

Guidelines on the structure of undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes

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Background

1. This document provides guidelines on the design of undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes and is aligned with Chapter B1: Programme design and approval of the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
2. Please contact the following members of staff with any queries:
 - the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean or School Director of Teaching and Learning;
 - Rosie Brown (rosemary.brown@reading.ac.uk)/ Lynda Tomlinson (l.tomlinson@reading.ac.uk)/ Alex Gushurst-Moore (a.gushurst-moore@reading.ac.uk) for matters relating to specific/technical programme requirements;
 - Dr Nina Brooke (n.m.brooke@reading.ac.uk) for matters relating to the Curriculum Framework.

Curriculum framework

3. Programme design is an iterative process and Schools and Departments are continuously reviewing and enhancing modules and programmes. The Curriculum Framework outlines a set of Graduate Attributes and principles to facilitate the creative and collaborative process of curriculum design and enhancement. Each School will be expected to plan for the review of its undergraduate programmes in light of the Curriculum Framework over a 3 year period from 2016-17 to 2018-19. The framework will also be used to inform the development of any undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in new areas. The review of PGT programmes will follow and its timeline will be decided at a later date. This document, the *Guidelines on the structure of undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes*, will be subject to review in light of the Curriculum Framework.
4. For further information on the Curriculum Framework, please contact Dr Nina Brooke (n.m.brooke@reading.ac.uk). A suite of online 'toolkits' will be available on the University website in 2016-17.

Associated documents

5. These guidelines refer to associated documentation which academic staff involved in designing new programmes will find useful. Key policies and procedures (including the Strategy for Teaching and Learning and programme approval policies) can be found on the **Guide to Policies and Procedures for Teaching and Learning** (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>).
6. The *University guidelines on undergraduate programme specifications and module descriptions* have been revised for 2016-17 in light of compliance advice published by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and recent changes to consumer regulation. The undergraduate programme specification template has been amended to ensure that the information it contains is clear and concise and includes only contractual information. Information which is not contractual and was previously included in the programme specification will be included in the further programme information. The programme specification will be set for a particular cohort and will not be changed for that cohort, other than under clause 10 of the Terms and Conditions of the Student Contract.

Programme scrutiny and approval

7. Proposals for new programmes and changes to programmes must be scrutinised and approved in accordance with the University's Programme Lifecycle Policies.

8. The academic scrutiny of programmes will include consideration of a number of pedagogic issues, such as the aims, structure, description, delivery, resources, assessment, quality management and enhancement and procedures of the proposed programme. The Programme Lifecycle Policies provide a guide to the evaluation of a new programme that Scrutiny Panel members are expected to undertake and should also be considered by staff in the design of programmes.

University credit and qualification framework (UCQF)

9. All undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes (including credit-bearing CPD) must be designed in accordance with the *University credit and qualifications framework (UCQF)*. This is the University's implementation of the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)* and associated credit guidance.
10. Programmes should be located at the appropriate level of the UCQF and with its intended learning outcomes meeting the applicable 'qualification descriptor'.
11. All taught degree programmes should comprise a set of modules, which are of a standard size and are coherently distributed across period of study. These modules are credit-weighted, with one credit being equivalent to 10 hours of student effort in relation to teaching, self-study and assessment across the academic year. In addition, each module within a programme should be located at a Level appropriate to its intended learning outcomes.
12. All programmes must also meet the overall minimum credits and the minimum credits at the level of award for each qualification as set out in the UCQF.
13. The minimal registration, normal completion and maximum registration times specified in the UCQF apply across all programmes, with effect from cohorts entering October 2013. Programmes will not be designed to either undercut the minimum registration period or exceed the maximum registration period for the type of qualification and mode of delivery, unless a specific exception has been approved.
14. Where the design of a programme includes a variation to the normal University policies and procedures (such as the UCQF or the [Assessment Handbook](#)) or external reference points, it will be expected that full details of the proposal be considered by the University Board for Teaching and Learning.

Subject benchmark statements

15. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has published Subject benchmark statements for a wide range of disciplines covering the generic skills and knowledge that students studying on undergraduate programmes should attain. There are also a number of subject benchmark statements for taught postgraduate programmes.
16. In designing programmes, Schools must pay due regard to the relevant Statement(s), which are available at - <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/ASSURINGSTANDARDSANDQUALITY/SUBJECT-GUIDANCE/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>
17. It should be noted that for some programmes (particularly combined programmes), more than one Subject benchmark statement may be of relevance.

Other external reference points

18. In designing programmes, Schools must also take due account take of other external reference points, including the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs), employers and any relevant national legislation/national commitments to European and international processes.

Programme specifications and module descriptions

19. All undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes are required to have an associated Programme Specification which describes the programme in detail, including its aims and learning outcomes. As noted above, the undergraduate programme specification template has been amended for 2016-17 with the consequence that the information it contains is clear and concise and includes only contractual information. The programme specification will be set for a particular cohort and will not be changed for that cohort, other than under clause 10 of the Terms and Conditions of the Student Contract.
20. The University produces guidelines on the development of programme specifications which can be found on the web at:
 - For undergraduate programmes - www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/ugprogspec.pdf
 - For taught postgraduate programmes - www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/pgprogspec.pdf
21. All credit-bearing modules within a programme (or any that may stand alone) are also required to have their own Module Description. Guidelines on developing these can also be found at the links above.
22. The University provides a web database of current programme specifications and module descriptions, which can be found at:
 - Programme Specifications - <http://www.reading.ac.uk/progspecs/>
 - Module Descriptions - <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>

Undergraduate programmes

Elements common to all undergraduate degree programmes

23. Each undergraduate programme should comprise three Parts, with each Part being three terms in length. 'Parts' may equate to 'Years' of a programme, although there may be exceptions to this, for example with regard to programmes with a placement element (see below).
24. 'Parts' should be related primarily to 'Levels' of the UCQF. Part 1 will therefore correspond to the Level 4, Part 2 to Level 5, and Part 3 to Level 6. This should ensure that the final award is located at the correct level of the UCQF and allow coherent student progression through the programme.
25. Three year undergraduate degree programmes are structured around 3600 hours of notional study, with each year corresponding to 1200 hours and therefore 120 credits. The final award therefore consists of 360 credits, with not less than 100 credits at Level 6.
26. Programmes should be based as far as possible around six 20-credit modules per year, with 10-credit modules as necessary. Normally up to 40 credits can be assigned to a dissertation or final year project.
27. Not all subject areas have exams in the Summer Term. For the majority that do, some have a short (two-week) teaching period at the beginning of Summer Term, some do not. Where a two-week teaching period is used, it may be used for a 10 credit module, taught intensively.
28. Non-finalists may have teaching after the end of exams in the summer term but there is limited time for this in the new 8-week format. Any summative assessment deadlines that are scheduled in the summer term after exams will count towards credit for the following academic year.
29. Programmes should incorporate into Parts 2 and 3 provision, where possible, a 20 credit element outside the main subject although this arrangement is not always appropriate for combined

programmes, and is not mandatory. Courses taken within the Institution-wide Language Programme may be included in this structure.

30. Programme-specific progression requirements at Part 2, and Part 3 in the case of Integrated Masters programmes, will normally be permitted only in exceptional circumstances, for example, in order to meet a specific requirement of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation. The structure of progression requirements and their rationale, and any specific progression requirements in relation to compulsory modules, must be approved by the University Programmes Board. Revisions to the list of optional modules or other module groupings specified within progression rules must be approved by the relevant School Board for Teaching and Learning; such changes must be consistent with the structure and rationale.
31. With regard to optional modules, students will normally only be able to take modules weighted at up to 20 credits at one level above or below the level they have reached in their programme. Any variations will require approval of the University Board for Teaching and Learning.
32. There is an already agreed exception to the above rule for IWLP courses and the introductory language modules CL1G1 Ancient Greek 1 and CL1L1 Latin 1, where students may take up to 20 credits at level 4 in a language in Part 3. Where Schools feel that there is a particular reason that this should not be permitted for a programme, approval should be sought from the University Programmes Board. The UPB should report any such decisions to the University Board for Teaching and Learning.
33. Those disciplines which have a need to cover a specified quantity of material in the main subject as a result, for example, of the requirements of a professional validating body, may need to specify a progression requirement of 60 or possibly 80 credits in the main subject for progression from Part 1 to Part 2. In single honours programmes at Part 1 students should be able to take up to 120 credits in the broad subject area. Nonetheless, students are normally permitted to take up to 60 credits outside of the broad subject area in order to facilitate progression to joint honours programmes. Whilst no more than 40 credits should normally be specified as part of subject-specific progression requirements, more than 40 credits may be specified in the subject at Part 1 in some programme areas in order to address the needs of individual disciplines.

Nomenclature for undergraduate programmes comprising two or more subjects

34. The generic title for all undergraduate programmes comprising two or more subjects will be '**combined**'. There are three possible types of combined programme:
 - **Joint:** where the programme is made up of roughly two equal and distinct halves of separate single subjects but with little or no linkages intended between the subjects. Such programmes would be styled **x and y**.
 - **Major/minor:** where again there are not necessarily any linkages but where the two subjects are distributed 67:33 or 75:25 or between these two distributions. Such programmes would be styled **x with y**.
 - **Multi-disciplinary:** where there are distinct linkages e.g. European Studies, or those degrees in two subjects where the subjects are largely or wholly integrated.

