

International Foundation Programme

Teaching Institution: The University of Reading
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences
For students entering in 2003 and thereafter
Programme Director: Mrs E. Frances Russell
Board of Studies: International Foundation Programme

Programme length: 1 year
Date of specification: May 2003

Summary of programme aims

The Programme aims to provide access to higher education in Britain to international students who do not possess the normal entry requirements of GCE Advanced level qualifications or the equivalent. This is achieved through the provision of high quality teaching which is sympathetic to the needs of students from a wide range of educational backgrounds. On completion of the programme, students can expect to be equipped with the subject specific and general study skills which will enable them to cope with the demands of undergraduate study.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which students are expected to develop by the end of their degree programme. The Foundation Programme seeks to introduce students to these skills through the provision of a credit-bearing Academic Skills module. The key skills relate to communication (both written and oral), use of information, problem solving and team-working. The credits for the module will be awarded through work done in relation to the core subject modules with additional support provided through workshops and individual tutorials.

Programme content

The programme offers a range of subjects made up of 40 credit and 20 credit modules. The profile which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with a list of modules which are chosen according to the students' intended degree programme (the required modules) and a list of modules from which students may make a selection (the optional modules). Students must choose modules totalling 140 credits.

Compulsory modules

| <i>Mod Code</i> | <i>Module Title</i> | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|

All students must take:

| | | | |
|--------|-----------------|------------|---|
| IF0ACA | Academic Skills | 20 credits | 0 |
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And if their English is below a specified level then, according to their entry level of English

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|--------|-------------------------|------------|---|
| | <i>either</i> | | |
| IF0IE1 | International English A | 40 credits | 0 |
| | <i>or</i> | | |
| IF0IE2 | International English B | 20 credits | 0 |

Required modules

Students must take at least TWO of the following as specified for their intended degree programme.

| <i>Mod Code</i> | <i>Module Title</i> | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|-----------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| AM0BIO | Biology | 40 credits | 0 |
| CH0CHE | Chemistry | 40 credits | 0 |
| CH0CST | Computing and Statistics | 40 credits | 0 |
| EC0ECO | Economics | 40 credits | 0 |
| GG0ENS | Environmental Science | 40 credits | 0 |
| FR0FRE | French | 40 credits | 0 |
| MA0FMA | Further Mathematics | 40 credits | 0 |
| CS0FMC | Further Mathematics and Computer Science | 40 credits | 0 |
| IF0LAW | Law | 40 credits | 0 |
| MA0MAA | Mathematics | 40 credits | 0 |
| EC0FMF | Mathematics for Management | 40 credits | 0 |
| MU0MUS | Music | 40 credits | 0 |
| PH0PHY | Physics | 40 credits | 0 |
| PO0POL | Politics | 40 credits | 0 |
| SO0SOC | Sociology | 40 credits | 0 |

Optional modules

Students may take further modules from the above or from the following list up to a total of 140 credits, by agreement with the Director and the Senior Tutor.

| <i>Mod Code</i> | <i>Module Title</i> | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|-----------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| CH0STA | Statistics | 20 credits | 0 |
| GG0ENA | Environmental Science A (Physical Geography) | 20 credits | 0 |
| GG0ENB | Environmental Science B (Human Geography) | 20 credits | 0 |
| MA0FMS | Further Mathematics | 20 credits | 0 |
| CS0CSC | Computer Science | 20 credits | 0 |
| PO0CAI | Politics A (Concepts and Ideologies) | 20 credits | 0 |
| PO0PIN | Politics B (Political Institutions) | 20 credits | 0 |

Progression requirements

Passes are at three levels: Grade I with Distinction (70%), Grade I (60%) and Grade II (40%). To pass the Programme, students must obtain an average of at least 40% overall, pass modules amounting to 100 credits at the 40% level and have no module mark below 35%

To progress to degree study in the University students must also satisfy the following progression and English Language requirements

Most individual degree programmes specify the modules in which a Grade I pass is required. These are listed in the Foundation Programme handbook. The progression requirements which relate to the number of Grade I and Grade II passes vary according to the intended degree programme as follows:

Intended degree programme

Progression requirements

| | |
|--|---|
| Law Management Studies Management and Business Administration Accounting and Management | An average of at least 60% overall with a Grade I pass in each of two 40 credit modules (including any specified modules) and no module mark below 40%. |
| International Securities, Investment and Banking | An average of at least 60% overall with a Grade I pass with Distinction in Mathematics for Management, a Grade I pass in one other 40 credit module (the specified module and no module mark below 40%. |
| All other degree programmes | A Grade I pass in each of two 40 credit modules (including any specified modules) and an average of at least 40% in the remaining two or three modules but with no module mark below 35%. |

English language requirements

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|---|---|
| Linguistics and Language Pathology | IELTS 7.5 or a pass at 65% in IF0IEI or IF0IE2. |
| All other degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and in The Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences | IELTS 7.0 or a pass at 60% in IF0IEI or IF0IE2. |
| Degree programmes in other faculties | IELTS 6.5 or a pass at 55% in IF0IEI or IF0IE2. |

Students who pass the Programme but do not qualify to progress to any degree programme will be entitled to an International Foundation Programme Certificate.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is delivered through lectures, seminars and individual tutorials. Some science modules also include practical classes in the laboratory.

