



Quality Assurance Approach to Integrated Foundation Years

This chapter considers how Integrated Foundation Years which share common modules should be managed aligned to standard University Quality Assurance Procedures for Course Change, Periodic Review and Continuous Course Improvement

1. Introduction

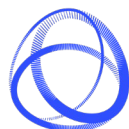
- 1.1. Foundation Years are designed to support routes into specific courses in higher education. The Foundation Year forms the first year of a four-year or five-year undergraduate degree. Learning is classed as Level 0 after which student progress onto Level 4 often joining other students who have entered directly on to a three-year version of the course.
- 1.2. Foundation Years should be designed according the parameters set by the University Academic Framework. Normally a Foundation Year which include shared common modules which are led by specialist teams.
- 1.3. Whatever the vehicle for delivery of the Foundation Year, it is essential that the Foundation Year operates as an integral part of a four-year degree and that the modules and student support arrangements for that year appropriately serve the attached course. An effective Foundation Year must enable students to successfully achieve the award with comparable results to those who study on the three-year version of the course.
- 1.4. The adoption of a common approach to quality assurance procedures for Foundation Years will enable more effective evaluation and delivery of courses with an integrated Foundation Year.

2. Course Change and Periodic Review

- 2.1. Where a Major course changes is being considered for courses with a Foundation Year, these will need to consider whether these changes relate to offerings with a Foundation Year and any impact/implications.
- 2.2. Where a Foundation Year and/or its modules change, the course teams for all courses utilising the Foundation year will need to be consulted regarding the change. Normally where structural changes are necessary to the Foundation Year (beyond the addition of subject specific modules) the normal procedures will be that of a major course change.
- 2.3. The currency of the Foundation Year should be reconsidered in the Periodic Course Review of each course which includes an integrated Foundation Year. This process should consider progression through the levels.

3. Continuous Improvement

- 3.1. All Course Boards for courses with an integrated Foundation Year must consider the delivery of the Foundation Year and the progression of students from a Foundation Year through the course as a whole. To support this the following standard approach is:



- 3.1.1. An annual Course Performance Plan for the Foundation Year should be written, normally by the course Foundation Year team (with input from course teams utilising the integrated Foundation Year). The CPP should consider the overall delivery of the Foundation Year and continuation of students onto level 4.
- 3.1.2. The Course Performance Plan should then be considered by all relevant Course Boards for courses with an integrated Foundation Year. Course Boards must consider the extent to which the Foundation Year supports the course, including reflection on the outcomes for Foundation Year students at levels 4, 5 and 6.
- 3.1.3. The Foundation Year Course Performance Plans and any relevant discussion of the Foundation Year from Course Boards should also be considered by the Boards of Study as part of the school's oversight of Course Board and CPP activity.

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