Placement Opportunities

35. All undergraduate programmes must have a placement opportunity (PO) available to students entering the programme from 2011-12 onwards, being either a work or academic placement, which might take one of three forms:

Micro: embedded within a module

Mini: constituting an entire module (mini placements will normally have a mark (i.e. not pass/fail))

Maxi: comprising a year (there are two types of Maxi placement – those which contribute to classification (i.e. involve the award of a mark) and those which do not contribute (i.e. placement is Pass/Fail only).

36. Those programmes which offer a ‘maxi’ placement should also offer either a ‘micro’ or a ‘mini’ placement since a significant number of students may not be able to commit to a full year placement.

Opportunities for Study Abroad

37. All undergraduate programmes must be flexible enough to allow sufficient opportunities for those students wishing to study abroad. The eligibility criteria for outgoing student mobility are published on the *Guide to Policies and Procedures in Teaching and Learning*.

Cross-cutting modules with international/global themes

38. Disciplines are encouraged to include cross-cutting modules with international/global themes in programmes. In the case of programmes which are subject to professional accreditation, Schools should consult accrediting bodies on the feasibility of including such modules in their curricula.

Attributes and skills

39. All undergraduate programmes at Reading provide the opportunity for students to develop, in context, a range of personal or transferable attributes and skills, including the graduate attributes articulated in the Curriculum Framework:

- discipline-based skills
- research skills
- personal effectiveness and self-awareness
- global engagement and multi-cultural awareness

40. Different programmes will have different profiles of attributes and skills. Programme teams should identify the wide-ranging skills the programme should seek to engender. This could include some or all of the following:

- Generic skills (cognitive and affective)
- Discipline specific skills
- Professional standards required by accrediting bodies
- Industry or employer expectations (seek advice from employers and alumni)

41. Numerous lists of generic skills are available. For example, [CBI Education and Skills Survey](#) (2016) (p49); Rich, J (2015) ‘Ten soft skills’ in *Employability: Degrees of Value* (p22-23), available [here](#).

42. The QAA’s [Subject Benchmark Statements](#) outline both the discipline-specific knowledge and skills, and the generic skills needed to develop understanding or competence in a subject area. These provide a useful reference point in terms of developing a programme specific skills profile.

Careers learning

43. Careers learning should be included in each undergraduate programme. The previous mandatory stand-alone model of five credits has been replaced by the principles which form the Employability Toolkit of the Curriculum Framework. This advocates for incremental, embedded employability learning throughout a programme, which can include credit bearing modules in one or more parts. The School/Department is responsible for delivering careers learning, and should work with the School Employability Team (SET) and Careers Consultant for the Department to ensure the appropriateness of content and delivery, and share emerging best practice. Please contact careers@reading.ac.uk for more information. The University’s new [Policy on Career Learning: Embedding Employability](#) is effective from 2017-18 onwards and will be rolled out as part of the Curriculum Framework and toolkits over a three-year period.

Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education

44. The coherent distribution of credits across ‘Parts’, located at the appropriate ‘Level’ of the UCQF, allows students to leave the University having successfully completed Part 1 with a Certificate of Higher Education (120 credits, 100 at Level 4) or Part 2 with a Diploma of Higher Education (240 credits, 100 at Level 5) respectively, should they so wish. The Certificate of Higher Education is a generic University award – except when offered as a stand-alone award in a specific discipline – whilst the Diploma of Higher Education is subject-specific.

Foundation Level

45. The University runs an International Foundation Programme, which is placed at a Foundation Level within the UCQF. Further details relating to the International Foundation Programme are provided in the programme specification, which is available at: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/progspeccs/prog-index.asp>

Foundation degrees

46. Foundation Degrees are located at Level 5 in the UCQF, have a duration of 2 years for full time students or equivalent for part time, and comprise a total 240 credits, with not less than 100 credits at Level 5. The principles used in relation to the design of the University’s undergraduate degrees should be followed in relation to the design of a Foundation Degree, as far as they are applicable. Additional guidance on designing Foundation Degrees is included in Appendix 2.
47. Foundation Degrees are designed to integrate academic and work-based learning, and to equip learners with knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to their employment. They should also prepare learners for further study and a progression route onto an appropriate Honours Degree should be defined.
48. By their nature as Degrees, Foundation Degrees must be validated by a degree-awarding body. They are usually, however, delivered by one or more Further Education Colleges with whom the degree-awarding body works in partnership.
49. A Foundation Degree should be developed by the University in partnership with the Further Education College(s) that will be delivering it, employers, professional bodies and Sector Skills Councils, to ensure that the programme is relevant to the workplace.

Four year undergraduate programmes

N.B. Integrated Masters programmes are dealt with separately below, although those designing Integrated Masters degrees with placement elements should also pay attention to this section.

50. Some programmes do not fall in to the University’s most common 360 credit/3 year undergraduate degree or the 480 credit/4 year Integrated Masters degree models and should be designed taking into account the principles set out below. These programmes are:
- Those with a year-abroad language placement;
 - Those with a sandwich placement comprising practical or industrial experience (including those five-year Integrated Masters programmes with a sandwich placement);
 - Four year programmes involving single or joint honours Art.
51. Students taking placements of any kind, whether language, industrial/business or teaching, should receive recognition for this element of their programme and must be informed in advance of their departure of the assessment method to be used.
52. The most sensible way of providing such recognition is to credit-weight placement elements at 120 credits for a full placement year. The University is however mindful that students should not be able

to 'cash-in' their credits at the end of the third year of a four-year programme and achieve an Honours degree and therefore:

- all four-year undergraduate degree programmes will carry a total credit-weighting of 480 credits, with each year being worth 120 credits (consequently, Integrated Masters degrees with a placement element are five years in length and should have a total weighting of 600 credits);
- all such degrees will normally have years 2 and 3 at Level 5 and year 4 at Level 6, with years 2 and 3 contributing 33% of the final assessment, and year 4 contributing 67%;
- placement years will normally be placed and assessed at the Level 5 of the UCQF, so ensuring that students will not have enough credit at Level 6 after three years to achieve an Honours degree;
- the delivery and assessment of credits during the Year Abroad will normally be undertaken by the host institution. Where Schools believe that they have a pedagogic case to the contrary which merits consideration as an exception to this rule, they should seek approval via the University Programmes Board, following consultation with the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean;
- it will be possible for the assessment to be on a pass/fail basis only and thus not to contribute to the final assessment. Otherwise, the total contribution of all the Level 5 modules should not normally exceed 33%.

53. For cohorts entering from 2015-16 onwards and undertaking the language Year Abroad in the School of Modern Languages and European Studies, all Year Abroad credits will be at level 5. The Year Abroad will not include a dissertation element and all assessment will take place before students enter Year 4. Students will progress to the Year Abroad on the basis of their results in the modules studied in Year 2 and the following progression rules apply to the Year Abroad:

- (i) obtain a weighted average of 40% over the 120 Year Abroad credits; and
- (ii) obtain a mark of at least 40% in Year Abroad modules amounting to at least 80 credits; and
- (iii) obtain marks of at least 30% in Year Abroad modules amounting to at least 120 credits.

Classification for four year programmes with a year abroad (MFL) is as follows:

- Part 2: one-sixth
- Year abroad: one-sixth
- Part 3: two-thirds

The above applies to all Modern Languages programmes, including joints. There is no contribution to the Year Abroad from non-language joint departments.

Part-time Degree programmes

54. Students for part-time Bachelor's degrees must take the compulsory and optional modules required for their degree programme, the following minimum number of credits being required at the levels indicated:

- Level 4 100 credits minimum
- Level 5 100 credits minimum
- Level 6 100 credits minimum

Part 1

55. Part 1 involves studying modules totalling at least 100 credits and no more than 120 Level 4 credits. Students must take at Level 4 those modules required for progression to one or more degree subjects, but may take individual modules from any available programme to make up the necessary minimum total of 100 credits at Level 4.

56. To proceed from Part 1 students will be considered to have achieved a threshold performance if they have achieved an overall average of at least 40% across 120 credits and achieve a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken at Part 1. In addition a student must fulfil any programme-specific requirements which are stipulated in the relevant programme specification.
57. Students who do not qualify to proceed from Part 1 at the first attempt may re-sit the required modules in a re-examination held in September.

Parts 2 and 3

58. For Parts 2 and 3 students should take the remainder of the modules which will enable them to meet the requirements of the designated award.
59. Students must complete at least 100 credits at Level 5 before they can proceed to study any Level 6 modules.
60. To proceed from Part 2 students will be considered to have achieved a threshold performance if they have achieved an overall average of 40% across 120 credits and achieve marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits and marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 120 credits. For cohorts entering Part 2 from 2015-16 onwards, a mark below 30% may be condoned in no more than 20 credits of modules owned by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. In addition a student must fulfil any programme-specific requirements which are stipulated in the relevant programme specification.

