



# UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK GUIDELINES

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This document defines the curriculum and credit structure for undergraduate awards at Leeds Arts University. It is consistent with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QAA, 2001/2008) which specifies the level and volume of study required for specific types of awards, and the UK Quality Code.

The document provides the general principles, requirements and additional guidance for the structural design and credit requirements undergraduate courses approved by Leeds Arts University. The Course Approval process deals with pedagogic approaches and course content.

The principles for course design set out the standard requirements for courses approved by Leeds Arts University. These requirements are regarded as the norm and courses must comply with the common design principles, structure and procedures as set out.

The University should clearly define the attributes of a Leeds Arts University graduate and these should be linked to course level outcomes. For example;

*Each Leeds Arts University course must aim to stimulate an enquiring, analytical and creative approach, encouraging independent judgement and critical self-awareness and the development of students' ability to locate, assimilate and present information in appropriate media and from a range of sources.*

The achievement of awards within the Curriculum Framework is based on the principles of credit accumulation where credit is gained through the successful achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level. The amount of credit achieved relates to the amount of learning, with each single unit of credit representing a notional 10 hours of student learning. Each course is divided into discrete modules, which are credit rated and have specific learning outcomes. Students receive academic credit in respect of their learning achievements as expressed in terms of learning outcomes.

Courses within the Curriculum Framework are based on discrete modules to provide flexibility and promote efficiency in course design, structure and provision and to ensure equity of experience for students. A credit value, specified in terms of the number of credits and the level, is ascribed to each module. As students successfully take and pass modules they accumulate credit towards specific awards.

All undergraduate courses leading to awards of Leeds Arts University shall conform to the Curriculum Framework. In specific circumstances, where course teams have a strong case to deviate from some aspect of these requirements, for example, on the grounds of meeting professional body requirements, this must be made clear in the proposal put forward for approval and such deviation must be approved through Academic Board and its committees as appropriate.

Courses of study are constructed to enable students to progress through the levels of study and, on achievement of the learning outcomes and credit requirements associated with each level of study, to qualify for an award of Leeds Arts University.

A module specification will define the structure and content of a module and be approved through the course approval process. Each module will have a defined level of study at Level 4, 5 and 6. The module will lead to specified learning outcomes which are summatively assessed; it will have a specific code and title and be distinctive overall in terms of aims, defined learning outcomes, content and assessment. Each module, regardless of size, will have a maximum of 5 learning outcomes.

Each unit of credit represents 10 hours of student learning and the minimum size of a unit available is 20 credits, the maximum size of a unit available is 60 credits (see table below).

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Unit Size (HE Credits)	Notional Learning Hours	ECTS Credits (European Credit and Accumulation Transfer System)
20 credits	200 hours	10 credits
30 credits	300 hours	15 credits
40 credits	400 hours	20 credits
50 credits	500 hours	25 credits
60 credits	600 hours	30 credits

The distribution of student learning hours within a module is a matter for the professional judgement of the course team. However, consideration must be given in the module specification to the indicative distribution of student effort in the module, which may include formally scheduled teaching and other activities they will be expected to complete to achieve the learning outcomes, such as directed study and independent study. The ratio of directed study to independent learning may vary according to the level of study; for example, where there is an emphasis on practical skills or where there is a greater need for students to research independently around a topic.

Course and module specifications must explicitly demonstrate through the learning outcomes and indicative content where learning related to professional practice (including preparation for employment/ self-employment) takes place within the course. The volume of learning for this aspect should equate to a minimum of 15 percent of the total credit unit value of the award and may be delivered as discrete modules or across modules clearly articulated within the course specification.

Course and module specifications must explicitly demonstrate through the indicative content, the learning outcomes and assessment strategies where critical engagement is specifically related to practice. The volume of learning for this aspect should equate to a minimum of 15 percent of the total credit unit value of the award and may be delivered as discrete modules or across modules.

Each module will have an assessment strategy which ensures that learning activities and evidence required for assessment are aligned with the intended learning outcomes.

Each award should be distinct from other awards, have a defined course structure, aims and specific learning outcomes related to the knowledge, skills and attributes that an individual is intended to have achieved on completion of the award. For undergraduate courses interim exit award titles (eg CertHe and DipHE) should be available on all courses.

Each course leading to an award is comprised of a set of modules detailed within a Course Specification. This Course Specification should include a Curriculum Map and Assessment Map. A similar map should be included to indicate how the course satisfies the requirements of the appropriate QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s)

Course specific learning outcomes will specify the knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and identify the ways in which these will be developed and evaluated in the students. The course learning outcomes will identify the ways in which students' transferable intellectual skills will be developed and evaluated.

Course Teams should state in specifications the methods and timing of formative assessment strategies during the delivery of a module. Formative assessment should be used judiciously and be appropriately timed to facilitate student progress and designed to ensure that the team can provide constructive feedback. The goal of formative assessment is to *monitor student learning* to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by students to improve their learning.

Each module must include a summative assessment strategy which is aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the module. All stated learning outcomes for a module will be summatively assessed at their designated level. All assessment will normally take place within the semester in which the module(s) is (are) taught.

The delivery of the assessment strategy should be managed by the Course Leader and show a balance of assessment across the course. In determining the assessment for a module, account will be taken of assessment loading, together with consideration of the assessment design, schedule and loading for the course as a whole. The aim is to ensure some standardisation of the assessment loading across different modules and courses.

Where modules include an attendance requirement, this must be included in the module specification and at a Course Approval event.

There should be clear statements in the module descriptor regarding workload to ensure that appropriate time is allocated to the activities. Submission dates for all elements of assessment will be determined on an annual basis and prior to the commencement of a course. Students must be provided with details of coursework submission dates at the start of a module.

As a pre-requisite of professional practice the framework encourages collaboration within and across courses as well as with external groups. The management and assessment of collaboration is subject to a code of practice.

The framework recognises that word count in relation to workload is not always consistent particularly as students' progress through levels; therefore word counts should be expressed in the form of maximums in order to balance assessment demands. In determining maximum word counts Course Leaders should apply the credit value model of 10 credits being equal to 100 hours of learning.

When critical and reflective engagement is evidenced through a written submission it is expected this will conform to standard academic conventions regarding referencing. However courses may also specify when and how alternatives to standard academic conventions might stand in their place such as in the form of presentations or audio/video forms. In such instances clear expectations of workload regarding, for example, length, complexity and depth of engagement should be stated to ensure that equivalent rigour to a written submission is demonstrated.