



This document is primarily intended for:
Directors of Studies

Queries:
First point of contact
Assistant Registrars or equivalent

Specialist contact
Academic Registry

Quality Assurance Code of Practice

Programme Handbooks and Programme Specifications: provision of programme information to students

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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 This statement sets out the University's expectations regarding the provision of definitive programme information to students, with particular reference to:
- the institutional requirements for the content of a Programme Handbook, which apply to all taught programmes of study leading to an award of the University and research degree programmes containing a taught element
 - the role of Programme Specifications in the provision of programme information to students, applying to all taught programmes of study leading to an award of the University and research degree programmes containing a taught element.
- 1.2 Particular versions of Programme Handbooks may be produced for distance-learning students, students on online courses, or student apprentices, to support their additional needs (see also [QA41 Distance Learning Provision](#)). In relation to students on franchised, licensed or validated programmes, see also QA38 Induction of Students, section 8.

2. Principles

- 2.1 The University is committed to providing students with clear, accurate, complete, current and readily accessible information about their programme of study, and the learning opportunities, sources of support and guidance available to them. The aim is to support student achievement and informed student choice, and to fulfil the University's responsibilities under consumer protection law.

3. Programme Handbooks

- 3.1. All students on taught programmes will have access to a single comprehensive resource in the form of a Programme Handbook containing clear information about their programme of study, the sources of support and guidance available to them and the standards of achievement expected of them.
- 3.2. Students will be asked to agree to access and read their Programme Handbook in order to complete the registration process online at the start of the academic year.
- 3.3. Departments/School/the Learning Partnerships Office (LPO) will email (to University email accounts) a link to a Programme (or student) Handbook as part of their induction arrangements ([QA38 Induction of Students](#)). Where there is a large amount of common material, a Department/School/LPO may opt to produce a single Handbook that covers a number of related programmes.
- 3.4. The Handbook should be provided in electronic pdf format. Where, exceptionally, in-year changes are necessary, affected students should be notified of the changes made and provided with an updated Handbook, also in electronic pdf format, distinguishable from the previous version by a reference on the title page (see also 3.11). Alternative formats (such as paper copies) should also be provided if required for those students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Imaging, Design and Print Services are able to provide advice on the production of alternative formats.
- 3.5. Programme Handbooks should be published online for each cohort of students.
- 3.6. It may be appropriate to produce Programme Handbooks for each year of the programme, for example where the programme of study is undergoing transition. However, the Programme Handbook should normally contain the curriculum details and progression information for the whole programme of study in order that students may view the entirety of the provision. As a minimum there should be an overview of all years of the programme.
- 3.7. Academic Registry is responsible for the annual update and circulation of common sections of information for incorporation into Programme Handbooks. Academic Registry will circulate the common sections after the final meeting of University Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (ULTQC) each academic year.
- 3.8. The common sections to be included in the Handbook for taught provision are detailed below.

Cover Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Bath logo • Faculty/School name • Department Name • Programme Name(s) • date effective (and any further reference required, eg to distinguish versions produced for each year of the programme, or versions reflecting in-year changes) • statement that the Handbook is available online or in alternative formats on request
Table of Contents	

Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to University/Department/Programme team • About this Handbook
Your Programme (mainly programme/departmental specific information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key contacts/staff list • departmental information • expectations • programme aims and learning outcomes • programme description • unit and programme catalogues • professional body accreditation • timetables • option choices • placements • student exchange/study abroad • submission deadlines • marking criteria • prizes • further study • unit and programme changes • how your programme is reviewed and monitored <p>For PGT (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PG team • Doctoral Training Centre • research ethics
Study and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accessing University email • your student record: SAMIS • Moodle • personal tutoring • language and academic skills support and development • extra-curricular activities: The Bath Award • the Library • computing services and facilities • recording of lectures • student representation • Students' Union membership • student support (Student Services, Students' Union Advice and Support Service, Wellbeing Service) • advice for international students • dealing with a problem involving the University • disabilities, long-term illness and specific learning difficulties • pregnancy and maternity • care-leavers, estranged students, refugees and young adult carers • equality, diversity and inclusion • Careers Service
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback to students on assessment • academic integrity: referencing and plagiarism • academic integrity initiative: training and test • academic integrity: penalties • word counts • late submission of coursework • Individual Mitigating Circumstances • assessment processes • examinations: information and guidance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Examiners • assessment regulations • procedures for Academic Appeals
General Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the academic year timetable • University Regulations for Students • registration status • attendance monitoring • change in circumstances • Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks • health and safety • data protection