Graduate Certificates and Diplomas

61. Graduate Certificates (60 credits at Level 6) and Graduate Diplomas (120 credits with 100 at Level 6) are programmes which could be used in a wide range of circumstances, including:
 - A 'top up' to shorter qualifications such as the Diploma of Higher Education or Foundation Degree – which may or may not lead to a Bachelor's degree with Honours.
 - A stand-alone course for professionals with or without Level 6 qualifications.
 - An 'access course' for those seeking entry to a post-graduate programme who do not have sufficient or recent experience of higher education study to warrant direct entry.

Integrated Masters programmes

62. Integrated Masters' awards are delivered through a programme that combines study at the level of a Bachelor's degree with honours study at Master's level.
63. Four-year Integrated Masters' degree programmes (such as MChem, MMath and MPharm) should follow a very similar structure to other undergraduate programmes, with each year corresponding to 120 credits (and therefore 480 credits in total across the four years). Part 4 will be placed at Level 7, and students should take a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7.
64. The following requirements apply:
 - Any variation to programme-specific progression rules at Part 1 on Integrated Masters programmes must be approved by the University Programmes Board. Integrated Masters programmes normally require students to achieve an overall weighted average of 50% for progression from Part 2 to Part 3. Any variation on the requirement to achieve an overall weighted average of 50% must be approved by the University Programmes Board. A requirement to achieve an overall average greater than 50% would normally only be permitted where stipulated by an accrediting body.
 - Integrated Masters programmes require students to achieve an overall weighted average of 40% for progression from Part 3 to Part 4. Any requirement to achieve a higher overall weighted average, such as a higher overall average or module-specific criteria, will normally

be permitted only in exceptional circumstances, for example in order to meet the specific requirements of a PSRB accreditation, and must be approved by the University Programmes Board;

- All Integrated Masters programmes must have an established ‘exit route’ at Part 3, either through the award of the equivalent Bachelor’s degree (where the syllabuses are aligned), or through the award of a specific ‘exit’ degree. The Bachelor’s degree award should be based on the student’s marks for Parts 2 and 3 only.
 - Integrated Masters students who re-sit at Part 2 or Part 3 have their marks capped for classification purposes in accordance with University regulations. From 2016-17 onwards, students who are re-assessed in the Final Part of an Integrated Master’s degree shall be eligible only for a classification of Third Class.
65. Integrated Masters’ degree programmes should be designed in accordance with the conventions for all undergraduate degree programmes in relation to: nomenclature, placement opportunities, opportunities for study abroad, cross-cutting modules with international/global themes, transferable skills and careers learning.
66. For Integrated Masters lasting 5 years, including a placement element, please also refer to the relevant paragraphs above.

Postgraduate programmes

67. In March 2010 QAA published *Master’s Degree Characteristics* (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/MastersDegreeCharacteristics.pdf>), to define the purpose; content; structure; delivery; volume of learning and credit; teaching, learning and assessment and naming of awards. The following guidelines reflect the University’s alignment with the *Master’s Degree Characteristics*.

Elements common to all postgraduate programmes

68. Postgraduate programmes (Masters, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate) should be located at the Level 7. The programme curriculum and the assessments must allow all students the opportunity to achieve and demonstrate achievement of the outcomes. In addition, each module within a programme should be located at a Level appropriate to its intended learning outcomes.
69. Programmes should be structured in multiples of 10 credits, so that there is harmonisation with the undergraduate structure.
70. Modules may run for one or more terms, with the proviso that 10 credit modules will normally be concentrated in one term, whilst modules of 20 credits and above may run over a single term or a number of terms. Unlike undergraduate modules, the whole of the Summer Term is available to be used.
71. Up to 20 credits in a particular programme may be set aside for modules in the Institution-wide Language Programme or for modules in Beginners Greek and Beginners Latin, if there is a good academic reason for doing so. Such modules should be placed at Level 4.

Postgraduate Masters programmes

72. Masters programmes should consist of a minimum of 180 credits, with a minimum of 150 credits at Level 7¹.

¹ Applicable from 2010-11, programmes which start before this require a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7.

73. Guidelines issued by Research Councils and/or professional associations should be followed, and External Examiners should be consulted. Programmes seeking or expecting approval from Research Councils and/or professional associations should normally be entirely at Level 7 unless assured by such bodies that the inclusion of undergraduate modules is permitted (Schools should also take note of the wishes and requirements of employers with regard to the balance of Level 6 and Level 7 credits within a programme).
74. For cohorts entering before 2013, there is no prescription on the length of programmes so long as the Level 7 learning outcomes of the programme can be delivered during the programme. However, for full-time 180 credit programmes, 12 months will be seen as the normal length.
75. Where Schools wish to offer a new programme which does not fit with the '12 month' model, it will also be a requirement that a good academic case be made as part of the proposal to be considered by the Scrutiny Panel for the new programme.
76. For cohorts entering from September 2013 onwards, programmes must comply with the minimal registration, normal completion and maximum registration times specified in the UCQF.
77. Most Taught Masters will include a significant research component in the form of a dissertation or research project.
78. Schools have flexibility with regard to the credit balance between the taught modules and the dissertation within programmes, and therefore the credit-weighting of dissertations is not prescribed. It is likely however that the dissertation will have a considerable weighting often representing 1/3 of the credits of the programme.
79. There may be some cases, depending on the specific learning outcomes of the programme, where a dissertation element is not part of a programme. In such circumstances, Schools must ensure that level 7 learning outcomes are achievable and met, and should make an academic case for not including a dissertation. Again, Schools must pay regard to Research Council requirements with regard to the inclusion of a dissertation element in particular programmes.

Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas

80. Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas are awards at level 7 consisting of at least 60 credits (40 credits at Level 7) and 120 credits (90 at Level 7) respectively. Schools may design programmes exceeding this minimum credit total if academically necessarily. For cohorts entering before 2013, programme length is not prescribed but should be proportionate to the amount and mode of study. For cohorts entering from September 2013 onwards, programmes must comply with the minimal registration, normal completion and maximum registration times specified in the UCQF.
81. They may be standalone qualifications or formal exit points within a taught Masters programme. Students undertaking a Master's programme who successfully pass modules with the number of credits totalling that required for a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate may, if they so wish, leave the University with such a qualification – subject to any programme specific requirements.
82. Such Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma programmes must however allow students to meet the learning outcomes of the Level 7 of the UCQF.

Nomenclature for Part-time programmes

83. Part-time taught postgraduate programmes which last for 24 months should be designated as '**part-time**', whilst those which last up to 63 months should be designated as '**flexible**'.

Awards not listed in the UCQF

84. All programmes resulting in a University award should normally be designed to fulfil the requirements of the qualifications listed in the UCQF.

85. Credit-bearing individual or combinations of modules which are offered to students but do not meet the requirements of any of the qualifications listed in the UCQF can result in an award of University credit represented by a 'Certificate of credit'. In these circumstances a programme specification is not required but module descriptions should be in place and appropriately approved.
86. Should it be intended that individual modules be able to act as 'building blocks' towards a qualification listed in the UCQF then this needs to be captured in the programme specification of an existing programme (if appropriate), or a new, specifically designed, programme specification will need to be created and approved in accordance with normal procedures.
87. In all cases where a programme is created leading to an award which is not listed in the UCQF, the following should be adhered to:
 - a) No award can be made for study of less than 30 credits;
 - b) Caution should be taken in the use of qualification titles that have commonly accepted meanings in the higher education sector such as 'certificate' or 'diploma'. When these are used they should always be qualified, normally with the word 'Professional' i.e. 'Professional Certificate' although other qualifiers are acceptable if required or preferred by an external professional body;
 - c) Where there are two related awards 'Certificate' should be used in relation to the lesser of the two awards and 'Diploma' in relation to the higher;
 - d) A separate programme specification should be in place.

Assessment

88. Assessment for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes should comply with the University's [Assessment Handbook](#)

Inclusivity

89. The design of all University programmes (including those delivered at Reading and at partner institutions) must include an assessment of the extent to which the programme is inclusive of all students and take proactive and anticipatory account of the varied student body, in light of the Equality Act 2010².
90. Schools should be able to demonstrate that they have:
 - recognised the diversity of students, including considering ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, socio-economic background, and previous educational experience;
 - taken deliberate steps to design the curriculum to maximize engagement from all students and ensure that all can fully participate in learning activities;
 - ensured that all students can demonstrate their knowledge and strengths at assessment, regardless of their background;
 - considered the legal requirement to make reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment so that no students are disadvantaged and pay attention to the accessibility of the physical learning and teaching environment.
91. The *Guide to Inclusive Practice in Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Admissions* is available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/disability/Guide-to-Inclusive-Practice-in-Teaching-and->

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

[Learning.pdf](#) and additional guidance and support is available from the Disability Advisory Service: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/disability/>.

92. The University has also published *Students with Disabilities: Key Principles for Staff, Students and Applicants* (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/Studentswithdisabilities.pdf>) which provides a statement of the principles which inform the University's approach in this area, together with an overview of, and links to, associated policies and central support.

