HSU HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

Version: 2.0
Effective from: September 2024
Policy Owner: Head of Learning and Teaching
Category: Course Design, Development and Management

Course Design Framework

1. Purpose

1.1 This collection of policy and procedure outlines the key features and considerations in the design (and re-design) of academic curriculum which is designed to award academic credit including both units and full courses. Some principles refer to specific forms of provision or to specific types of delivery for courses or units. Where this is the case, the specificity is stated within the documentation.

1.2 Expectations relating to design activities and specific design requirements are set out within the following separate policy and procedures which make up the framework:

- Course Structure Policy and Procedure
- Curriculum Design Policy and Procedure, which includes:
    - Curriculum design and redesign activities
    - Curriculum, learning and teaching design
    - Assessment design

1.3 The framework should be considered with reference to the standard University Regulations for Admissions and Assessment.

1.4 The University policy and procedures for the approval of new and redesigned courses, including responsibilities and documentation requirements for approval processes are set out within the Course Approval Policy and Procedure. The University policy and procedures for changing the content of units and courses between approval and periodic review is set out in the Course and Unit Modification Policy and Procedure. Both of these documents should be read alongside this framework as applicable.

2. Regulatory Context

2.1 These documents set out the ways in which we work to ensure our course design principles allow us to meet the regulatory requirements set out by the Office for Students in the Conditions of registration, specifically B1 and B4 conditions as outlined at the end of this document. This framework has also been designed to align with the expectations and indicators set out within the QAA UK Quality Code, and in reference to expectations regarding principles of design that are common to other relevant and specific PSRBs applicable to the University portfolio.

3. Key Responsibilities

- ***Academic Board*** is responsible for overseeing updates and amendments to policy principles outlined within this framework
- ***ASQC*** is responsible for overseeing the application of the principles set out in this framework
- ***Education Committee*** is responsible for providing oversight and enhancement of the approaches to curriculum design set out within the framework
- ***Course Steering Committee*** is responsible for retaining oversight of application of the policy principles set out below, and for considering proposed changes to curricula as part of the relevant approval procedures.
- ***The Head of Learning and Teaching*** is responsible for overseeing the application of, and reporting on, the principles set out below. They will also oversee the periodic and continuous review of the document and associated enhancements and updates.
- ***The Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance)*** is responsible for supporting the oversight of the Course Structure Policy and Procedure and for overseeing the procedures for Course Approval and Course and Unit Modification.

- ***Heads of School/Centre*** are responsible for oversight of the application of the principles set out below across the academic provision.
- ***Course Leads*** are responsible for overseeing the application of the principles set out below across the course they lead. The Course Lead will lead any discussions relating to curriculum design and re-design and will actively engage with key stakeholders, both internally and externally. The Course Lead is also responsible for liaising with relevant PSRBs in relation to requirements and expectations, approval and accreditation arrangements and review periods.
- ***Unit Leads*** are expected to have a good understanding of the Course Design Framework and for ensuring practice and suggestions in relation to curriculum design or re-design align with the principles set out below.
- ***Registry*** are responsible for providing support to ensure that the principles set out in this framework can be applied operationally, and for supporting post approval implementation following approval or modification.

4. Policy principles

4.1 All courses and units are required to be designed and delivered in accordance with these principles:

i. Design and delivery of diverse and innovative types of curricula are encouraged to support the strategic aims of the University

ii. Course and unit design is aligned to the principles set out in the University Education Strategy and the design principles set out below.

iii. All curricula will be designed with reference to relevant External Frames of Reference.

iv. Where possible, relevant Professional, Regulatory or Statutory (PSRB) accreditation should be sought. This is a requirement for regulated courses.

v. Curriculum must be designed to promote and allow for interdisciplinary learning opportunities.

vi. Curriculum design must consider current sector practice relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, employability, sustainability and digital competency.

vii. Courses should include placements and practice-based learning opportunity where possible. This is normally a requirement for regulated courses.

viii. All courses and units will be recorded within the approved University Course and Unit specification templates.

4.2 Further policy principles are set out within the individual documents which make up the framework.

5. Procedure

5.1 All procedure information is set out within the individual documents.

6. Information Management requirements

6.1 All courses and units will be recorded in the relevant approved specification:

- ***Course Specifications*** are published internally to staff and students and externally via the website. Course specifications are provided within the course pages of the website and are therefore classed as pre-contractual material information, as well as forming part of the student agreement.
- ***Unit Specifications*** are published internally to staff and students.

6.2 Definitive copies of both Course and Unit specifications are held centrally by Registry.

6.3 A list of approved Courses (definitive awards of the University) is maintained by the Quality Team within Registry.

7. Reporting and Oversight requirements

7.1 Course design will be considered during specific established procedures (for example annual and periodic review) and course teams are encouraged to reflect on how curriculum design impacts the learning experience and outcomes as part of routine delivery.

8. Appendices- Supporting documentation, templates and guidance

8.1 ***Framework documents:***
Course Structure Policy and Procedure
Curriculum Design Policy and Procedure

8.2 ***Templates:***
Course Specification template (Standard courses)
Course Specification template (Apprenticeship courses)
Unit Specification template (Standard courses)
Unit Specification template (Apprenticeship courses)

The Course Design Summary template is required for all Course Approvals. This template is associated with the Course Approval Policy and Procedure.

8.3 ***Guidance*** is included in the individual policy and procedures.

9. OfS conditions of Registration relevant to this Framework

- B1.2 Without prejudice to the principles and requirements provided for by any other condition of registration and the scope of B1.1, the provider must ensure that the students registered on each higher education course receive a high-quality academic experience.
- B1.3a- Courses are up to date
- B1.3b- courses provide educational challenge
- B1.3c- courses are coherent
- B1.3e-courses require students to develop relevant skills
- B4.a- students are assessed effectively
- B4.b each assessment is valid and reliable
- B4.c- academic regulations are designed to ensure that relevant awards are credible
- B4.d- academic regulations are designed to ensure the effective assessment of technical proficiency in the English language in a way which appropriately reflects the level and content of the course
- B4.e- relevant awards granted to students are credible at the point of being granted and when compared to those granted previously.

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HSU HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

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Effective from: September 2024
Policy Owner: Assistant Registrar (QA)
Category: Course Design, Development and Management

Course Structure Policy and Procedure
Part of the Course Design Framework

1. Scope and Purpose

1.1 This policy and procedure describes the requirements for Course Structure and should be utilised at the point of design (or re-design) of Courses and Units. This policy and procedure should be utilised alongside the Curriculum Design Policy and Procedure at the point of designing a new course or unit, and at the point of re-design following periodic review (or targeted review).

1.2 The University policy and procedures for the approval of new and redesigned courses, including responsibilities and documentation requirements for approval processes is set out within the Course Approval Policy and Procedure. The University policy and procedures for changing the content of units and courses between approval and periodic review is set out in the Course and Unit Modification Policy and Procedure. Both of these documents should be read alongside this framework as applicable.

1.3 The following principles and requirements for application and oversight are relevant to all provision, unless specificity or exception is stated. Where course development teams wish to request an exception to any of these principles, this must be in accordance with the procedure set out in section 11, below.

Policy and Procedure

2. Awards of the University

2.1 Academic Board approves proposals for the addition of new awards. The table below lists the current definitive list of awards the University may offer, including the required level and volume of credit.

Award	Abbreviation	Credit	Interim Awards
Certificate of Higher Education	CertHE	120 (90 at FHEQ level 4)	None (credit only)
Diploma of Higher Education	DipHE	240 (90 at FHEQ level 5)	Cert HE
Foundation of Sciences	FdSc	240 (90 at FHEQ level 5)	Cert HE
Bachelor of Science without Honours	BSc	300 (60 at FHEQ level 6)	Cert HE Dip HE
Bachelor of Science with Honours	BSc (Hons)	360 (90 at FHEQ level 6) (Normally 120 at Level 4, t 120 at Level 5 and 120 at Level /6	Cert HE Dip HE
Integrated Masters *Master of Chiropractic with Honours* *Masters of Osteopathy with Honours*	 *MChiro (Hons)* *MOst (Hons)*	480 (Normally 120 at Level 4, 120 at Level 5, 120 at Level 6 and 120 at Level 7)	Cert HE Dip HE BSc (Hons
Postgraduate Certificate	PGCert	60 (40 at FHEQ level 7)	None (credit only)

Award	Abbreviation	Credit	Interim Awards
Postgraduate Diploma	PGDip	120 (90 at FHEQ level 7)	PG Cert
Master of Science with Honours	MSci (Hons)	180 (150 at FHEQ level 7)	PG Cert PG Dip
Master of Business Administration	MBA	180 (150 at FHEQ level 7)	PG Cert PG Dip
Master of Science with Honours	MSc (Hons)	180 (150 at FHEQ level 7)	PG Cert PG Dip
Master of Arts with Honours	MA (Hons)	180 (150 at FHEQ level 7)	PG Cert PG Dip
Master of Research	MRes	180 (150 at FHEQ level 7)	PG Cert PG Dip

2.2 **Credit allocations** must align with the Higher Education Credit Framework for England (2021). Credit values for units must be stipulated in multiples of 10, and standard practice is for units to be allocated 20 or 40 credits to enable alignment to the standard academic calendar and to enable the creation of opportunities for inter-professional learning via common units. Exceptions may be permitted only on the basis of external factors including PSRB requirements.