- 3.9. In order to draw up Programme Handbooks that can be of maximum benefit to the whole student cohort, Departments/the School are expected to give consideration to the following:
- making clear the relevant procedures and regulations, sources of advice and guidance for programmes involving collaborative provision
 - mechanisms for making available programme information in alternative formats for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties
 - ensuring that the information provided is accessible to students who may be new to (British) higher education
 - considering particular information requirements and issues of accessibility of services and advice that may be particular to distance learners and/or part-time students.
- 3.10 Directors of Studies (or equivalent) are responsible for:
- ensuring that each student is emailed (to their University email account) a link to the definitive pdf version of the relevant Programme Handbook at the start of each year and advised of where it is located online
 - ensuring that each student is notified, in writing, of any substantial changes to the content of the Handbook during the course of an academic session, and provided with the updated version of the Handbook
 - ensuring that the common sections provided by Academic Registry for the relevant academic year are incorporated into Programme Handbooks
 - approving the final version of any Programme Handbooks issued to students
 - ensuring that the current Handbook is accessible to staff around the University (for example, not just on the Moodle VLE).
- 3.11 In liaison with the Director of Studies, a designated member of staff (as nominated by the Assistant Registrar/Director of Administration or the Head of LPO) will be responsible for authorising and ensuring in-year amendments to Programme Handbooks are recorded and previous versions archived appropriately for students and staff to access.

4. Programme Specifications

- 4.1. 'Programme Specifications' are the documents used for existing programmes under the previous academic framework. From 2018/19, for new and transformed programmes following the academic framework principles approved by Senate in 2017/18, an equivalent 'Course Description' will be produced.
- 4.2. Programme Specifications are definitive, formal and concise descriptions of programmes that are comprehensible to a general audience and are intended to support external accountability.

The electronic Curriculum Management Information System ([CMIS](#)) is the definitive source of unit and programme information for existing programmes.

- 4.3. Programme Specifications are multi-stakeholder documents, which form one of the sources of programme information available to current and prospective students. The University prospectus is the primary point of contact and detail for prospective students, and Programme Handbooks serve as the key point of day-to-day reference for current students.
- 4.4. Directors of Studies are responsible for ensuring that information in Programme Specifications, as recorded in the CMIS system, is up to date and coherent with the more detailed information provided in the prospectus and Programme Handbooks. Further guidance on maintaining Programme Specifications and the level of detail and content to be included is available from Academic Registry and provided within the CMIS system. For programmes within the scope of the New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations, see also the [NFAAR](#) (UG, PGT, FD, HY, CPD or PGOLC).
- 4.5. Directors of Studies are responsible for reviewing Programme Specifications on an annual basis.
- 4.6. Assistant Registrars in the Faculty/School (or equivalent) are responsible for ensuring that current Programme Specifications are publicly available via the designated area on the Faculty/School/LPO website.

5. Monitoring and Review

- 5.1 ULTQC is responsible for:
- maintaining an overview of the adequacy of mechanisms for the provision of definitive programme information for students, and
 - the assurance and enhancement of the provision of information to a number of stakeholders, including prospective and current students.
- 5.2 Review of the standards of provision of programme information relating to particular programmes will form part of the periodic review process, Degree Scheme Review (see [QA13 Degree Scheme Review](#)) or equivalent.

Statement Details			
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Date:	August 2019		
Antecedents:	<i>Senate</i>	09/04/08	Minute 12740
	<i>New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations (NFAAR)</i>	11/06/08 21/10/09 14/04/10 08/06/11	Minute 12782 Minute 13005 Minute 13110 Minute
	<i>Individual Mitigating Circumstances & Assessment (IMCA)</i>	09/06/10	Minute 13141
	<i>Quality Assurance Committee</i>	Paper QAC 98/99 – 6 06/10/98 06/12/02	Minute 83(iv) Minute 318
		Paper QAC 06/07 - 94	

		19/03/07	Minute 705
		02/07/07	Minute 742(8)
		20/05/08	Minute 833(3)
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		29/09/09	Minute 1009
		13/07/10	Minute 1095(8)
	<i>University Learning Teaching and Quality Committee</i>	13/07/11	Minute 121
		10 July 2012	Minute 279
		15 May 2013	Minute 408
		8 July 2014	Minute 554
		7 July 2015	Minute 671
		5 July 2016	Minute 807
		11 July 2017	Minute 940
		22 May 2018	Minute 1040
		16 July 2019	Minute 1197
	<i>Learning and Teaching Committee</i>	21/11/06	Minute 28
Related Documentation:	Statement of Equality Objectives 2019-21 University of Bath Student Protection Plan New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulation (NFAAR) University of Bath Quality Assurance Code of Practice Individual Mitigating Circumstances & Assessment: Principles and Procedures within and outside NFAAR Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) consumer law advice for Higher Education providers		
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