Appendix 1: Programmes involving delivery with a partner

93. The University wishes to support the development of programmes involving delivery with other institutions within the UK and overseas, which are purposeful, strategic and aligned with the University's Strategy and other relevant sub-strategies.
94. Programmes involving delivery with a partner should:
- be equivalent in quality and standards to comparable awards delivered solely by the University;
 - be comparable in student learning, support and experiences to those programmes based at the University;
 - except where the subject matter of the course is a language, normally have English as the primary language of instruction and assessment. All modules which contribute to the final stage of an award of the University should normally be taught and assessed in English; and
 - be compliant with internal and national (UK or EU) legislative requirements.
95. Schools should ensure, in so far as is applicable, that programmes involving delivery with a partner are designed in accordance with the guidelines provided in this document and external reference points, including any relevant subject benchmark statements, national frameworks for higher education qualifications and, where appropriate, the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs), employers and any relevant national legislation/national commitments to European and international processes.
96. Such programmes will normally lead directly to an award of the University and be delivered in part or in whole through an arrangement with a Partner Institution.
97. Where the programme involves an overseas partner, the International Partnerships Team (IPT) should be contacted at an early stage of the development process (partnerships@reading.ac.uk). The IPT will maintain an overview of all international partnership activity at the University and may assist with development of key documentation such as the Memorandum of Understanding, Programme Documents and the Business Proposal.

Partnership Programmes: definition and typology

98. The University defines partnership programmes as:

“Any programme directly leading to an award of the University which is delivered in part or in whole through an arrangement with a partner organisation”

In this context “delivered” includes any combination of one or more of the following activities: admissions decisions, teaching, programme design, preparation of learning materials, and assessment.

99. The University is responsible for the overall quality of any qualification it awards. The University's typology can be found in Section 11c here:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Fee Reductions

100. Requests for fee reductions for international partnerships should be submitted to Mr Vincenzo Raimo (Pro-Vice-Chancellor) (Global Engagement) using the Fee reduction form found in Section 11g here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Additional guidance on the design of programmes involving delivery with a partner

101. Additional guidance on the design of **Foundation Degrees (Appendix 2)**, **jointly-awarded degrees (Appendix 3)** and **programmes to be delivered with International Partners (Appendix 4)** is included in these appendices. The guidance provided should inform the design of the programme and the development of the Programme Documents (Programme Specification and Module Descriptions) and the Business Proposal, which are required in accordance with the Programme Lifecycle Policies.
102. Please note that the University will formally and in advance of their commencing teaching on University programmes, approve the *curricula vitae* of all relevant partner institution staff. This is a continuing obligation throughout the life of the programme.

Appendix 2: Design of a Foundation Degree

103. The guidance included in this Appendix is intended to support staff designing Foundation Degrees and should be considered in the preparation of programme documents, as specified in the Programme Lifecycle Policies.

Framework for programme development

104. The principles used in relation to the design of the University's undergraduate degrees should be followed in relation to the design of a Foundation Degree, as far as they are applicable. Specifically, Foundation Degrees should:
- Be located at the Level 5 of the University credit and qualifications framework (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/ucqf.pdf>)
 - Be informed by the relevant QAA Benchmarking Statement for the discipline (see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/ASSURINGSTANDARDSANDQUALITY/SUBJECT-GUIDANCE/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>);
 - Be informed by the *Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement* (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/characteristics-statements>)
 - Have a duration of two years for full-time students, and equivalent for part-time students as specified in the UCQF;
 - Comprise a series of credit-weighted modules, totalling 240 credits for the full programme;
 - Have a programme specification, further programme information, and module descriptions, which include appropriate aims, learning outcomes and assessment, corresponding to the University's templates;
 - Be assessed in line with the University's [Assessment Handbook](#);

- Align with the University's Code of Practice on the External Examining of Taught Programmes <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/exams/CPEE.pdf>

Programme Director and Project Team

105. The School should nominate a Programme Director to lead the development of the programme and to manage the Degree when delivery commences.
106. It may be useful to convene a Project Team comprising the Programme Director, relevant academic staff from the School and the partner College(s), and a representative of the Centre for Quality Support and Development in order to develop a new Foundation Degree.
107. If the programme is to be developed from existing curricula, it may not be necessary for a development group to be formally constituted – it is essential, however, that partner College(s) are centrally involved in the development of the programme, and that the designated Teaching and Learning Dean and the Centre for Quality Support and Development are informed of progress.
108. The Programme Director and those involved in the development of the programme will need to give thought as to how employers will be involved in the process. It is an essential component of the Foundation Degree that employers are involved in its design, and it will increase the programme's chances of success. It may be appropriate to convene a Steering Group through which employers' views can be channelled during development and once delivery has commenced. Alternatively, the School and/or the partner College(s) may wish to make use of existing structures, such as Employer Advisory Boards, which can feed into curriculum developments.

Mode of delivery

109. Foundation Degrees may be delivered on a part-time basis to learners currently in work, or on a full-time basis with the provision of work placements. The length and timing of College based sessions will need to be considered in the context of the students' employment status and the nature of their industry. Students in employment may wish to study on a day release, block release, or evening only basis, depending on the tradition and context of their employment sector. The most appropriate mode of delivery can be established through discussion with relevant employers and Colleges.

Employer involvement and work-based learning

110. Relevant employers should play a key part in the design and review of Foundation Degree programmes. They are also likely to take part in the scrutiny and approval process. Schools may also wish to involve relevant professional bodies and Sector Skills Councils in order to incorporate a broader view.
111. A central element of the Foundation Degree is the inclusion of work-based learning, which can be defined as a real and sustained involvement with the workplace. The integration of academic and vocational learning, and in particular the work-based application of academic knowledge and skills, should be considered at all stages of programme design. Assessment should be work-related wherever possible, and the use of extended work-based projects is common. It may be appropriate to involve the employer in work-based assessment.
112. Workplace simulation activities (such as 'live' projects), speakers from industry, and other work-related activities may be used to complement work-based learning, but cannot be a substitute for it; such activities cannot be considered a real and sustained involvement with the workplace.

Assessment

113. Assessment of Foundation Degrees should, as with all of the University's programmes, be appropriately designed to allow students to demonstrate achievement of the programme's aims and

learning outcomes. Consideration will need to be given to the assessment of work-based learning and technical and practical skills. Assessment procedures should follow those detailed in the Assessment Handbook.

Progression

114. Foundation Degrees must provide a clearly articulated progression route to at least one Honours degree. This progression should be directly to Part 3, in recognition that the Foundation Degree is located at Level 5 in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. In some cases, however, this may involve a ‘bridging’ programme to ensure adequate preparation for students to progress. Such progression should be a real possibility for the Foundation Degree graduate – it would not normally be appropriate to offer only a full-time progression route from a Foundation Degree that has been designed to allow students to remain in full-time employment.
115. The programme specification for the Foundation Degree should state the Honours degree(s) to which progression is possible and also any ‘bridging’ arrangements. When being offered admission to the Foundation Degree, students should be informed of any additional entry requirements of the progression route.

Quality management

116. The University is responsible for the overall quality of any qualification awarded in its name and it is expected that the programme will operate within the University’s standard quality assurance framework as far as is possible. The School will convene a Board of Studies to manage the programme, and the Board will report to School and University level as per standard practice. An annual report for the programme, equivalent to that for programmes delivered at Reading, must be produced.
117. However, it is likely that the College will have internal quality assurance arrangements in place that, in some instances, fulfil the same purpose as those operated by the University. If the University can be assured that the College’s existing procedures fulfil the quality requirements which it needs to meet, then it may agree that those procedures be used instead. For example - it would be usual for students to refer to the College’s own disciplinary arrangements rather than that of the University, if these arrangements can be seen to be equivalent. This will be agreed prior to the programme commencing and be detailed in the relevant handbooks.
118. In particular, consideration must be given to ensuring that students receive an equivalent experience to that of students at Reading. This will include considering the most appropriate arrangements for:
 - Student evaluation of modules;
 - Student representation (e.g. Staff/Student Committees); and
 - Student complaints and appeals.

Validation fee

119. In addition to any tuition fees paid direct to the University or Partner Institution a validation fee may be included to cover the costs of running the collaboration itself. This should be considered in relation to any costs not directly related to the provision of the programme to students including:
 - Day-to-day administration of the collaboration at the University (at School and University level);
 - visits by University staff to the Partner Institution for quality, staff-development or other non-teaching purposes; and
 - any additional costs incurred in the operation of the programme i.e. fees charged by professional bodies for accreditation visits, any additional/extended learning resources acquired, staff development activities, external examining, graduation etc.

120. There is no single way for calculating a Validation fee, and it may involve:
- A “core fee” – a base fee set to cover all the unchanging costs of operating the collaboration; and
 - A “per head fee” – in addition to the base fee, a fee based on student enrolment, to account for the additional costs brought about by increased student numbers (this could, for instance, only be enacted on student numbers above a certain threshold) or be levied in proportion to the entire student enrolment where no portion of tuition fees is received by the University but teaching related activities are undertaken i.e. assessment, moderation etc.
121. In any discussions with a Partner regarding validation fees it must be stressed that these will need to be renegotiated on a regular basis in line with inflation and to reflect any changes in the nature of the relationship - for instance a greater administration burden falling on the University than had previously been envisaged. Alternatively, you might wish to consider specifying automatically escalating fees at the outset.