2.3 University Course and Unit Specifications record the credit, and the equivalent **European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)** is based on the principle that 60 ECTS credits are equivalent to the learning outcomes and associated workload of a typical full-time academic year of formal learning. In practice, two UK credits are regarded as equivalent to one ECTS credit.

2.4 **Interim Awards** (also referred to as exit awards) will be made available within all courses, where possible. Interim awards recognise the completion of learning based on credit value and in accordance with the Higher Education Credit Framework for England (2021). Conferment of an interim award is always dependent on the application of the specific progression requirements and Assessment Regulations for the course.

3. Course Titles

3.1 Course titles are definitive and must be reflected accurately in all formal and informal documentation and communication relating to the course. The subject matter of the planned course must justify the title proposed. To justify the award, subject specific credit should normally be available for each level of the course. The dissertation is accepted as subject specific credit but must not be the sole justification for the title. Interim Award titles need to be given specific consideration as designation of some titles are protected and require completion of the entire course.

3.2 Where units are designed to run as common units across a variety of courses, if the intention is to adapt the unit content for different subject specialisms, this must be clearly articulated within the Unit Specification and associated supporting unit information. At the point of approval, the Course Design Summary and Resources document should also outline the rationale for this form of unit design and how it has informed the course title.

3.3 Changes to approved Course titles must be proposed and presented for approval utilising the procedure set out in the Course and Unit Modifications Policy and Procedures. Where the change is part of a Course Approval, the timeline requirements for the procedure is set out in the Course Approval Policy and Procedure.

4. Format of delivery

4.1 Course design must include consideration of the delivery arrangements for all proposed format of study at the point of approval. All formats should be designed to ensure alignment with the standard academic calendar. Additional information relating to standard contact time is available below.

4.2 The following formats of delivery may be offered (as applicable):

Format	Credits/ Hours per semester	Other considerations
Full-time	Around 60 credits/ 600 hours, standard is 2 semesters of taught content.	Placement requirements need to also be factored into full time course design.
Part-time	Normally half the credits and hours expected or full-time, and no more than two thirds equivalent.	Design should ensure that units studied in part-time mode can be completed with the academic cycle (September to August or January to December) and not cross academic cycles.
Apprenticeship Full-time	This mode takes account of the required on and off the job learning hours for the specific apprenticeship standard.	Learning, teaching and assessment activities will take up far fewer hours than standard full-time mode.
Accelerated Full-time	Normally either no more than1.5x the credits of standard full-time, or teaching and learning is completed across 3 semesters at the same credit/ hours ratio	This mode enables faster completion of a full-time course.

5. Variants

5.1 Courses may be offered with additional variants of design including:

Sandwich	For undergraduate degrees, this is normally designed to include one full academic cycle in placement. Duration and hours will be dependent on the specific course design.	Sandwich variants can be offered full-time or part-time. Some regulated courses will need to meet PSRB requirements in relation to placement/ practice-based learning provision. Optional or mandatory placement years can be proposed.
With Foundation Year	One full academic cycle is offered prior to the start of an undergraduate course, normally at Level 3.	Foundation Years can be offered in full-time and part-time format, but care must be taken to ensure registration periods are considered. All undergraduate courses should be designed to offer Foundation Year, where this is not deemed appropriate, the Course Design Team will be required to provide a clear rationale as to why this is not suitable.

6. Method of delivery

6.1 Courses are designed to enable both supported and self-directed learning opportunities. All courses are expected to utilise some form of on-line or virtual learning.

6.2 Additional information relating to designing learning and teaching activities is available in the *Curriculum Design Policy and Procedure* within the Course Design Framework.

6.3 The University utilises the following definitions to describe the various methods of delivery:

<table>
<tr><th>In-Place
Courses</th><th>Hybrid
Courses</th><th>On-line
Courses</th></tr>
<tr><td>100% on-campus with blended learning activities</td><td>Any mix of on-campus and on-line delivery across the units which make up the course. On-campus aspects will include blended learning activities</td><td>100% on-line</td></tr>
<tr><td>Routine attendance on-campus for in-person learning activities on a routine basis</td><td>Attendance on-campus will be dependent on the % of on-campus content/ units

Hybrid percentages are calculated by taking the total number of units and dividing by the total offered as on-line units, e.gs.:
• 6 units offered, 3 online= 50% on-line
• 6 units offered, 5 online= 80% online</td><td>No requirement to attend campus (except for enrolment etc, as required)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Blend of supported and self-directed

Blend of contact time/ tutor led time and independent learning</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Blend of in-person and on-line</td><td>On-line</td></tr>
</table>

6.4 Apprenticeship courses cannot be designed to run solely through asynchronous on-line learning.

7. The Standard Academic Calendar

7.1 The Standard Academic Calendar has three semesters (September, January and May) and sets specific entry points and teaching/ learning blocks. Assessment and reassessment activities are included in the calendar at the end of every semester, along with key routine quality assurance procedures and academic committee dates. The specific dates for the calendar are agreed at least 2 years in advance. The calendar is managed by the Academic Registrar and approved via Senior Management Group.

7.2 All courses are expected to adhere to the standard academic calendar, which has been implemented to allow the following benefits:

- supporting student achievement and progression by enabling responsive and prompt feedback and early reassessment opportunities
- increased consistency of student experience, comparability and equity of education opportunities and assessment diets across provision
- a University-wide shared approach to provide more opportunities to offer shared and inter-professional learning opportunities
- standard entry points at the start of each semester
- standard timelines and deadlines for routine quality assurance procedures
- supporting diversification and growth across the portfolio by increasing operational efficiency and effectiveness

7.3 All units should be designed to run within a single semester. Exception to this will require a clear rationale as to why this is necessary for the course design. Dissertations are an accepted exception but the rationale for having these cross-semester should still be provided at the point of design/ redesign. All units within a course level or year must be designed to be completed within that year (including part-time courses) and should not cross academic cycles.

8. Learning Time

8.1 ***Credit- based Learning time***

8.1.1 For standard (non-apprenticeship) courses, student learning time is specifically linked to credits. All standard units must be designed in accordance with the principles set out here to ensure equity of student educational experience and to ensure that the workload burden is appropriate for the credit value for the unit.

Learning time should align to the following requirement:

One credit is awarded for every ten hours of notional learning time. Therefore, a 20-credit unit will have a notional 200 learning hours.

8.1.2 It is recognised that student learning time is notional – the hours a student will 'typically' need to spend on the unit– the actual time needed will vary from student to student, depending on, for example, their ability, engagement and interest.

Notional learning time will be made up of:

Learner contact time	Tutor-guided learning	Independent learning

These three aspects link together to support effective learning and help students to plan their learning time effectively. More information relating to these forms of learning time and relating to the allocation of learning time during course design is available in the Curriculum Design Policy and Procedure within the Course Design Framework.

8.2 ***Apprenticeships Learning time***

8.2.1 For Apprenticeship courses, indicative planned off the job / protected learning time is defined at the point of design and reflects the planned time required for a typical apprentice to achieve the level of competence required to successfully achieve the apprenticeship.

8.2.2 The course must be designed to ensure clear details of the indicative time that the apprentices will need to plan for and set aside during their paid working hours to achieve the Knowledge Skills and Behaviours required across the units and the course as a whole.

8.2.3 The total planned learning time for Apprenticeship courses informs employers how long the apprentice will require to complete the units and the course.

8.2.4 Actual apprentice learning time must be monitored, evidenced and recorded, and will be reviewed as part of internal annual monitoring and as part of external regulatory review/ audit.

9. Common Units

9.1 In order for shared units to be defined as 'common' units, the following characteristics must be shared:

- Unit title
- Level of study
- Credit value
- Units aims
- Intended Learning Outcomes
- Learning and teaching
- Assessments (including briefs and scripts)

If any of these aspects are not shared, the unit cannot be classed as common.

9.2 Units cannot be common between standard and Apprenticeship courses. Units which form part of apprenticeship course curriculum must be presented on the unit specification template specific to apprenticeship courses.

9.3 Where a course utilises common units the unit specification made available for course approval and subsequently shared with learners must be the unit specification which is already approved for the unit(s) in question.

9.4 Each common unit will be owned by the course which it was originally approved for delivery within, however if that course were to close the unit would be assigned to another course which makes use of it, in discussion with the relevant Head(s) of School.

