be in accordance with the [Credit Framework](#) – Quality Assurance Agency – which expects that there will be 10 hours of notional study associated with every 1 credit achieved. Therefore if a unit is 20 credits, this will equate to 200 notional study hours.

The contact hours for the unit must meet or exceed the Faculty's specifications, as follows:

Undergraduate Students

- For each year of study in the Faculty of Humanities, students will have the opportunity to spend approximately 25% of their time in activities which involve contact with a member or members of staff, and which may be provided at unit or programme level.
- Within that, there must be a minimum of 30 hours scheduled teaching and learning activities per 20 credit unit.

A pro-rata calculation will be made for 10, 30 or 40 credit units.

Postgraduate Taught Students

- 15 credit course unit (taught element of programme only) – minimum 20 hours contact
- 30 credit course unit (taught element of the programme only) - minimum 40 hours contact

NB: A pro-rata calculation should be made for course units with alternative credit weightings.

The minimum contact / interaction can be made up of both scheduled and non-scheduled (i.e. opportunities for contact / interaction) activity.

You can find further guidance regarding contact hours on the Faculty Teaching and Learning website: <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/humanities/teaching-support/policy-and-guidance/programme-management/>

The below is an example of how the notional hours of learning might be calculated by a Course Unit Director when preparing for a 20 credit unit:

- *33 hours teaching contact (11 x one hour lectures and 11x two hour seminars)*
- *7 hours of additional contact through field trips (2 x 3.5 hour trips to a museum)*
- *40 hours background reading and research*
- *60 hours preparation for classes (including studying seminar texts, preparing formative assignments, reviewing lecture notes, and reflecting on learning)*
- *60 hours assessment (actual assessment time plus preparation), e.g.*
 - *50% examination (2 hour assessment plus 28 hours preparation)*
 - *50% 2,000 word essay x 2 (15 hours x 2)*

ADDITIONAL NOTES – please be clear if these are for publication online, or for the approval panel only.

[If applicable]

APPROVAL

The CU cannot start until it has been formally approved by the relevant Departmental Committee and by the SALC UGC / PGTC.