Appendix 3: Design of jointly-awarded degrees

122. A jointly-awarded degree is one in which the University of Reading collaborates with other, approved, partner institutions in delivering a programme which ultimately leads to a degree qualification awarded jointly by all partners. These programmes therefore involve close and equal co-operation between partner institutions, often arising from complex discussion.
123. Whilst the University is responsible for the quality of any qualification awarded in its name, including any jointly-awarded degrees, it also recognises that such programmes require all partner institutions to have equal responsibility. It will therefore be an integral part of the process of designing and approving jointly-awarded degree programmes that discussion and negotiation in regard to a range of issues will be necessary.
124. The guidance included in this Appendix is intended to support staff designing jointly-awarded degrees and should be considered in the preparation of programme documents, as specified in the Programme Lifecycle Policies.
125. Schools designing jointly-awarded degrees with international partners should also refer to Annex 4 *Design of programmes to be delivered with International Partners*.

Framework for programme development

126. For jointly-awarded degrees, all partners delivering the programme must have the legal ability to award joint degree qualifications, enshrined in their Charter, Statutes or other relevant legislation.
127. A jointly-awarded degree, being a joint qualification of more than one institution, needs to satisfy the threshold standards of all the institutions involved, in terms of academic standards, quality processes and the students’ rights. As most institutions deliver more than the threshold requirement, the provision above these minimum standards should be by agreement.
128. Students should be governed by a common standard for the programme but, where possible and consistent with this, local arrangements for student support, complaints, feedback and publication of results should be used. There should be a common handbook for the programme, issued to each student, setting out the common arrangements and drawing attention to any differences between institutional practices. The handbook should particularly specify what the student is required to study, the arrangements for assessment and award of qualifications, and other arrangements.
129. Jointly-awarded degree programmes will normally be designed by staff at the University in collaboration with staff from proposed partner institutions. It is also expected that the principles used in relation to the structure of the University’s undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes (specified in this document) will be followed, as far as they are applicable.

130. Schools should note that many jointly-awarded degree programmes will be developed and delivered with European partner institutions. The ‘Bologna process’ means that many of these principles will be both familiar to and apply to such institutions. Jointly-awarded degree programmes should therefore:
- Comprise a series of credit-weighted modules, which total an appropriate number of credits for the programme (120 credits for 12 months of an undergraduate programme and 180 credits for a Masters programme). Schools should note that the University’s credit system relates to the European Credit Transfer System on a ratio of 2:1 (2 University credits to 1 ECTS credit). The credit weightings must satisfy each partner institution’s requirements for the award of the relevant qualification.
 - Have a programme specification and module descriptions, which include appropriate aims, learning outcomes and assessment, corresponding to an appropriate template. The agreed programme specification may vary from the University of Reading template, with appropriate information about facilities and student support. It must, however, include the key information about the criteria for the assessment and award of the qualification, the modules to be taken, aims, learning outcomes, progression and skills;
 - Be located at the appropriate level of the University credit and qualifications framework. Details can be found at: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/ucqf.pdf> ;
 - If applicable, be informed by the relevant QAA Benchmarking Statement for the discipline, as given at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/ASSURINGSTANDARDSANDQUALITY/SUBJECT-GUIDANCE/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>;
 - If applicable, comply with the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs), employers and any relevant national legislation/national commitments to European and international processes; and
 - Be assessed as appropriate.

Curriculum design and delivery

131. Specific areas to consider in the curriculum design and delivery of jointly-awarded degrees will normally include:
- Designation of ‘core’ and ‘optional’ modules, and the extent to which there is flexibility within the programme structure to allow different options to be delivered by different partner institutions;
 - Arrangements for induction;
 - Arrangements for student support (academic, pastoral and disabilities);
 - Teaching locations of modules;
 - Extent to which students are able to transfer between institutions to study different modules (and the administrative arrangements which will be required to facilitate such transfer);
 - Arrangements in relation to teaching location of dissertations and projects;
 - Criteria for progression from one stage of the programme to the next where there are such stages;
 - Criteria for the award of the qualification, including details of whether all modules need to be passed, and for the award of different classes of award, where these exist;
 - Development of teaching materials and any issues relating to student access to electronic materials;
 - The language of teaching and assessment (where relevant);
 - Employability support for students;
 - Arrangements for consideration and approval of changes to programmes;
 - Appointment of programme director(s);

- Advice to students on aspects of the programme, including options to study at partner institutions; and
- Teaching, IT and learning resources.

Admissions, enrolment and maintenance of the student record

132. Specific arrangements for admissions, enrolment and maintenance of the student record for jointly-awarded degrees will normally include:
- the production and dissemination of joint publicity and marketing material for the programme;
 - recruitment activities;
 - application advice;
 - the minimum and maximum number of students which can be registered on the programme at each institution, including any virement of student numbers, if appropriate. The minimum and maximum number of students can be reviewed annually and significant changes to numbers allowed to enrol at any single institution will require approval from relevant bodies within that institution.
133. Responsibility for admissions and registration of students shall normally rest with the partner institution(s) at which students are able to commence their programme. However, all partner institutions should agree a common admission standard taking into account, as appropriate, the different entry qualifications which students from different countries may offer. Such a common standard should include consideration of:
- the language ability of students relevant to those countries in which they will study and the language of delivery and assessment of the programme;
 - the arrangements for the Recognition of Prior Learning;
 - the arrangements for admitting students who do not meet the agreed common admission standard, where relevant; and
 - Arrangements should a student wish to transfer to one of the other partner institutions for the programme.
134. One partner institution should normally be responsible for the development and upkeep of a definitive student record, although other partners may wish to keep a summary record of students studying at that institution. It is suggested that the information in the student record be equivalent to that in the University's RISIS database. It is essential that the RISIS Office, Planning and Strategy Office and the relevant Student Support Centre have an input to discussions relating to this issue at an early stage of the design of the programme.

Examinations and Assessment arrangements

135. Specific areas to consider in respect of Examinations and Assessment arrangements for jointly-awarded degrees will normally include:
- Agreement on the meaning of marks and grades, pass marks, on how marks are combined and a comparison with each institution's own marking procedures;
 - Production and moderation of examination scripts;
 - Security and timing of examinations;
 - Conduct of examinations and other assessments, including resits (it is suggested that resit examinations for particular students take place simultaneously at whichever institution the student is studying at the time);
 - Arrangements for consideration of academic appeals. Local arrangements at each partner institution will normally come into effect where appropriate, although this will be an area of investigation during the process of programme scrutiny and approval. However, the process of

considering such an appeal (whether by a panel convened for this purpose, or by other means) shall also involve seeking the views of a representative from one of the other partner institutions. Each partner institution will therefore be required to appoint an appropriate member of staff to act in such a situation, at the start of each academic Part;

- Agreement, where appropriate on the nature of summative and formative coursework;
- Feedback to students on such coursework;
- Marking regimes, including moderation and second-marking;
- The nature and treatment of academic misconduct, particularly plagiarism;
- Appointment of external examiners;
- The composition and duties of a Joint Examination Board, which will not have the power to formally award degrees, only to make recommendations to a further committee to which each institution will devolve such powers; and
- Arrangements for approval of, issuing and publishing results.

136. Developing a single, joint set of assessment procedures for a programme which will involve several partner institutions is likely to be complex. It is suggested that the University's own Assessment Handbook be used as a starting point in any discussions.

Transcripts, certificates and graduation

137. Students who successfully complete a jointly-awarded degree programme will be entitled to graduate at an appropriate ceremony. They should also receive the following:

- i. A full transcript of their marks, showing the institution which delivered particular modules;
- ii. A 'Diploma Supplement' which should indicate study undertaken at the partner; and
- iii. A degree certificate, which should bear the name and crest of all partner institutions.

138. Students should normally be able to select the institution, from among those at which they have studied, where they attend graduation, subject to their giving appropriate notice.

139. The eventual Memorandum of Agreement must set out responsibility for the production of all transcripts, Diploma Supplements and degree certificates. These should be produced to a common template, agreed by the partner institutions.

On-going quality assurance arrangements

140. A number of areas of Quality Assurance should be agreed when developing a programme with an international partner:

- the convening of a joint Board of Studies for the programme, with membership drawn from each partner institution, which will meet at least twice during each academic year and which shall receive a list of all students admitted to a programme and their entry qualifications at its first meeting of each academic year;
- the Chair of the Board will normally rotate between the partner institutions on an annual basis;
- a report from the joint Board of Studies after each meeting and an annual programme report to the relevant School Board for Teaching and Learning and to any other relevant committee. The SBTL will prepare a School Annual Quality Assurance Report for submission to the Sub-Committee on the Delivery and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (DELT);
- a Periodic review/re-validation exercise at agreed intervals of not more than six years, corresponding as appropriate to the procedures detailed in the University's *Procedure for the review of collaborative programmes and the renewal of collaborative partnerships* shown at: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/cpreviewandrenewal.pdf>

- the nature and consideration of evaluation by students;
- arrangements for student representation;
- arrangements for student disciplinary matters;
- arrangements for the provision of training specific to the programme for appropriate staff; and
- the arrangements for rapid reporting of events, queries and feedback for students.

