

FRAMEWORK FOR THE APPROVAL OF FOUNDATION DEGREES

INTRODUCTION

1. This paper sets out the framework that underpins the provision of Foundation Degrees at Canterbury Christ Church University.
2. It is the responsibility of the Programme Teams presenting at the Programme Approval Event to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Programme Approval Panel that all elements of this Framework will be met.
3. This paper is to be read in conjunction with the [Regulation and Credit Framework for the Conferment of Awards](#) and with the [Quality Assurance Agency, Characteristics Statement: Foundation Degree \(February 2020\)](#).

PRINCIPLES

4. This Framework is underpinned by nine key principles:
 - 4.1 The design of Foundation Degrees requires the support and engagement of employers, sector skills councils and professional bodies to enable recognised occupational needs.
 - 4.2 Employers should be involved wherever possible in the design, delivery and assessment of Foundation Degrees.
 - 4.3 Foundation Degrees must embed a commitment to work-based learning within the programme as a whole.
 - 4.4 Foundation Degrees should make full use of articulation arrangements, advanced standing and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning [APEL].
 - 4.5 The design of Foundation Degrees will use flexible delivery modes and study patterns, including full-time, part-time, distance, and work-based, with flexibility to study, within reasonable limits, when and where it best suits the learner.¹
 - 4.6 Foundation Degrees will seek, whenever possible, to recruit and support learners who may not previously have considered studying for a higher-level qualification.
 - 4.7 Foundation Degree programmes will seek to embed higher apprenticeship skills wherever appropriate.
 - 4.8 A successful student will be able to articulate a Foundation Degree into an undergraduate degree with a period of further study of no more than 150 credits, 120 credits of which must be at Level 6, enabling them to complete an undergraduate degree.

¹ QAA Characteristics Statement: Foundation Degree (February 2020)

- 4.9 The route by which a student may progress to honours degree level must include the same mode as the student studied for the Foundation Degree, but may also offer other modes of study.

THE APPROVAL EVENT

5. It is the responsibility of the programme team to demonstrate to the Approval Panel that the following arrangements are in place:
- 5.1 The Foundation Degree principles set out above have been appropriately incorporated into the proposal.
 - 5.2 Consideration has been given to the role of Foundation Degrees in meeting the delivery of work place skills and the regional and local economies.
 - 5.3 There has been liaison with relevant HE networks, employers, professional bodies, regulators, sector skills councils and the further education sector to identify skills shortages and develop strategies which are focused to the local workforce.
 - 5.4 The proposal is underpinned by a needs analysis of the ways in which it will contribute to the development of employment skills relevant to the local, regional or national economy.
 - 5.5 Relevant employers, Skills Sector Councils, the Skills Funding Agency, other professional and training organisations and, where appropriate, the Regional Development Agency have been consulted on programme design to ensure that the learning outcomes are considered appropriate.
 - 5.6 Suitable work-based learning activities have been identified to enable the learning outcomes to be met.
 - 5.7 There is an infrastructure to support work-based learning that reflects the central role of work-based learning either through direct involvement in the work place or through placement.
 - 5.8 Effective learning agreements/contracts have been put in place with work-place and/or placement providers for work-based learning.
 - 5.9 The programme contains provision for flexible delivery modes, study patterns, and admissions requirements.
 - 5.10 The programme contains provision for Accreditation of Prior Learning [APL] for both entry and credit exemption in line with the maximum allowed by the University's policy for APL, except where a strong supporting rationale for limiting or excluding APL has been presented.
 - 5.11 The validation document demonstrates how employers are involved in teaching, mentoring, facilitating, and, where possible, assessment of work-based learning, and details how these processes will be quality assured.
 - 5.12 The validation document provides a strategy to determine how the situation will be managed where a student required to complete work-based learning loses their work-based setting through no fault of their own.

- 5.13 Arrangements are in place to ensure that facilitators and mentors in the workplace are appropriately selected and provided with training, monitoring, support and engagement.
- 5.14 There are appropriate arrangements for the induction, support and mentoring of students in placement or in work-based learning. This must identify the roles to be played by University staff and by work place/placement mentors and facilitators.
- 5.15 Appropriate use has been made of tools, such as formal learning agreements, to manage and monitor work-based learning. Personal Development Planning (PDP) should be used within work-based learning.

ADMISSIONS

- 6. The normal entry requirement may not be appropriate for all anticipated applicants to Foundation Degrees. The process of acceptance may involve an interview and/or other forms of aptitude test.
- 7. There are arrangements in place to ensure that students on FDs will have an opportunity to gain appropriate experience in the work place, which will enable them to reflect on and apply their learning.

STUDENT SUPPORT

- 8. The programme will need to identify how students may be supported in the workplace. This could include:
 - 8.1 a learning agreement/contract identifying roles and responsibilities and signed by a representative from the University, workplace and the student;
 - 8.2 provision of a work-place facilitator who supports the students learning in the work place or comparable supporting arrangements where no facilitation arrangement is available, such as in the case of a student is self-employed. These individuals will require support to undertake this role which may be provided via e-mail and telephone, face-to-face or the use of the virtual learning environment;
 - 8.3 practice evaluations as a means of monitoring the quality of the work-based learning.

PLACEMENT

- 9. As part of Foundation Degrees, employers will be invited to provide placement opportunities. Placement can be defined as a broad term applying to a continuum of learning situations, where the learning outcomes of a module or programme require students to learn at, through or for work. The term is applied variously to short periods of placement, professional placements designed to develop competence to practice as, for example a teacher, work-related projects and, at the furthest end of the continuum, to negotiated work-based learning as part of a professional

development programme. All placement learning must be compatible with the Quality Assurance Agency, *UK Quality Code Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others* and the University [*Policy and Guidance on Placement and Work-Based Learning*](#).

PROGRESSION TO HONOURS DEGREE

10. In line with principle 4.8, a student awarded a Foundation Degree by the University is entitled to progress to a linked honours degree programme through an additional programme of study of no more than 150 credits, of which 120 credits must be at Level 6. All such programmes must be specified in the validation document, must include the same mode of delivery and must be validated before students are enrolled on the Foundation Degree.

BRIDGING PROGRAMMES

11. Validation documents must specify either:
 - (a) the nature of a Bridging Programme(s) to the articulated degree(s). A Bridging Programme will comprise a commitment equivalent to that of at least a 10-credit module at Level 5; or
 - (b) a detailed rationale as to why a Bridging Programme is not required.

COLLABORATIVE PROVISION ARRANGEMENTS

12. Collaboration is at the core of the design and delivery of Foundation Degrees. Further Education Colleges, other public bodies, voluntary organisations and private sector bodies will be natural partners for the delivery of programmes. In these instances, the programme team must be aware of the University's collaborative provision procedures. Where Foundation Degrees are taught entirely by University staff, there should be some discussion in the approval document as to why partnership arrangements are not appropriate.
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