10. Optional Units

10.1 Optional units can be offered within courses. Where courses will include optional units, more than two options should be proposed in order to ensure optionality is retained in cases where one of the options is not offered.

11. Exceptions

11.1 Exceptions to alignment to the course structure principles set out in this policy and procedure must be requested at the point of Approval or Modification. A clear rationale must be provided and the specifics of any alternative arrangements or operational requirements must be outlined. Approval of exceptions will be granted either as part of Course Approval or via ASQC for Modifications.

11.2 Exceptions to standard arrangements will be specifically monitored and a record of approved exceptions will be retained within Registry.

12. Information Management requirements

12.1 The Course and Unit Specification templates are the definitive record of information relating to course structure. During Course Approval, rationale and reflection on course structure design will be provided to clearly outline the proposed structure for delivery, and the rationale behind this design.

13. Reporting and Oversight requirements

13.1 Oversight of the structure of courses and units takes place at the point of approval, during annual and periodic review and also when modifications are approved.

14. Appendices- Supporting documentation, templates and guidance

14.1 Additional Operational guidance documents are available in relation to the following aspects of this policy and procedure:

- Standard Academic Calendar
- Common Units
- Requesting exceptions

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HSU HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

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Curriculum Design Policy and Procedure
Part of the Course Design Framework

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy and procedure describes the principles, expectations and requirements for curriculum design and should be utilised at the point of design (or re-design) of Courses and Units. This policy and procedure should be utilised alongside the Course Structure Policy and Procedure at the point of designing a new course or unit, at the point of re-design following periodic review (or targeted review), and when considering changes to curriculum to be presented via Modification.

1.2 The University policy and procedures for the approval of new and redesigned courses, including responsibilities and documentation requirements for approval processes is set out within the Course Approval Policy and Procedure. The University policy and procedures for changing the content of units and courses between approval and periodic review is set out in the Course and Unit Modification Policy and Procedure. Both of these documents should be read alongside this framework as applicable.

1.3 The following principles, expectations and requirements are relevant to all provision, unless specificity or exception is stated.

1.4 This document is separated into the following sections:

SECTION ONE: Curriculum design and re-design activities

This section covers:
- Course design teams
- External Stakeholder Engagement
- Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies
- Internal Stakeholder Engagement
- External Frames of reference
- Internal frames of Reference
- Activity timelines

SECTION TWO: Curriculum, learning and teaching design

This section covers:
- Principles of curriculum design (including constructive alignment)
- Learning time allocation
- Intended Learning Outcomes and Course Learning Outcomes
- Specific forms of learning and teaching

SECTION THREE: Assessment design

This section covers:
- Assessment design principles
- Types of Assessment
- Assessment workload and tariff

1.5 All three sections are supported by a range of resources and information which is available via the Learning and Teaching webpage: Home - Teaching and Learning Hub - Library & Student Services at AECC University College

SECTION ONE: Curriculum design and re-design activities

1. Design teams

1.1 Designing curriculum is not an individual activity. All curriculum design activities will require a named 'Course Development Lead' who in many cases will be the future Course Lead. For re-design of curriculum for presentation for Modification, it is the standard for this to be the incumbent Course Lead.

1.2 The Course Development Lead should normally have subject expertise and experience of curriculum development / design / course leadership. If this is not the case, an external critical friend with subject expertise must be appointed at the start of the design activities.

1.3 The Course Development Lead is required to draw together a Course Design Team of relevant colleagues, including colleagues with experience in designing and re-designing curriculum. The names of the Course Design Team members are requested at the point of initial proposal for new courses.

1.4 The Course Design Team is likely to include:

- Course Lead
- Staff likely to be unit leads in the new course
- Senior colleagues in the School with experience of course design
- Students
- Patients / service users
- Other relevant Professional Support Services staff
- End-point Assessment team/ EPAO (for Apprenticeship Courses)
- External subject expert(s) where relevant

1.5 The Course Development Lead must ensure that the required roles and responsibilities are agreed at the initial stage of the design process.

1.6 For courses which will be delivered in partnership with an approved Educational Partner, it is important that team membership is reflective of the allocation of staff responsibilities across the University and the partner organisation. The Course Lead will normally be a member of partner staff, and it will therefore be essential for a member of University staff to be appointed as Co-lead. It may be appropriate for this to be the previously identified Link Tutor.

1.7 Advice on the nature/ composition of Course Design Teams is available from both the Quality team and the Head of Learning and Teaching.

2. External Stakeholder Engagement

2.1 External Stakeholder Engagement is a requirement for all design and re-design activities. Engagement should commence early in the process and should inform the initial proposal for new courses.

2.2 For new courses, and for approval of re-designed courses following review, an External Stakeholder Event should be planned and hosted during for the early stages of the design process, ideally prior to the initial proposal being submitted. This is outlined in more detail in the *Course Approval Policy and Procedure.*

2.3 Course Design Teams should interact with the following groups of stakeholders (as applicable) as a minimum:

Employers	- To inform graduate outcomes/ course learning outcomes - To discuss potential gaps in curriculum - To review and comment on curriculum design later in the activities
Placement providers/practice educators	- To discuss potential operational arrangements - To comment on required attributes over and above academic content - To inform graduate outcomes/ course learning outcomes

	- To discuss potential gaps in curriculum - To review and comment on curriculum design later in the activities
External expertise from within the sector or profession	- To offer subject expertise - To confirm alignment with existing sector provision - To inform graduate outcomes/ course learning outcomes - To discuss potential gaps in curriculum - To review and comment on curriculum design later in the activities Please note- an external appointed to work with the design team cannot be nominated to act as External Panel Member as they will be unable to offer the independent view required.
Service users (patients/clients/carers) Including SPaCE	- To inform graduate attributes/ outcomes/ course learning outcomes - To discuss potential gaps in curriculum - To review and comment on curriculum design later in the activities - giving a lived experience or service user perspective to content and design
Students	- To offer opinions on the mode and make-up of the course - Potential barriers to participation on the course - Design with respect to flexible approaches to delivery / design
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)s	- To agree approach for approval/ accreditation or review - To gain an understanding of the expectations relating to their requirements and how these will be illustrated within the documentation - To gain advice and guidance as early in the process as possible - To act as a critical friend during the process or approval / review where appropriate Some further information relating to working with PSRBs is outlined below.
Current external examiners (where applicable)	- To offer subject expertise - To confirm alignment with existing sector provision - To inform graduate outcomes/ course learning outcomes - To discuss potential gaps in curriculum - To review and comment on curriculum design later in the activities NB- Review via External Examiner is a requirement for Level 3 Modifications.

2.4 *Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies*

2.4.1 Wherever possible, courses should be designed to facilitate accreditation, recognition or approval from relevant PSRBs. Where a course is to be accredited or recognised by a Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body, the Course Development Lead is responsible for ensuring that the PSRB is notified of the development in a timely manner, to ensure their commitment to and involvement in its approval. The Course Development Lead should also take the opportunity to seek any advice and guidance they may require in relation to the PSRB requirements and procedures.

2.4.2 Some professional bodies require accreditation once a course is already being delivered. Where this is the case, Course Design Teams will still need to refer to the accreditation requirements as part of the initial stages to ensure that the course design will meet the requirements of the PSRB.

2.4.3 The Course Development Lead will act as the main point of contact with PSRBs and will be expected to provide a summary of required actions as part of the Initial Planning Meeting.

2.4.4 Where curriculum re-design requires presentation of a Modification it is a requirement for the Course Lead to outline the requirements of the relevant PSRB(s) and to confirm outcomes of any submission.

3. Internal Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Internal Stakeholder Engagement is a requirement for all design and re-design activities. Engagement should be considered early in the process and will inform the initial proposal for new courses.