Student complaints

141. For dealing with and reporting student complaints, it is suggested that where appropriate, local arrangements should remain in force. Where a complaint cannot be resolved simply at a 'local' level and it is necessary to arrange for a hearing to consider the case, any panel convened should include a representative from one of the other partner institutions involved in delivering the jointly-awarded degree programme. Each partner institution will therefore be required to appoint an appropriate member of staff to sit on such a panel, at the start of each academic year. This should be explored further during the development of the programme.

Other considerations

142. A comprehensive list of areas of responsibility is included in the Business Proposal template. Schools are asked to consider each of these areas in the design of their jointly-awarded degrees and articulate proposed arrangements, providing documentation where appropriate. In addition, Schools should consider:
- Intellectual Property Rights;
 - Arrangements for resolution of disputes between partners; and
 - Arrangements for termination of programmes, (either at a single partner institution or at all institutions) and subsequent arrangements for ensuring that all affected students who are registered for a programme are able to complete their studies.

Finance

143. Schools will be asked to provide a financial summary of anticipated expenditure and income as part of the Business Proposal.
144. The income for the programme should include the fees paid by or on behalf of the students together with any amounts paid to any of the Universities involved by any relevant national or other authority. The eventual Memorandum of Agreement between the partners should specify how this income is to be distributed to each institution, which should normally take account of the institution's contribution to the teaching, supervision, administration, student support and provision of facilities, including laboratories.
145. The fees for the programme and arrangements for their collection and distribution should be discussed and approved by all partner institutions on an annual basis. It should be the normal arrangement that students pay the fee for the programme to the institution at which they first attend the programme. The agreement will detail the distribution of the fee and any other income to the various institutions, including dates when this will occur, which should normally be broadly proportional to the institution's contribution to the teaching, supervision, administration, student support and provision of facilities, including laboratories. The agreement should include details of who calculates the distribution of resource and how any disputes are resolved.
146. A jointly-awarded degree will usually involve mobility of students or staff between institutions on some basis. The financial arrangements will need to make provision for this and be considered as part of the Business Proposal for the programme.

Appendix 4: Design of programmes to be delivered with International Partners

147. Existing policies, procedures and guidelines relating to new programmes, quality assurance and monitoring all apply equally to programmes delivered in partnership with an institution based outside of the UK. Further support is available from the International Partnerships Team (partnerships@reading.ac.uk).
148. However, there are a number of areas of programme design that will vary for programmes delivered with international partners. The guidance included in this Appendix is intended to support staff designing such programmes and should be considered in the development of a programme and in light of the requirements of the Programme Lifecycle Policies.

Resources

Human

149. Operating any programme with a partner leads to additional call on both a School/Department's resources and those of centralised services. As such, proposers should consider the implications of academic and support staff resourcing during the set up and operational stages of the programme. This may include recruiting new members of staff, creating new units or new cost centres. Schools/Departments with current experience of running international partnership programmes will be able to advise on what work is involved in running a partnership programme, and what support will need to be put in place based on their own experiences.
150. The School should consider the English language support requirements of students and, in particular, additional pre-sessional or in-sessional language support that may be required to ensure that students are given the greatest opportunity to succeed. Early contact by the School with International Study and Language Institute (ISLI) is recommended. ISLI can provide consultancy and/or training in the setting up of pre-sessional or in-sessional support in situations whether or not the students will actually be coming to Reading.

Teaching, Learning and other Facilities

151. The adequacy of the Partner's overall learning environment for the delivery of the programme (or portion of the programme that will be based there) will be assessed as part of Partnership Investigations, described in *Programme Lifecycle Policies*, which will normally include a formal site visit. Learning resources available at the Partner University need to be assessed carefully, particularly where English is not the major language of instruction.
152. The School should ensure that there are adequate resources in each of the follow areas:
- Basic reference materials: dictionaries, thesaurus, key subject specific reference works
 - Key textbooks (available in sufficient quantities for student numbers)
 - Wider range of research materials (sufficient to support the independent research required for projects and essays etc.)
 - Access to PCs and prevalence of PC ownership amongst students, in particular for distance-learning programmes.
153. The School should further consider what level of resources the University will be responsible for and what level of resources the partner will be responsible. The allocation of responsibility may incur additional costs to the School which should be included in the financial planning for the proposed partnerships programme.

The School should consult the *Guidelines on the provision of information and IT learning resources for students on programmes delivered with an academic partner* at Stage 2 of the University-level

approval process (Document 11d;
<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx> .

Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions

154. How marketing, recruitment and admissions are handled will vary significantly depending on the exact nature of the partnership programme between the University and the Partner involved. The greater the devolution of these processes to the Partner Institution, the lighter the burden placed on the School and Faculty responsible for the Programme; however, with greater devolution comes less control, so the amount of devolution of responsibility to the Partner should be carefully considered. In all cases there should be an oversight mechanism built in for those areas in which direct responsibility has been devolved in order that the School can ensure it retains oversight of quality assurance.
155. Schools will be asked to assess the marketability of the programme in this section of the Business Proposal. This information should also feed into a recruitment strategy for the programme. It is likely that in the majority of cases the actual process of recruitment will be devolved to the Partner Institution as they will have the direct access to the local student market. In addition, Reading International Office may be able to offer advice on the use of agents or other means to support recruitment. The School/Department should retain some form of oversight of recruitment, promotional material and strategies in order to offer advice and ensure effectiveness. The School/Department must always be in a position to ensure the accuracy of published materials for which the University always retains ultimate responsibility.
156. The University accepts a wide range of qualifications for admission in addition to those held by the majority of UK applicants. The Director of Admissions will be able to offer advice as to equivalences already accepted by the University for admission or will be able to investigate equivalence for qualifications which the University has not previously encountered. It is important to also explore how any subject-specific prerequisite requirements will be addressed for applicants with non-UK entry qualifications. Where it is intended for lower entry requirements to be offered for students on international partnership programmes than for the same or similar UK-based programmes, this should be highlighted in the proposal and clearly explained.
157. The normal level of English language ability required for both undergraduate and postgraduate students for whom English is not their first language varies between IELTS scores of 6.0 and 7.5 across the University. Admissions Tutors and the Director of Admissions will be able to give information on current practice. Advice on the acceptability of language tests - other than the recognised TEEP, IELTS, Pearson, TOEFL and CPE – should be sought from the ISLI.
158. Greater variation is likely to occur in relation to responsibility for admissions. Schools/Departments may wish to retain responsibility for the entire admissions process or devolve initial selection, or even the entire process, to the Partner Institution – again, creating implications for the administrative burden. In any case where elements are devolved to the Partner Institution it is important that clear, written guidelines are provided (for example, as part of the Operational Handbook) to ensure that admissions standards are met and that the process is carried out in a fair and equitable manner. In all cases the School/Department should retain the ultimate decision over admissions, even if in practice the Partner Institution has day-to-day responsibility.
159. What level of tuition fees are paid, and to whom will vary significantly depending on the exact nature and location of the provision. The following are likely to be fairly common scenarios:
 - If the programme as a whole or a section of the programme is delivered entirely by the Partner Institution then tuition fees should normally be paid directly to them and levels determined based on costs and local market conditions (in agreement with the University). In this case a validation

fee (see below) is calculated to cover the costs of the University and paid by the Partner Institution. If the students follow part of their course at the University then consideration is given as to what, if any discount, on the standard fee tariff for that portion of the programme might be applied.

- Where part of the teaching is delivered by University staff – either face-to-face or virtually – a commensurate proportion of a tuition fees should be distributed to the University and the Partner Institution – although, in practice, it may be collected from the student by one or the other. As tuition fee income will vary depending on the number of students enrolled from year to year, it may also be appropriate to apply a validation fee to ensure that the University’s base costs are covered no matter the size of the student intake.
160. Schools should consider what mechanisms will be used to collect fees from students. Mechanisms for transferring the partner’s proportion of fees or having the University’s fees transferred from the partner must also be considered.
 161. All students studying for University of Reading awards must be enrolled at the University and be vested with a student record on the RISIS system. Depending on the nature of the partnership arrangement certain levels of access can be devolved to staff at Partner Institutions if that is felt to be appropriate. The RISIS Office should be contacted for advice on Partner Institution staff access.
 162. It is essential that the RISIS Office and the Student Support Centre – and, if appropriate, the Planning and Strategy Office– be consulted on the process for enrolling students on the RISIS system at an early stage of the programme design process.