Most modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework and formal examinations. Some are assessed by formal examination only. The Academic Skills module is assessed by coursework only.

The criteria for assessment are published in the handbook in the form of grade descriptions. The assessment objectives are:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Interpretation, analysis and application
- Evaluation
- Organisation and presentation
- Practical skills (Science modules only)

Grades are awarded at the following levels:

| Mark | Interpretation |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 70% - 100% | Grade I with Distinction |
| 60% - 69% | Grade I |
| 40% - 59% | Grade II |
| 0% - 39% | Fail |

Admission requirements

Entrants to this Programme are normally required to have obtained a school leaving qualification from their home country which is at least equivalent to GCSE but which will be below GCE A-level standard. There must be evidence of a general academic ability of a high standard, with particular strengths in those subjects which are relevant to their chosen degree programme and Foundation Programme modules.

Entrants must also satisfy an English language entry requirement as follows:

| Faculty of intended degree course | IELTS or equivalent |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences | 5.5 with at least 5.0 in each skill |
| Faculty of Arts and Humanities | 5.5 with at least 5.0 in each skill |
| Other faculties | 5.0 with at least 5.0 in each skill |

Admissions Tutor: Mrs E. Frances Russell

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, the International Student Adviser, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

The Foundation Programme places particular emphasis on individual support for its students. Support for students in their studies is provided through the University's Personal Academic Record (PAR) Scheme, in which Personal Tutors see their tutees at least once in each term and also offer weekly surgeries for ad hoc consultations. Small group teaching and weekly module surgeries provide opportunities for individual assistance with academic problems. Student progress is monitored closely so that

problems can be identified and addressed at an early stage. In addition, module tutors submit reports at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms and these are discussed with each student at termly interviews with the Director.

The Student/staff committee meets once a term and allows for discussion on matters relating to the working of the Foundation Programme and issues of concern to students and staff.

Career prospects

The majority of Foundation Programme students believe that their career prospects in their home country will be enhanced by obtaining a degree from a British university. The Foundation Programme assists in this process by providing access to most degree programmes in this University and to alternative programmes at other institutions. An average of 80% of students qualify to proceed to a degree programme at Reading and, of those who have sat examinations but do not qualify and wish to transfer to another institution, 100% have to date been successfully placed. The degree results of those who graduate from Reading compare favourably with students who enter the University through other routes, with an average of 30% over the past five years gaining First Class or Upper Second class degrees.

Educational aims of the programme

The main aims of the Programme are:

- to provide a sound knowledge base in the areas studied and to develop the methodological and learning skills which are specifically relevant to those areas
- through the use of a variety of teaching methods, to equip students with the academic skills which are particularly suited to undergraduate study at a British university
- to encourage the development of work discipline, commitment, independent learning and time management
- to assist students in improving their language skills

Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and Understanding

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| <p>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The key areas of each module syllabus.2. The relevant concepts and principles.3. Subject specific methodology and reasoning.4. Where relevant, the relationship between different areas of study. | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Acquisition of knowledge is through lectures, seminars and individual tutorials. Students are expected to undertake independent reading to supplement and consolidate what is being taught in classes and to broaden their individual knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Where appropriate, visits to relevant places of interest further enhance understanding and interest.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Knowledge and understanding are assessed through unseen written examinations and, in some modules, coursework.</p> |
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Skills and other attributes

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|--|---|
| <p>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Interpret and analyse different types of information.2. Explain and apply the syllabus material.3. Evaluate arguments and points of criticism.4. Identify and solve problems.5. Present material in a well-planned sequence6. Use appropriate terminology confidently and accurately | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme outlined above. The form of the teaching is designed to enable students to develop all the learning outcomes in this category. Regular assignments in the form of seminar preparations and homework provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate their levels of achievement.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>These skills form part of the assessment objectives in end-of-term and final examinations. Assessed coursework and practical project work are also used in some modules.</p> |
| <p>C. Practical skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Perform practical work logically, precisely and safely.2. Accurately collect and collate data.3. Relate theory to practice.4. Use data to produce a well presented and ordered report. | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Practical skills are developed through regular practical exercises. In some modules, work is laboratory or project based and data are used to produce written reports.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Practical skills are assessed in end of term and final examinations. In some modules, laboratory skills, project work and written reports are also assessed.</p> |

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. Communicate effectively by written and oral means.
2. Demonstrate numerical and problem solving skills appropriate to the subject matter of the module.
3. Competent use of information, including Information Technology.
4. Work as part of a team.
5. Work independently.
6. Demonstrate effective time management

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The skills are developed primarily within the content of the core modules with additional support provided through workshops and individual tutorials.

Assessment

The skills are assessed through work done in relation to the core modules. The skills which are developed within individual modules are identified and presented in the handbook. From this information and after consultation with their tutors, students are required to identify the individual skills which will be assessed within each module. They then complete an assignment which focuses on each key skill. The assignments are marked and the average mark is given a credit rating.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.