3.2 Course Design Teams are required to interact with the following groups of internal stakeholders as a minimum:

Existing students or apprentices	- To gain student feedback in relation to the proposal - To understand how students perceive the proposed structure, assessment load, curricula etc
Course Leads for other Courses (including in other Schools/ Centre)	- For their input and reflections on course design activities, for comment on the proposed curriculum design, including operational requirements - To discuss common units as required
Head of Practice-related Learning	- To discuss implications where there is a requirement for placements and / or practice-based learning, simulation etc
Other Heads of School/ Centre	- To discuss potential common units etc - To discuss new Apprenticeship provision, as applicable
Head of Learning and Teaching	- For guidance on curriculum design - For context of current practice in the sector and emerging trends in design - Strategic direction with respect to institution wide approaches or initiatives
Learning technology	- To discuss potential VLE format for the course - To ensure the VLE management policy/practices are being adhered to
Library	- To discuss specific resourcing requirements
Marketing	- To discuss marketing and recruitment opportunities - To provide initial information in relation to the course to support early promotion at the relevant point of approval
Registry: **Admissions** **Timetabling** **Student Records** **Course Administration** **Quality** **Apprenticeships Manager**	 - To discuss Entry Requirements, English Language requirements, admissions cycles etc - To discuss structure of delivery - To discuss requirements for the SRS and data for statutory returns - To discuss student lifecycle, structure and delivery - Support Course Approval and Modifications - Discuss management of exceptions to the standard UC Regulations, Policies or Procedures - To discuss aspects of the course relating specifically to Apprenticeship element of courses (as applicable)

4. External Frames of reference

4.1 Course Design Teams must consider all relevant external sector recognised standards and frames of

reference. These include, but are not limited to:

- The sector recognised standards as defined by the office for students in connection with the ongoing conditions of registration B5.
- The Frameworks for HE qualifications of UK degree-awarding bodies
- Higher education credit Framework for England
- Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education (and associated advice and guidance)
- Relevant QAA characteristics statements
- SEEC Credit Level Descriptors
- Relevant subject benchmark statements
- Additional QAA resources available from https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/supporting-resources
- For Apprenticeship courses, the following **additional external reference** points **must** be considered and **must** inform the curriculum design and approval procedures;
  - The relevant Apprenticeship Standard for the course, and in particular the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours required as the output of the course
  - The Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment which sets out the competency assessment at the end of the apprenticeship
  - The published apprenticeship quality strategy and IfATE Apprenticeship Quality Statement
  - The requirements of the ESFA Funding Rules
  - The requirements of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework
  - The ESFA Apprenticeship Accountability Framework

4.2 As part of the Approval procedure, Course Design Teams are required to provide a narrative and evidence of the ways in which external frames of reference have been utilised in the design process and how they have influenced the proposed curriculum.

5. Internal frames of reference

5.1 Course Design Teams are expected to refer to relevant internal policies, procedures and regulations during the design of curriculum. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The Course Design Framework
- Admissions Regulations
- Assessment Regulations
- Policy and Procedures related to Learning, Teaching and Assessment

6. Design Activity timelines

6.1 The Course Development Lead is expected to be aware of the timelines and milestones associated with the relevant procedures that are required as part of curriculum design and redesign. Management of the design activities and oversight of timelines is a core part of the Lead role, and ensuring documentation and information is submitted in accordance with procedural requirements is essential to ensuring successful approval of new or re-designed courses. The Quality team will provide guidance on deadlines as part of both the Course Approval Policy and Procedure, and the Course and Unit Modifications Policy and Procedure.

SECTION TWO: Curriculum, learning and teaching design

1. Principles of curriculum design

a) Learning, teaching and assessment practices should provide meaningful learning experiences that develop knowledge and skills progressively; and enable learners to benefit from consistency across levels of study.

b) Learning, teaching and assessment should be appropriately and progressively challenging from the outset, building on prior knowledge and skills and developing learners further as they progress.

c) Learning, teaching and assessment should be designed and delivered in ways that relate directly to professional and progressive workplace practice and should include employability skills.

d) When designing learning, teaching and assessment activities, Course Design Teams should give consideration to the diversity of learners and learning styles and provide a rich variety of types of activities. The design of learning activities, teaching and assessment should provide an inclusive, positive, engaging and effective learning experience for all learners. (more information relating to inclusive curricula is available in Appendix 2).

e) Curriculum design should include opportunities for learners to develop relevant digital capabilities that enable them to live, learn and work in a digital society.

f) Course Design Teams are encouraged to refer to the QAA/Advance HE Education for Sustainable Development Guidance (March 2021), which is intended as a reference point to offer practical help in facilitating and building Education for Sustainable Development into curriculum design and delivery.

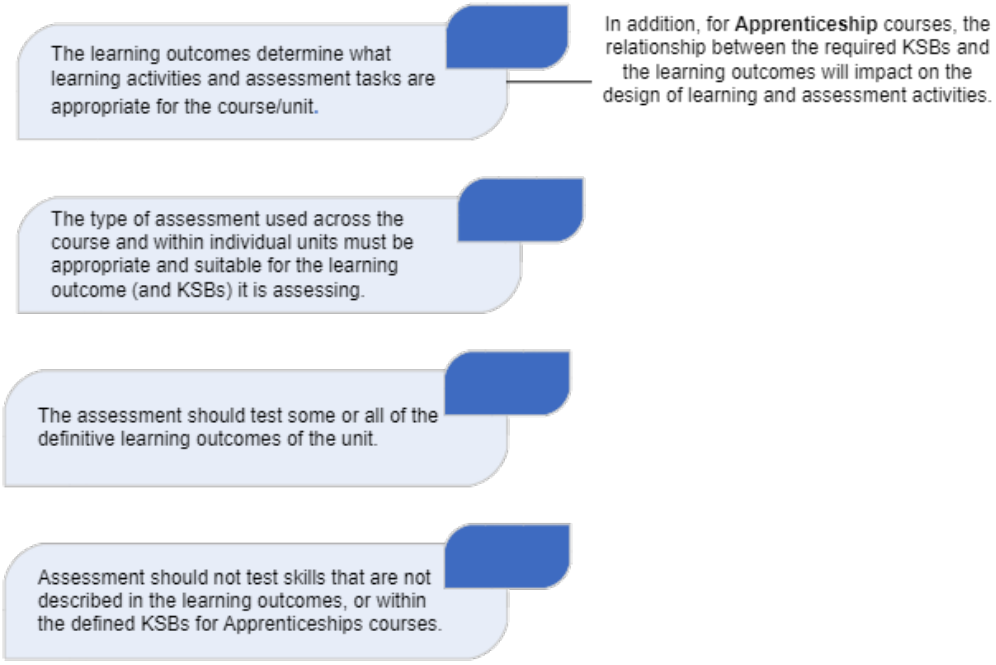
g) Curriculum should be designed to allow learners to:
- develop knowledge, critical judgement, understanding and capability;
- adopt self-directed learning practices;
- reflect critically on approaches, attitudes and skills;
- use research informed and evidence informed practices;
- use ethical and values-based practices;
- develop relevant professional/academic skills and
- adopt a multidisciplinary approach to health sciences across the professions.

h) Learners should be provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of the importance of academic integrity and good academic practice. Learning activities should encourage discussion about the utilisation of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, exploration of the uses of this technology whilst retaining integrity, and enable learners to demonstrate their understanding. Assessment design should take into account the potential misuses of generative AI (see Section Three: Assessment Design).

1.1 Design methodology

1.1.1 Curriculum design approaches should be utilised, such as the ABC Learning Design methodology. Such methodologies should utilise workshop activities, led by Course Development Leads and in collaboration with the Course Design Team, including unit leaders.

1.1.2 Courses should be designed as a coherent whole.



1.1.3 As part of the curriculum design, the nature frequency and mode of assessment should be considered as a whole. assessment diet across the level and course should offer learners a wide range of assessment to develop a range of knowledge and skills. Assessment should ensure that learning outcomes are not assessed multiple times.

1.1.4 Course Design Teams should consider whether the nature of the course lends itself to the inclusion of optional units and if so where these are best placed, and how many options a learner should have. If optional units are to be included the Course Team should consider how students will be counselled to select options available. The Course Team must also consider whether offering optional units is feasible in light of available resources.

1.1.5 A guidance document is available to support Design Teams with early design activities. This is available as appendix 1 to this document.

2. Aims, Intended Learning Outcomes and Course Outcomes

2.1 All courses and units must have clearly defined aims and learning outcomes, which are made explicit in the definitive course and unit specifications.

2.2 There should be a clear distinction between aims, outcomes and content.

Philosophy and Aims highlight the intentions of a course or unit	Aims should outline the overall rationale and purpose of the course or unit and what it is intended to achieve, focusing on key knowledge, understanding and skills. They answer the questions: • Defining principles and values • Distinctiveness within the sector • Pedagogical approaches that are adopted throughout the course, such as problem-based learning, inter-professional / student negotiated curriculum, e-learning support, flexible delivery modes etc • How the course articulates with professional registration (where appropriate) • Intended characteristics of graduates • What is the purpose of this course/unit? • What is the course /unit intended to achieve? • Why is this unit included in the curriculum?