Student Experience

163. In this section of the Business Proposal, Schools will be asked to comment upon the student experience and the impact of the new programme and the demands of ensuring an equivalent student experience will have on their normal operations.
164. Particularly in the case of partnerships where students spend part of their time at the University – such as in 2 +1 or 2 + 2 arrangements – consideration should be given to ensuring a good quality student experience away from Reading, as well as the impact of a group of students arriving en masse into the student body at Reading. This might require increased teaching and support capacity within the host School and this should be taken into account when costing the proposal.
165. When either franchising an existing programme or designing a new programme to be delivered in part or in whole outside the UK, the School should consider the teaching and learning culture of the destination country. This understanding may need to influence mode and style of delivery chosen (i.e. lectures or small groups, group project work or individual projects, e-learning or face-to-face etc.). In all cases the delivery and assessment must help deliver the learning outcomes of the programme, but it does not necessarily need to be identical to the way a programme is or would be delivered in the UK.
166. The School should consider whether there are cultural differences relating to learning practices and methods between the two countries. For example, UK higher education tends to expect students to critically analyse received wisdom to form their own opinion. For students used to learning cultures based on a greater level of deference to authority this concept may be challenging and therefore impact on their overall performance. Other students may be used to gaining the vast majority of their factual information through lectures rather than through self-study. Again this may need to be taken into account in programme and assessment design and the support available to students – i.e. through documents like the Programme/Student Handbook outlining exactly what is expected or “academic skills” classes.

Financial Summary

167. Many of the types of cost of running a programme will be the same whether the programme is delivered in the UK or internationally. Working with a Partner Institution who is located outside of the UK is, however, likely to incur extra costs which will need to be taken into account.
168. Schools are responsible (most likely shared to some degree with the Partner Institution) for meeting the set-up costs of establishing a partnership, which in the case of international partnership programmes will include:
- **Informal visits** between the two Institutions to facilitate the development of the relationship.
 - The **Site Visit** and for any subsequent Review visits
 - Independent, professional verification of a **translation** or translation of all formal documents will be necessary (even if proficient language speakers exist with the School, external translators must be employed for all formal documents).
169. Once the programme has been set up, the budget needs to allow for visits by the University to the Partner Institution on a regular basis. Obviously this will vary depending on the nature of the partnership; but even if a programme is entirely delivered by Partner Institution staff an annual visit by the Programme Director is strongly recommended. The longer term cost projections should also cover the costs of quality assurance visits, specifically those relating to periodic review and revalidation.
170. For further details of areas of resource to be considered, see the Business Proposal template.

Partner status and operating context

171. All programmes leading to an award of the University must fit within the *UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications*.³ It is also advisable to consider how the UK qualification to be offered through the partnership programme fits with the national qualifications of the location country of the partner institution as this may impact student and employer demand.
172. The “Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area” (covering the 46 signatory countries of the Bologna Process) published in 2005, is intended to align qualifications across Europe and allow easy translation of qualifications from one participating country to another. In general the UK qualifications framework fits well with the European framework – although discussion still surrounds Masters’ provision. Around the world, however, great variations in the type (duration, nomenclature, etc.) of higher education qualifications exist. For graduates of an international partnership programme to successfully gain employment or access further study after completing their studies it is important to ensure that their achievement is adequately recognised in their country of origin. The Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD) and the International Office will be able to provide support in understanding the qualifications structure of the partner’s country of operation.
173. National regulatory and accreditation systems vary widely around the world. Some countries have legislation in place which puts restrictions on the type of international partnership activities involving international partners into which their HEIs can enter, and/or have approval processes which international partnership programmes need to pass before being allowed to take on students. The time and cost of this regulatory burden needs to be taken into consideration when putting together, and costing, a proposal for partnership programmes. Information on the regulatory environment of potential partner institutions can be sought from CQSD.
174. Where the programme offered is intended to lead to an award which meets the criteria for recognition for a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB), it is important that the PSRB in question is approached early in the design/approval phase to ensure that they will be willing to consider a partnership programme for recognition. It will also need to be ascertained whether the programme

³ See the *University Credit and Qualifications Framework*.

will need to undergo separate scrutiny by the PSRB or will be considered merely as another means of delivery of an existing programme. This may mean an additional time and cost burden which needs to be factored into planning and budget.

175. For further details of areas to be considered in respect of the operating context and partner status, see the Business Proposal template. In most cases, the Partner Institution should be able to provide much of the information required.

Operational structure and division of responsibilities

176. Along with appropriate academic qualifications, teaching staff at the partner are expected to have a sufficient level of English language proficiency both in general and in the specific vocabulary of the subject area being taught. This should be ascertained at the same time as investigating their academic credentials and confirmed, with documentary evidence through the review of staff CVs. As noted above, the University should formally and in advance of their commencing teaching on University programmes, approve the *curricula vitae* of all relevant partner institution staff. This is a continual obligation throughout the life of the programme.

Examinations and Assessment arrangements

177. In many programmes involving delivery with a partner, students will undertake their formal assessment at a location other than the University. Whatever method of assessment is used, provisions must be put in place such that the *Assessment Handbook* is adhered to – whether it is organised and marked by University or Partner Institution staff.
178. Formal examinations should normally take place either at the University or at the Partner Institution. The University will consider arrangements for examinations to be taken at other appropriate locations – for example British Council offices – although the administrative burden and cost of hosting such examinations needs to be taken into account.
179. If the partnership involves the transfer of an existing University programme to a Partner Institution it might be worth considering the transferability of the type of assessment to the new context – for both administrative and academic reasons. Any changes would need to be incorporated into the proposal submitted for Programme Approval. Advice can be sought on alternative assessment arrangements from the Teaching and Learning Dean.
180. The timing of assessment (coursework deadlines, examination dates and times) are potentially problematic where students at a Partner Institution are following the same programme as students at the University. This may cause one or more of the following problems:
- **Examination scheduling I** – to ensure that there is no possibility of collusion between student cohorts, exams will need to be scheduled so as to overlap the same absolute time both in the UK and at the Partner Institution.
 - **Examination scheduling II** – when scheduling examinations and assessment deadlines it is important to take note of major festivals and national holidays which may impact students at Partner Institutions.
 - **Academic calendar I** – it may often be the case that a programme delivered at a Partner Institution will run to a different academic calendar than the University, with different start dates for the programme, and perhaps more than one student cohort starting each year. This may mean that additional examinations will have to be set and marked and is likely to have significant resource implications for the School, the Faculty and the Examinations Office.
 - **Academic calendar II** – another problem may occur if students who have started outside the normal cycle are to join students at the University at some point in their studies – i.e. in 1 + 2 or 2 + 1 arrangements. Students are likely to be subject to a compressed academic year prior to joining the University-based programme, however sufficient time in the calendar must be left for

revision before the examination period and, after it, enough time must be allowed for re-sits. Students must not be disadvantaged by the point at which they started their programme.

181. These issues should be resolved with the help of the Teaching and Learning Dean, CQSD and the Examinations Office during the development of the programme.
182. Arrangements for external examination of student work for international partnership programmes should mirror that for UK-based students. External examining as a practice is not widespread outside of the UK and therefore its role and operation should be explained to the Partner Institution.
183. For further details of areas to be considered in respect of the operational structure and division of responsibilities, see the Business Proposal template.

Validation fee

184. In addition to any tuition fees paid, a validation fee may be levied to cover the costs of running the partnership itself. This should be considered in relation to any costs not directly related to the provision of the programme to students including:
 - Day-to-day administration of the collaboration at the University (at School and University level);
 - Visits by University staff to the Partner Institution for quality, staff-development or other non-teaching purposes; and,
 - any additional costs incurred in the operation of the programme i.e. fees charged by professional bodies for accreditation visits, any additional/extended learning resources acquired, staff development activities, external examining, graduation etc.
185. There is no single way for calculating a Validation Fee, and it may involve:
 - A “core fee” – a base fee set to cover all the unchanging costs of operating the partnership ; and/or,
 - A “per head fee” –a fee based on student enrolment, to account for the additional costs brought about by increased student numbers (this could, for instance, only come into force on student numbers above a certain threshold) or levied in proportion to the entire student enrolment where no portion of tuition fees are received by the University but teaching-related activities are undertaken i.e. assessment, moderation etc.
186. In any discussions with a Partner regarding validation fees it must be stressed that these will need to be renegotiated on a regular basis in line with inflation and to reflect any changes in the nature of the relationship (e.g. a greater administrative burden falling on the University than had previously been envisaged). Alternatively, you might wish to consider specifying automatically escalating fees at the outset.

Appendix 5: Design of programmes to be delivered at international branch campuses

For the purposes of this document, Henley South Africa and the Henley Business School (HBS) offices in Germany, Finland and Hong Kong are not branch campuses. Henley South Africa is a wholly owned subsidiary of the University which holds degree-awarding powers in its own right. The HBS offices in Germany, Finland and Hong Kong support the delivery of HBS programmes administratively and academically, but are not constituted as, nor have the responsibilities associated with, a branch campus.

All references to 'School' shall, in the case of Henley Business School, be construed to mean 'programme area' (except in respect of paragraphs 213-215), and likewise references to 'Head of School' shall be construed to mean 'Head of Programme Area'.

187. Existing policies, procedures and guidelines relating to new programmes, quality assurance and monitoring all apply equally to programmes delivered at the University's international branch campuses, *mutatis mutandis*.
188. However, there are a number of areas of programme design that will vary for programmes delivered at the University's international branch campuses. The guidance included in this Appendix is intended to support staff designing such programmes and should be considered in the preparation of programme documents, as specified in the Programme Lifecycle Policies.
189. It is recognised that, as provision on the international campus matures, there may need to be some variation on the specific implementation of the guidance. It is, however, important that the underlying principles are upheld, and that the interests of students are respected and academic standards maintained.

Organising principles

190. It is the Head of School's responsibility to keep his/her School's practice under review and in line with the *Guide to policy and procedures for teaching and learning*. Compliance with the *Guide to policy and procedures for teaching and learning* is checked by numerous mechanisms, including: Annual Programme Review and the University's Periodic Review of Programmes. The Head of School may delegate those responsibilities but where this is the case it should be formally documented and appropriate protocols established. Where autonomy has been granted to another unit by the Head of School, the School still has responsibility to exercise a general monitoring function to ensure that the policies and procedures in the *Guide to policy and procedures for teaching and learning* are being executed.
191. Schools have ownership of provision on one or more campuses. A School's ownership of its provision applies equally to its international campus provision and its UK provision, although the manner in which the responsibilities of ownership are discharged may differ.
192. All provision on all campuses is clearly owned by a single School (even where delivery may be joint and there is no single equivalent UK School).
193. Where a School has delegated specific functions to a Section on an international campus, it should be clear that this Section forms part of that School or, at least, is performing those specific functions on behalf of that School
194. While it is up to individual Schools to determine specifically how their academic responsibilities should be managed and the extent of delegation of decision-making to sections on specific campuses, in making these determinations the following principles should be applied:
 - a. in terms of organisational structure, academic staff in a given subject area at the international campuses and the UK campus should be regarded as members of the relevant

- School (although it is noted that their contracts of employment may reside with separate legal entities); and,
- b. the expertise of staff is a key component in quality assurance and a clear protocol should exist across campuses to ensure that appointment processes make full use of recognized expertise among existing staff in making new appointments
195. Modules that are delivered across multiple campuses must achieve the same learning outcomes to the same standards and cover the same core subject matter. It is a fundamental requirement that the content of teaching programmes is equivalent, but not necessarily identical. The title, structure and content of the same programme may vary between campuses so long as the learning outcomes remain the same.
 196. The development and enhancement of individual modules and overall degree programmes should be regarded as a collaborative process involving relevant staff across all campuses. While new course initiatives and course changes may be proposed by the international campuses, such proposals should be routed through the respective School and University processes at the UK campus. While new course initiatives and course changes may be proposed by the UK campus, such proposals insofar as they may affect delivery at the international branch campuses should involve consultation with relevant staff at the international branch campuses.
 197. The status of internal examiners is equal, irrespective of the campus on which they are based; where examination boards meet at the international campuses, these have the status of internal examination boards.
 198. Staff across all campuses should have the opportunity to participate in the assessment process and in award recommendations (including participation in final examination boards), subject to the constraints of space and time; a normal expectation might be at least one representative from international campus internal examination boards at the final external board. Where this is not possible, Schools must ensure that there is someone present who can fully represent the views of the examiners at the relevant campus.
 199. Staff at the international branch campuses should have the opportunity to contribute fully and equally to the operation of quality assurance systems and process within their School and Faculty and the University.
 200. Relevant senior management of the international branch campuses should be consulted regarding specific quality assurance arrangements at School level, and their agreement secured, in so far as they affect the functioning of those campuses.
 201. Where the same programmes and modules are offered on more than one campus, it is the responsibility of the Head of School which offers the programme to ensure that all modifications to this provision and the manner of its delivery are communicated and implemented across all campuses, taking account of local regulatory compliance requirements.
 202. The Annual Programme Review process will review programmes across all campuses and the Periodic Review process will review academic units at the international campuses as part of their home School. Additional reviews may be conducted as a result of local requirements. Separate campus reviews may be designed to focus on issues regarding context and environment rather than addressing the specific provision of individual academic units.

Responsibilities

203. Schools have all the responsibilities set out in the *Guide to policy and procedures for teaching and learning* for all of their provision across all campuses. It is the responsibility of the individual School to determine the most appropriate approach to operating its quality assurance process within the context of the broad principles outlined in this document. Where quality assurance responsibilities have been delegated to particular individuals or Sections on the international branch campuses, this should be formally documented and appropriate protocols put in place. Schools may choose to give considerable autonomy to units on international campuses, but necessarily retain a responsibility to

exercise a general monitoring function to ensure that the policies and procedures in the *Guide to policy and procedures for teaching and learning* are being executed appropriately.

204. Where the activities of the School have repercussions for the provision of other Schools on the international branch campuses, or for the overall management of the campuses, the relevant managers on the international campus must be fully involved in decision-making and there should be joint agreement as to the actions taken. By the same token, decisions of the international branch campus management that have repercussions for the academic activities of Schools should be arrived at jointly with those Schools.
205. In regard to the above, and to the guidance section below, decisions made by relevant bodies at an international branch campus are regarded as having the agreement of Schools and of international branch campus management, where the School or international campus management has delegated requisite authority to those bodies.
206. In cases where agreement cannot be arrived at between Schools and the international branch campus management, the matter should be referred to the University Board for Teaching and Learning (in regard to matters of academic policy) or to the PVC, Global Engagement (in regard to strategic or operational matters).
207. The Chief Operating Officer and Chief Strategy Officer have a responsibility for ensuring that University policies and procedures take account of the needs of all campuses and the implementation of them is supported on all campuses. This involves either direct or indirect responsibility for relevant professional services on the international branch campuses in cooperation with the senior management of the international branch campuses.

Guidance on particular areas

Admissions

208. Schools should agree entry criteria in discussion with international branch campus management. Implementation of these admissions criteria is undertaken by the international branch campus management with academic decision-making as necessary by relevant academic units.

School Reviews and Annual Monitoring

209. Reviews of programmes delivered on international campuses form part of the Annual Programme Review process and must include reference to and review of international branch campus provision.

Assessment, Progression, and Awards

210. Creation of question papers and marking of scripts can be fully delegated to staff on international branch campuses at the discretion of individual Schools. Some moderation and comparison of outcomes involving staff and scripts from different campuses should normally be undertaken. There should be a single Board of Examiners for programmes and modules taught on more than one campus with representation (physical or electronic) from all campuses. In the case of Henley Business School, these responsibilities belong to the School and not the programme area.

School Committees

211. A School's international branch campus staff should have the opportunity to be fully represented on School committees including at senior management level. A School's approach to internal communications should ensure that the international branch campuses are fully informed of all developments and are involved in decision-making. In the case of Henley Business School, the provisions relate to Schools rather than programme areas.

Appointment of Staff

212. Schools retain responsibility for staff appointed on the international branch campuses to carry out School functions and should have an agreed process for making such appointments. In the case of Henley Business School, the provisions relate to Schools rather than programme areas.

Academic Tutors

213. Schools (or, in the case of Henley Business School, programme areas) should ensure that academic tutoring arrangements as set out in the *Guide to Policies and Procedures for Teaching and Learning*, s. 7 are operating appropriately across all campuses on which they are active.

Student Evaluation

214. Schools should ensure that processes for securing School-level student evaluation of modules/programmes are operating on the international branch campuses and that proper consideration is given to this evaluation, in accordance with the *Guide to Policies and Procedures for Teaching and Learning*, s. 4. In the case of Henley Business School, Schools are responsible for module evaluation and Heads of Programmes are responsible for programme evaluation.

Research Students

215. School Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies have responsibility for ensuring that requirements of the *Code of Practice on Research Students* and *Guide to Policies and Procedures for Teaching and Learning* are implemented for their research students on the University's international branch campuses. In the case of Henley Business School, this responsibility belongs to the School and not the programme area.

Students with Disabilities

216. Schools and the international branch campus management should arrange jointly for a Disability Liaison Officer to be available for all international branch campus students. In the case of Henley Business School, this responsibility belongs to the School and not the programme area.

Careers Information, Advice & Guidance

217. Schools, international branch campus management and the Careers team have joint responsibility for ensuring that careers advice and support is delivered to international branch campus students in line with the *Guide to Policies and Procedures for Teaching and Learning*, s. 7.

Communications and Staff Visits

218. Given the use of different email domains in UoRM, Schools and Support Services of UoR should identify appropriate mechanisms to ensure that information flows between different locations in a timely fashion. Face-to-face meetings can be of particular value and, while noting the University's *Carbon Management Plan*, a limited number of annual visits (in both directions) should be considered normal.

Accreditation

219. The accreditation process for programmes delivered at the University of Reading Malaysia can be lengthy and labour intensive. Staff considering programmes for delivery at the University of Reading Malaysia need to plan and resource appropriately the accreditation process which needs to be completed before the programmes commence.

Learning resources

220. The University is committed to providing students with both physical learning resources and online access to a variety of e-resources at international branch campuses. International branch campuses work closely with the University of Reading Library to manage licenses governing the use of

collections and also liaises with colleagues to ensure that branch campuses comply with copyright licenses. Due to the variations relating to licenses for materials, programmes delivered at branch campuses will need adequate time to negotiate licenses in order for students to have the necessary access to all learning resources at the start of delivery. Reading lists should be made available to the Head of the Learning Resource Centre at the international branch campus as soon as possible and at a minimum of six months prior to commencement of the programme.