Learning Outcomes indicate what is expected of learners and specify the core knowledge and skills (and, where appropriate, any other attributes) that a learner is required to demonstrate/do upon completion of the period of study/learning. **Learning Outcomes** articulate what a student or apprentice will be able to do on successful completion of a course/unit	Courses and units must have clearly articulated intended learning outcomes (ILOs) that are appropriate to the award and the levels of the award(s) on offer. **Course LOs** outline the intended learning at the end of the course. At course level, LOs should be broad and relate to the knowledge, understanding and skills learners will be expected to develop/achieve during the whole course. They should not be a summary of the course content, or an aggregation of the unit learning outcomes. **Unit LOs** outline the intended learning at the end of the particular unit. They are more specific in the knowledge, understanding and skills learners will be expected to develop/achieve during the unit and should determine its content, delivery and assessment. o Course ILOs shape the ILOs of the units included in a course o Unit ILOs shape the purpose of learning activities in a unit, including learning activities designed for formative assessment. o Units must clearly map to course ILOs to demonstrate how course ILOs will be achieved; and how progression is achieved and demonstrated between levels (where applicable). o Learning activities should explicitly develop the knowledge and skills expressed in the course ILOs and unit ILOs. Course and unit learning outcomes must be **aligned with the national level descriptors (FHEQ)** and subject benchmarks (where applicable) and should demonstrate appropriate progression between course levels. In particular the verbs used should make clear the level of complexity expected, and should be pitched at the same level as the course/unit **Learning outcomes should be specified at threshold level.** Grading performance is separate from judging whether a learner has met learning outcomes; if the learning outcomes are met, the learner passes; if they perform at a standard above the threshold standard, separate assessment criteria should guide the marking process and the determination of the mark reflecting the level of performance. **A twenty-credit unit should normally have no more than six learning outcomes**. This enables learners to focus on the key aspects expected of them. If there are more than this, there is likely to be too much detail and assessing them all may become unmanageable. Exceptions to this are presented via the Course Approval Procedure. Requirements of PSRBs are an accepted exception. There should be **consistency** in the number of learning outcomes for units of the same credit value at the same level of the course. **Learning outcomes should communicate clearly to learners what they are expected to achieve as a result of studying the course or unit**, and thus what they will be expected to demonstrate at assessment. Learning outcomes should be written to **speak directly to the learner** and in terms that can be understood by an intending or potential student or apprentice. Complex technical language should be avoided where possible.
Content sets out the substance of what a student or apprentice will learn during the course/unit.	

2.3 For Apprenticeship courses, the **Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours** (KSBs) that apprentices are expected to achieve must be articulated alongside the learning outcomes. As part of Apprenticeship course design, course teams are required to establish the relationship between the unit and course level learning outcomes and the KSBs, and how these combined enable apprentices to achieve the requirements set out in the relevant Apprenticeships Standard.

2.4 **Apprenticeship core curriculum** areas must be included in the curriculum for all Apprenticeship courses. These include safeguarding, Prevent, respect and tolerance, rule of law, individual liberty, democracy, further development of English and Maths skills, careers and personal development and equality and diversity. It is not a requirement to include all core apprenticeship curriculum areas within every unit, but each must be embedded where relevant across the whole Apprenticeship course.

3. Learning time allocation

3.1 When designing curriculum and allocating learning time, Course Design Teams must take into account learning experience and also learner perceptions of the time allocated. It is recognised that unit content may determine a variety of learning time allocations. Where Course Design Teams propose a varied approach to allocating learning time, the rationale for doing so should be provided within the Course Design Summary.

3.2 Course teams are responsible for recognising, and encouraging learners to recognise, the importance of all aspects of study time, to help make clear that more hours of contact time do not equate to a 'higher quality course' or to depth and quality of learning, and that experiencing higher levels of contact will not automatically lead to a better outcome. This is explained within the Unit specification templates.

3.3 Defining Learning time

3.3.1 All courses are expected to utilise some form of on-line or virtual learning. Courses and units can be designed to include a range of on-line teaching, learning and assessment activities including:

- ***Synchronous*** activities which require all learners and the teaching team to utilise a virtual learning space at the same time to undertake learning and teaching activities (e.g. virtual seminars etc.)

- ***Asynchronous*** activities which do not require learners to be on-line at a specific time but which allows access on-line to learning, teaching and assessment activities (e.g. self-led learning activities, access to pre-recorded lectures etc)

3.3.2 Notional learning time will be made up of:

Learner contact time	**Tutor-guided learning**	**Independent learning**
Refers to the amount of time learners can expect to engage with University staff in relation to teaching and learning.	Refers to specific learning activities that learners are asked to undertake by a tutor	Refers to learner-led activities which do not require direct contact and or guidance from the teaching team.
Includes: • scheduled teaching sessions (activities included on a learner and/or staff timetable), • specific academic guidance (i.e. not broader pastoral support/guidance) and • individual help or personalised feedback on progress	Includes: • directed reading, • review of learning materials on the VLE in advance of scheduled 'flipped classroom' session.	Includes: • preparation for scheduled sessions, • reflecting on feedback received and planning for future tasks, • follow-up work, • wider reading (including reading beyond set topics), • practice, revision, and • completion of assessment tasks
Opportunities for one-to-one interaction with members of staff may not always present themselves as formal scheduled sessions. 'Office hours' for example are a frequent feature where members of staff are available for one-to-one sessions at set times. Interactions via email are another example of contact time. It is important that learners recognise these as opportunities		Independent study helps students and apprentices learn to manage their own learning as preparation for the expectations of a professional life that emphasises continuing professional development and life-long learning.

Learner contact time	Tutor-guided learning	Independent learning
for interaction with institutional staff		

3.3.3 For Apprenticeship courses, **Tri-partite progress reviews** take place four times every year of the course. This meeting includes the apprentice, line manager and tri-partite review lead from within the University and is a formal, mandatory review of the apprentice's progress towards meeting the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours prescribed within the course, and in preparation for the End-Point Assessment. This review is the opportunity to formally review the apprentice's progress in meeting the protected learning time off the job learning hours required by the apprenticeship. It is the opportunity to review progress and set objectives for the next phase of learning. The meeting allows for a check to ensure the apprentice is able to make the required progress at work and confirm that the apprentice is on target to achieve the apprenticeship, based on achievements in learning and at work. The apprentice and the employer will sign and return the record of this meeting and any action plans arising.

3.3.4 For Apprenticeship courses, **Work-based learning** refers to the time that apprentices negotiate for the mandatory off-course (both on-the-job and off-the-job) hours, based on their agreed, signed, individual training plan. This is critical and a mandatory requirement for ensuring apprentices are enabled to apply Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours from their overall academic and work-based learning into their practice.

3.4 Allocation of Learner Contact time

3.4.1 For standard (non-Apprenticeship) courses, **a 20 credit unit** will normally have a **maximum of 4 hours of learner contact time** per week (48 hours per semester). It must be possible to show an audit trail to justify the allocation.

3.4.2 Units formed of, or including, placement or practice-based learning hours are outside of this requirement as these are usually determined by the relevant PSRB. Evidence of these requirements should be made available as part of the Course Design Summary.

3.4.3 For some courses it may be appropriate to have more contact time at early stages of the course, reducing as students develop as independent learners.

3.4.4 Should the Course Design Team consider that more contact time is required a commentary is required within the unit specification to provide an explanation in student-appropriate language. The Team should consider carefully what additional learning benefit student will gain through the additional hours.

3.4.5 When considering whether units warrant more contact hours than specified here, the following should be considered:

- Which skills or competencies are required to ensure safety concerns are met
- Which skills or competencies are essential for practise (depending on the scope of unit)
- The cognitive complexity of the skills being learnt
- The different pedagogical approaches to learning that may enhance the delivery of unit and maximise learning gain within a unit.

3.5 Providing information about learning time

3.5.1 In order to promote flexibility in delivery, the University does not require a specific allocation to particular types of learner contact (for example, specifying the number of tutorials, seminars etc). Course and Unit documentation does, however, need to provide an overview for learners as to what their learning experience will involve, and provide the basis for a shared understanding of expectations for both learners and teaching teams. Each unit specification therefore records learning hours in terms of contact time, tutor-guided learning and independent learning.

3.5.2 Unit specifications for units delivered as part of Apprenticeship courses also provide the planned off the job at work hours, and the total of off the job hours.

4. Specific forms of learning and teaching

4.1 Online Courses

4.1.1 For on-line courses, it is possible for a student to achieve all the outcomes and satisfy all the requirements of the course without attending the University in person (although some students may sometimes choose to do so).

4.1.2 Access to University teaching staff, and interactions with other students on the course is usually through technological means. (Course Design Teams need to make it clear if it will be necessary for students to attend in person for, for example, enrolment, an induction or an identity check). Design of on-line courses must promote a high-quality student experience, comparable to that of on-campus students. Course Design teams will need to take into account the support and information/ communication requirements for on-line courses at the point of design.

4.1.3 The pedagogical approaches to be taken in the delivery of the course should be a key driver in the course design process. Courses should normally be planned specifically for this method of delivery rather than a re-working of arrangements previously developed for on-campus provision (this applies even where a campus-based version of the course is already in operation). The Course Development Lead should be aware of the significant time investment that will be required to lead the design of a course for on-line delivery, and the potential need for additional staff development to support the activity.

4.1.4 It is therefore essential that as part of initial discussions and business planning the suitability of the specific course for delivery in this way, the course philosophy and pedagogical strategy on which the course is based, the intended target market and on-line identity and the necessary time and resources for effective development, are clearly identified.

4.1.5 The VLE developers should be involved at an early stage of the design to support the pedagogical aspects of design in the online environment and to provide staff development where needed.

4.1.6 Within on-line courses interactions may be synchronous or asynchronous or a mixture of both. It is essential that this is considered at an early stage to ensure the course is designed with coherence and taking into account the overarching learning experience.

4.1.7 Where applicable the views of the relevant PSRB(S) should be sought early in the development, to identify if there are any specific requirements that must be taken into consideration, for example, whether an on-line version of an existing course require a separate PSRB approval.

4.1.8 Course Design Teams proposing on-line courses should refer to appendix three which provides some specific guidance questions which will assist in the design activities.

SECTION THREE: Assessment Design

1. Principles of assessment Design

1.1 The following assessment design principles are applicable for all assessments:

Principle 1 *Assessment should be valid*. Assessment tasks and associated assessment criteria should effectively measure attainment of the learning outcomes and KSBs (where applicable) at the appropriate level. It may be necessary to design different assessment tasks to ensure that all outcomes are appropriately assessed. Assessment design should encourage the type of learning approaches Course Teams wish learners to adopt and develop, for example to encourage a deep, rather than a surface approach to learning, to develop and demonstrate higher order learning and skills, and assist the student or apprentice in identifying appropriate priorities in learning. Assessment for Apprenticeship course curriculum should also have direct relation to the End Point Assessment and prepare apprentices for this.

Principle 2 *Assessment should be incremental and sufficiently demanding.* Assessment tasks need to build on what was expected in previous study and should be designed to challenge learners to demonstrate the best level of attainment of which they are capable. Assessment should be designed to enable differentiation between learners performing above and below the threshold and at different levels of performance above the threshold.

Principle 3 *Assessment should be inclusive and equitable.* As far as is possible without compromising academic standards, inclusive and equitable assessment should ensure that tasks and procedures do not disadvantage any group or individual. Assessment tasks should where possible enable learners to draw upon their diverse backgrounds and experiences, valuing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Assessment design for Apprenticeship courses should take into account the apprentices' profession of employment and reflect stakeholder (employer) engagement in the curriculum design process. Courses are therefore encouraged to use (in a way that is consistent with the learning outcomes) a diversity of assessment methods to allow all learners to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. However, variety should always have an underlying purpose, related to the learning outcomes, rather than being for 'variety's sake'. There should be coordination at course level to ensure that the overall pattern of assessment does not become unbalanced.

Accessibility and inclusion should be anticipated when designing assessment - consider how learners with disabilities or other protected characteristics will take part or where an alternative, equivalent assessment may need to be offered to enable all learners to demonstrate attainment of essential skills and knowledge.

Principle 4 *Assessment should be manageable and efficient for both learners and staff.* It should provide a reliable and valid profile of achievement without overloading staff or learners. Learning outcomes should not be overly assessed, and systems of assessment should be managed so as to use academic and support staff time and resources in appropriate ways while ensuring appropriate academic challenge.

Principle 5 *Authentic assessment should be used wherever possible and consistent with constructive alignment.* Assessment should encourage learners to apply and contextualise knowledge and skills to real world situations, and setting tasks that model real-world situations in which the knowledge, understanding and skills being tested are typically required. For example, writing business plans, giving presentations, writing health promotion leaflets ('real world assessment').

Principle 6 *Formative assessment and timely feedback that promotes learning and facilitates improvement should be an integral part of the assessment process*. Please also refer to the Assessment Feedback Policy.

Principle 7 *Forms of assessment should be designed in a way which actively discourages academic misconduct*. Questions should be formulated in such a way as cannot easily be answered by the repetition of materials from existing sources, including material downloaded from the Internet, or through the use of contract cheating, other third-party services or by utilising generative AI.

Principle 8 *Assessment should be explicit and transparent:* Before any assessment task, learners should be clearly informed of the purpose and requirements of the task and will be provided with the assessment criteria that will be used for marking it. Learners should be helped to understand the

requirements of assessment, e.g. through guidance, discussion with tutors, model answers etc. Feedback to learners will be related to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Principle 9 *Assessment should be reliable and consistent.* This requires that the University policies and procedures regarding the setting, marking, and moderation of assessments are followed in all cases.

Principle 10 *Assessment should not cause undue stress or burden*. Unnecessary academic stress should be minimised through a range of measures such as: clarifying assessment expectations, managing assessment volume, avoiding bunching of assessment deadlines and the avoidance of high stakes assessments.

1.2 The purpose, type and variety of assessment activities must be appropriate for the course and its constituent units.

- Formative assessment should be used to consolidate learning and prepare students and apprentices ahead of unit summative assessment(s)
- Assessments should be designed to be inclusive (methods, timing, culture, religion, disability, technologies)
- The quantity and timing of assessment should take account of the other learning activities within the curriculum, in order not to overload students and apprentices (hours of study); and learners should not be over-assessed
- Authentic assessment activities should be designed to prepare learners for what they do next, using approaches and technology that they will use in their careers.

2. Assessment workload

2.1 Assessment workload can be measured in notional hours and word counts.

2.2 Word counts are a useful tool for allocation assessment workload for written assignments but cannot always be effectively applied to some equivalent types of assessment e.g. the assessment of practical skills. In these cases, the Course Design team are required to develop a robust assessment strategy which should balance subject-specific requirements, the level(s) of study and the learning outcomes. It is important for the assessment strategy to be consistent across the course.

2.3 *Allocation of assessment workload for standard (credit-based) courses*

2.3.1 For standard courses, the concept of notional working hours is applied as follows:

A 20-credit unit typically involves 200 hours of learning,
of which assessment should make up approximately 25% i.e. 50 hours

2.3.2 The 25% should include preparation, planning and revision for the assessment, as well as taking the assessment itself. In units where there are staged assessments (i.e. more than one assessment per unit), the total assessment workload should be divided across the multiple assessment tasks.

2.3.3 These figures should be increased or decreased accordingly for units with higher or lower credit weightings; this is not always as simple as halving or doubling and should be considered as part of the overall unit and course assessment strategy, as above.

2.3.4 The following principle should be adopted as a guide for the maximum workload allocation of assessments:

Word Count	Notional Hours	Credits
1000	10	5

This will vary slightly across levels, to reflect the learner's ability and skills.

2.4 ***Allocation of assessment workload for Apprenticeship courses***

2.4.1 For Apprenticeship courses, it is a requirement for the hours stipulated as part of the 'independent learning' time for the course, and for the unit, to include the time expected for apprentices to complete assessment tasks including preparation, planning and revision for the assessment, as well as taking the assessment itself. The principle of 1000 words (or equivalent) to 10 notional hours is applicable for Apprenticeship courses.

2.5 ***Word count and equivalences***

2.5.1 Generally, word counts should increase from levels 4-6 as a learner is expected to explore a topic more deeply and generate more complex synthesis and discussion. However, at level 7, it is common for the word count to reduce slightly, to recognise the move at this level towards concise and precise scientific writing.

2.5.2 Assessments should be aligned with the intended learning outcomes and (where applicable) the KSBs of the unit, and the form(s) of assessment used in a unit should test these intended learning outcomes. A range of assessments in a unit of study reflects the range of learning styles of different learners and is considered good pedagogic practise.

2.5.3 Course Teams should consider carefully how the guidelines are applied to ensure that the approach taken is justifiable in terms of the learning outcomes (and KSBs as applicable), complexity and nature of the assessment task, the expected number of (independent) learning hours needed to complete it, and the expectations of any relevant PSRBs. In addition, for Apprenticeship courses, course teams will be expected to provide an explanation of how the assessment prepares apprentices for the End Point Assessment. As part of the Course Consideration Procedure Course Teams will need to be able to explain the rationale for both the assessment strategy for the entire course, and the specific assessment approaches taken at unit level.

2.5.4 As part of designing the course assessment strategy, Course Design Teams should consider the timing of assessment, to ensure that summative assessment deadlines are spread throughout the course where possible. For Apprenticeship courses, it is also necessary to consider how the timing of assessment activities relate to the schedule of tripartite reviews. This will help both learners and staff plan their workload. The requirement to publish feedback within the institution's approved turnaround times should be taken into account in setting these deadlines.

2.6 ***Allocating assessment workload- guidance for different assessment types***

2.6.1 **Written Coursework guidelines:**

All courses			**Specifically for Credit- based (standard) courses**	
Level	**Notional Hours**	**Total Words**	**Credits**	**Word/credit**
3	30	3000	20	150
4	35	3500	20	175
5	40	4000	20	200
6	40	4000	20	200
7	35	3500	20	175

These word counts reflect the indicative workload that a learner should undertake for assessment for a single unit at a specific level of study. However, it is appropriate to consider equivalence of assessment to ensure a broad assessment approach is adopted and is consistent.

2.6.2 **Examination guidelines:**

Unseen written examinations are an important part of assessment for many subject areas. When combined with coursework, they form an effective assessment strategy. Open book assessments also provide valid assessment opportunities, albeit testing different skills.

Unit hours	Unit credit	Examination duration (100% of assessment for the unit)	Examination duration (75% of assessment for the unit)	Examination duration (50% of assessment for the unit)
200 hours	20	3 hours	2 hours	1.5 hours
100 hours	10	1.5 hours	1 hour	45 minutes

2.6.3 **Examples of other forms of assessment:**

It is helpful to consider the equivalence of different types of assessment. A range of assessments should be used where possible (given the resources and experience of staff available), to reflect the fact that different learning styles will succeed in different assessment types.

At levels 4-6, 1000 words of coursework is approximately equivalent to:

Type of assessment	Words/Time	Notional Hours	Credits
Reflective Journal	2000 words/12 weeks	10	5
Lab/Practical Report	750 words w graphs/tables	10	5
Group project/poster	750 words per member	10	5
Individual Presentation	15-20 min + poster/presentation	10	5
Group Presentation	5-10 min + group report/ poster	10	5
Clinical Assessment	20 min patient encounter	10	5

2.6.4 **Project/Dissertation guidelines:**

Course Teams are encouraged to consider assessing these learning outcomes at level 7 by asking learners to write a journal article and/or create a research poster, to be delivered with an oral presentation which more accurately reflects the skills needed in today's research workplace.

- 200 hours/ 20 Credit up to but not more than 3,000 words or equivalent
- 400 hours/40 Credit up to but not more than 5,000 words or equivalent
- 600 hours/60 Credit up to but not more than 8,000 words or equivalent

2.6.5 **Practical assessments guidelines:**

When considering practical assessments, more flexibility is required in terms of timing and no specific tariff is prescribed.

Course Design Teams are required to consider the specific level(s), learning outcomes and the overall assessment strategy when setting practical assessments. Sector practice is varied in relation to allocating practical assessment time, with examples of 45 minutes for 15 credits and 20-30 minutes for 10 credits noted.

2.6.6 **End-Point Assessments (EPA)**

The EPA Plan sets out the specific mode, scope and marking for the EPA- this needs to be given consideration in the design of assessments for apprenticeship courses. The End Point Assessment must be designed to meet the IfATE's general requirements for end-point assessments.

3. Assessment Feedback and Feed forward

3.1 Course Leads must ensure that across the course assessment is designed to provide learners with regular opportunities for constructive feedback. There should be a mix of genuinely formative feedback and summative

feedback, with early formative feedback and feedforward. Opportunities for formative assessment should be integral to curriculum design at unit and course levels, and curricula should be designed to give learners sufficient time to apply lessons learned from formative assessment in their summative assessments.

3.2 For Apprenticeship courses, it is essential that the timing of assessment aligns to the schedule of tripartite reviews which enable effective feedback to apprentices and employers. Feedback to apprentices must inform the individual learning plan and will support the apprentice to effectively prepare for both the gateway review and the End Point Assessment.

3.3 Learners should be supported to act on feedback, particularly by ensuring they are aware when they are receiving feedback, by relating feedback to learning outcomes, and by enabling them to make connections between assessment tasks across units and levels. Assessment tasks should be designed and scheduled across the course in a way that facilitates learning and ensures that feedback on assessment is received at a point where it can enhance their related assessed work.

4. Assessment Criteria

4.1 Learning outcomes explain what learners should be able to do at the end of a unit; assessment criteria indicate what is required for the award of particular marks. Although not required to be presented as part of the Course Consideration Process it is helpful for Course Teams to begin to consider this as part of the design process.

4.2 Learners must be provided with information about how they will be assessed and what is required for achievement of a pass and the grades above this. Effective and appropriate assessment criteria and their use helps to ensure marking is fair and reliable, whilst also providing learners with an understanding of the standards associated with different grades. Specific assessment criteria for assessments must be mapped to the University's Generic Assessment Criteria. Please refer to the Generic Assessment Criteria Policy and Procedure

5. Information Management requirements

5.1 The Course and Unit Specification templates are the definitive record of information relating to course structure. During Course Approval, rationale and reflection on curriculum design will be provided to clearly outline the proposed curriculum design and the rationale for this design.

6. Appendices- Supporting documentation, templates and guidance

- Appendix One- Guidance for Course Design Teams
- Appendix Two- Guidance for Inclusive Curricula
- Appendix Three- Guidance questions for developing online courses
- Appendix Four- Indicative helpful resources

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Appendix One- Guidance for Course Design Teams

Course Teams may find it helpful to consider the questions below, from an early stage, to inform their reflections as they move through the design and development process:

Course design and development guidance questions
• What is the purpose of the course and its constituent units? For example, personal academic development, preparation for research or employment, preparation for lifelong learning? • What are the anticipated career paths for the learners? How will support for career development be embedded within the course and delivery model? (Required for Apprenticeship courses) • How will the course reflect current disciplinary knowledge, good practice in pedagogy, any professional requirements and the needs of the identified market? how does it meet regional and occupational skills needs? • Where is the course located on the Framework for higher education qualification? How is this made clear? • How will you ensure the course is well structured and coherent? For standard courses, what credit structure will you adopt? • How will the design of an Apprenticeship course ensure effective integration of on- and off-the-job training? how will the off-the -job hours be prescribed? • For Apprenticeship courses, what will the schedule be for the gateway review and the elements of the End Point Assessment? • For Apprenticeship courses, how will the course design meet the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours, and the required duties as set out in the Apprenticeship Standard? • For Apprenticeships how and where will the additional core curriculum topics be included across the apprenticeship to ensure the development of the wider skills requirements? • How will the curriculum promote progression so that the demands on the learner in terms of intellectual challenge, skills, knowledge, and learning autonomy increase? • How will you ensure that the relative complexity, depth of study, and learner autonomy is defined appropriately within the intended learning outcomes for any named stages of the course, and its constituent units? • What approaches will you adopt to ensure that the design of the assessment is clearly aligned with the intended learning outcomes, and that the assessment strategy encourages the learning approach you want learners to adopt, provides learners with regular opportunities for constructive feedback, and enables learners to demonstrate their achievement of the LOs? For Apprenticeship courses, how will preparation for the End Point Assessment be embedded within the course and units?

Course design and development guidance questions

- How will learners receive feedback/forward throughout the course? How will it be clear to them when they are receiving feedback? What will be the implications of feedback strategies for staff and learner workloads - are there different ways of providing effective and meaningful feedback/forward that may be less time consuming?
- Specifically, for Apprenticeship courses, how will the tripartite progress reviews be conducted? Are there any operational hurdles that need to be addressed as part of the design phase? How and when will information be shared with employers?
- What knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes should graduates from the course be able to demonstrate and how will they demonstrate these?
- How will you encourage learners to develop assessment literacy and information literacy?
- How will technology be used in the delivery of the course and how will learners be assisted to develop their digital capability/IT literacy? How will online and face-to-face activities be blended for an effective learning experience?
- Will there be appropriate learning opportunities provided to support learners to achieve the aims and intended outcomes of the course? What additional resources may be needed?
- Who are your prospective students or apprentices likely to be and what profiles are they likely to have? Are there any particular targeted groups who we are seeking to attract?
- How will you ensure the course is sufficiently flexible to fit a range of diverse learner needs? How will you build in evaluation that will assess if the course is enabling progression and achievement for all learners regardless of their characteristics?
- What specifically might you need to do to ensure your curriculum and course resources are inclusive? How will the course design and content comply with the Equality Act (2010)? Are the course content, teaching learning and assessment strategies inclusive and do they eliminate any discrimination, harassment or victimisation of people due to their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, ethnicity, religion or belief, or sexual orientation or caring responsibilities?

Designing a course is an iterative process, and thinking should continue to develop as the process progresses.

The tables below are designed to help course development teams summarise the purpose of their course and design a course which is robust and where learning outcomes blend with teaching and learning activities, assessment methods, and resources. They can be used to inform the development of the course and its constituent units, leading to the production of the definitive course and unit specifications.

Course Design Summary tables

The following tables are designed to help course development teams summarise the purpose of their course and create a curriculum which is robust and utilises constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996) where learning outcomes blend with teaching and learning activities, assessment methods, resources and course evaluation. They should be used to inform the development of course and unit specifications.

Table 1: Contextual information about the curriculum

Criteria	**Information that is relevant to the proposed curriculum and context**
Curriculum title	
Identify the learners: numbers, stage of learning, profession, specialism etc.	
Summary of the curriculum rationale including indication of whether this is a new or revised curriculum.	
Purpose of the curriculum (may include reference to values, standards, vision and/or mission)	
Structure of the curriculum (e.g., modular, spiral, core versus optional etc)	
Additional information that will help others understand the context of this curriculum: tutors, environment, resources, wider curricular structures etc.	

Table 2: Unit Curriculum Map (Point 1 left in as an example of how to complete)

Learning outcomes (LOs)	Teaching and learning activities	Indicative content	Assessments (formative and/or summative)	Resources required	Evaluation
1. *Demonstrate understanding and application of the functional anatomy of the shoulder and upper quadrant.*	• *Directed reading tasks* • *Prosection laboratories* • *Case Based Learning*	*Learners will revise their pre-existing knowledge of neuro-musculoskeletal anatomy of the shoulder and upper quadrant and develop a deeper knowledge base of the functional relationships of the upper quarter.*	*Formative: Oral feedback during small group tutorials using prosected specimens.*	• *Prosection laboratory and cadaveric specimens* • *Anatomists* • *Clinicians* • *CBL delivered via VLE – clinician and learning technologist to develop and manage*	*Kirkpatrick's Hierarchy [2]– Levels 1 & 2 assessed via:* *Student Perception of Course Survey* *staff questionnaire* *Analysis of portfolio*
2.	•			•	
Insert more rows as necessary	•			•	

[2] Kirkpatrick's hierarchy is a widely used evaluation tool which was developed for training professionals from industry (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2014). The model has since been adapted to suit the needs of medical education with level 1 asking questions around satisfaction with teaching and learning, level 2 looking at evaluation of the learning which has occurred, level 3 around evaluation of the behaviours transferred to the workplace and at level 4 an evaluation of the programme's impact on society (Lovato & Wall cited Swanwick, 2014). Whilst Kirkpatrick's model is widely used in medical education, the majority of published papers on evaluation of a medical programme focus on the performance of students (level 2) with less than 2% looking at the evaluation of a medical programme and its effect on health care outcomes (level 4) (Belfield, Thomas, Bullock, Eynon & Wall, 2001).

Belfield, C., Thomas, H., Bullock, A., Eynon, R., and Wall, D. 2001. Measuring effectiveness for best evidence medical education: a discussion. *Medical Teacher*, 23(2), 164-170
Biggs, J. 1996. Enhancing teaching through constructive alignment. *Higher Education*, 32 347-364
Kirkpatrick, J. and Kirkpatrick, W.K. 2014. *The Kirkpatrick Four Levels. A Fresh Look After 55 Years*. Kirkpatrick Partners
Lovato, C., and Wall, D. 2014. Programme evaluation: Improving practice, influencing policy and decision making. In Swanwick, T. (Ed), *Understanding Medical Education: Evidence, Theory and Practice* (2nd ed., pp. 385- 400). Oxford: John Wiley and Sons.

Appendix 2- Inclusive Curricula

An inclusive curriculum is one in which the needs of all learners, regardless of their background, is taken into account and in which the learning experience is structured in a way that allows all learners to achieve to the best of their ability. Inclusive curriculum design anticipates the ways in which learners (particularly those with protected characteristics) might be subjected to disadvantage or discrimination and takes steps to either avoid or mitigate for this at the planning stage. *For example, a learner with specific religious beliefs might be disadvantaged in their learning by being unable to participate in an overnight field trip during a particular religious festival; an inclusive curriculum would ensure that they have the opportunity to access the same learning in a way that is suitable for their needs.*

The Course Team should seek to identify possible areas of discrimination and/or disadvantage and take steps to address these, in order to anticipate and mitigate against any challenge, disadvantage or discrimination that a learner may experience through the curriculum.

The institutional Framework for embedding an inclusive curriculum through course development and periodic review is set out in a separate document.

As per the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments are required where disabled learners and those with temporary conditions experience substantial disadvantage in comparison to other learners. The aim of reasonable adjustments for examinations and assessment arrangements is to enable these learners to demonstrate their abilities by making adjustments to standard forms of assessment which does not change the purpose of the assessment but may alter the form. During the design of courses, alternative assessments should normally be provided on an anticipatory basis where appropriate and must be implemented by the Course Team where a learner has a specific ALS assessment of need.

Alternative assessments must be designed to ensure that learners are still able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject against the relevant intended learning outcomes. In some cases, adjustments may be considered inappropriate, and also may not be permitted by PSRBs. Where this is the case, it should be made clear in the course specification.

There are a number of useful resources created at other institutions – for example the University of Worcester Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programmes of Study https://scips.worc.ac.uk/browse/ has a useful searchable database that 'identifies potential challenges that learners with particular needs may experience in achieving and/or demonstrating key skills and attributes as defined within Subject Benchmark Statements [and] offers strategies and adjustments to practice that academic staff might consider in helping address these challenges.'[1]

Appendix 4, Equality considerations for new course proposals identifies questions which should be considered in curriculum development to ensure that courses meet the needs of learners from different backgrounds and with different needs. This will also ensure that the University College is fulfilling its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Course Leads are encouraged to refer to the following resources:
- Guidance and resources on inclusive teaching available from the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) (http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-retention/inclusive-learning-teaching/)
- ECU publication Disability legislation: practical guidance for academic staff (revised) (http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/disability-legislation-practical-guidance-for-academic-staff-revised/)
- The Disabled Students Sector Leadership Group publication Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Higher Education as a route to Excellence January 2017 (at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-teaching-and-learning-in-higher-education

Jisc guidance on accessibility available from https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides?f[]=field_project_topics:569

[1] https://scips.worc.ac.uk/ accessed 20.10.2020

Appendix Three- Guidance questions for developing online courses

- The suitability of the specific course for delivery in this way and the online pedagogical strategy on which the course is based. How flexible will the course be - when and how will the content be released to learners?
- Staff workload skills and training; including workload models for academic staff developing, tutoring and supporting online learning, additional staff development for online delivery and associated pedagogical methods; to include time to ensure updating/revision of learning activities, study materials and support mechanisms. (It is important that the time required is not underestimated given the potential complexities involved – development is likely to take longer than might usually be expected).
- The relevance, longevity, accessibility, security, reliability and costs of the learning platform, tools, authoring software and/or licences used in the design of online activities and study materials.
- The appropriate design and availability of study materials.
- The coherence of the course, in terms of academic content and flow, academic level (where applicable), format and structure of the on-line experience and the overarching learning experience.
- Arrangements for assessment, particularly where assessments are to be delivered on-line (e.g. ensuring the identity of students and apprentices is verified robustly and that assessments are reliable and assist in the identification of academic misconduct). How will assessments be submitted? How will learners receive feedback?
- The technological requirements and skills learners will need in order to follow the course, and how it will be ensured students and apprentices can meet these requirements before admission.
- How Digital Literacy issues will be addressed in the design of the curriculum with respect to using e-resources.
- Arrangements for encouraging active learner participation and collaboration, and monitoring engagement; operation of Course Steering Committee and student or apprentice progress arrangements.
- Arrangements for communications and contact with staff and with the learner cohort to develop a coherent academic community and manage expectations (It may be appropriate to set minimum expectations/standards).
- Implications for administrative arrangements (in conversation with Registry).
- Clarity about channels of communication including roles, responsibilities, contact points, response times, and escalation points.
- Availability, cost and accessibility of digital library resources and support; Are there any specific copyright and/or usage constraints? (Learning Services should be consulted).
- How students will access Library Services and Student Services, and the support that will be in place for them/Provision of technological support for learners including setting expectations for when learners can access support (including provision, or otherwise, of out-of-hours support, and how students can escalate their concerns?
- Arrangements for induction activities and materials.
- Contingency plans in case of technological failure.
- Futureproofing the course to enable innovation as new tools and technologies become available.

Appendix Four -Indicative Helpful resources

There is helpful information provided by the QAA, in the form of outputs from the project 'Using Outcomes-based Approaches to Learning, Teaching and Assessment - Reflections, Tools and Case Studies' to which Course Teams are encouraged to refer.

Additional resources are available from the IFATE to support the design of Apprenticeships courses, including case studies such as: How aligning programme learning outcomes with KSBs has helped to establish B2B sales as a profession
Further guidance on the writing of aims and learning outcomes is available in appendix 3, including information on Bloom's Original Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain (Sample Verbs to Use in Writing Intended Student Learning Outcomes).

Reference documents relating to assessment workloads

Galvin et al, (2012). Assessment workload and equivalences. UCD. Available at https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/2/2529/UCD_workload_and_eqivalences.pdf
Fielding, A. (2015). Learning and Teaching in Action: Assessment. MMU. Available at: http://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/ltia/issue17/fielding.php
HEPI (2020). Student Academic Experience Survey. Available at: https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/The-Student-Academic-Experience-Survey-2020.pdf
Hornby, W. (2003). Case Studies on Streamlining Assessment. Available at SSRN: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=405760