Academic Staff Induction: Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Thursday 7\textsuperscript{th} December 2017
3.00-5.00pm in Room JD13, Ormskirk Campus

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Academic Quality & Development Unit
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Aim of the session

To explain:

– National quality expectations:
  • *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*
– How Edge Hill’s procedures align with these expectations
– How academic staff are involved
– Sources of information and guidance
UK Quality Code for Higher Education

• Defined by:
  – A national HE level framework and subject benchmarks (PART A)
  – Additional guidance on securing and enhancing the quality of students’ learning opportunities (PART B)
  – Guidance concerning information published by HE providers (PART C)
General introduction

Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards
- A1: UK and European reference points for academic standards
- A2: Degree-awarding bodies’ reference points for academic standards
- A3: Securing academic standards and an outcomes-based approach to academic awards

Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality
- B1: Programme design, development and approval
- B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education
- B3: Learning and teaching
- B4: Enabling student development and achievement
- B5: Student engagement
- B6: Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning
- B7: External examining
- B8: Programme monitoring and review
- B9: Academic appeals and student complaints
- B10: Managing higher education provision with others
- B11: Research degrees

Part C: Information about higher education provision
UKQCHE Part ‘A’

• Deals with the setting and maintenance of threshold academic standards:
  – Threshold standards = the MINIMUM level of achievement that a student has to reach to achieve a UK HE award (however awarding institutions may set their own minimum threshold higher than the national threshold)
  – Classification beyond threshold is a matter for institutions
  – External examiners judge whether threshold standards are being achieved and comment on comparability of standards beyond the threshold
## Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Certificate (C) level</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Certificates of higher education, HNCs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Intermediate (I) level</td>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Foundation degrees, diplomas of higher education, HNDs and other higher diplomas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Honours (H) level</td>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>Bachelor's degrees with honours, ordinary bachelor’s degrees, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Master's (M) level</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Master's degrees, postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Doctoral (D) level</td>
<td>Level 8</td>
<td>MPhil, PhD including professional doctorates</td>
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Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 6:
Bachelor's degree with honours

The descriptor provided for this level of the FHEQ is for any bachelor's degree with honours which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other level 6 qualifications, including bachelor's degrees, graduate diplomas and so on.

Bachelor's degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline

- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline

- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or
  - equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline

- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge

- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).
Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects

- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem

- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
  - the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.
Holders of a bachelor’s degree with honours will have developed an understanding of a complex body of knowledge, some of it at the current boundaries of an academic discipline. Through this, the holder will have developed analytical techniques and problem-solving skills that can be applied in many types of employment. The holder of such a qualification will be able to evaluate evidence, arguments and assumptions, to reach sound judgements and to communicate them effectively.

Holders of a bachelor’s degree with honours should have the qualities needed for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility, and decision making in complex and unpredictable circumstances.
Subject Benchmark Statements

• Developed by panels of academic subject experts convened by QAA
  – Subject benchmark statements for undergraduate honours degrees (61 subjects)
  – Masters degree benchmark statements (16 subjects)
  – NHS/ DoH degree benchmark statements
    – includes nursing, midwifery, ODP and paramedic (18 subjects)
English Honours Degree
Benchmark Statement (2015)

Subject knowledge

3.1 Graduates who have studied English know about a range of the following:

- literature and/or language from different periods. For single honours literature students this includes knowledge of writing from periods before 1800 and the range of principal literary genres across prose, poetry and drama.
- the breadth of literatures in English
- regional and global varieties of the English language
- the history, structure, levels and discourse functions of the English language
- how culture, language, technology, and economics affect how, where and by whom texts are produced and received
- the role of readers in shaping texts
- the relationships between different genres and different media
- critical, theoretical, linguistic and stylistic concepts and terminology.

Skills specific to English

3.2 Graduates who have studied English are able to:

- read closely and critically
- analyse texts and discourses, and respond to the affective power of language, using appropriate approaches and terminology
- develop independent and imaginative interpretations of literary, critical, linguistic or creative material
- articulate a critical understanding of complex texts and ideas (and of their historical relations where appropriate)
- write clearly, accurately and effectively
- apply scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to the subject.
Generic and graduate skills

3.3 Graduates who have studied English are effective researchers, good communicators and active learners. They contribute to society and are highly sought after by employers.

3.4 English graduates are versatile researchers. They are able to:

- discover and synthesize complex information and diverse evidence
- respond creatively and imaginatively to research tasks
- initiate projects of their own
- present information within wider contexts
- test, interpret and analyse information and evidence independently and critically, producing from that analysis cogent arguments and decisive judgements
- plan, organise and report to deadline.

3.5 English graduates possess advanced communication skills. They are able to:

- articulate their own and other people’s ideas concisely, accurately and persuasively both orally and in writing
- develop working relationships with others in teams, especially through constructive dialogue (for example, by listening, asking and responding to questions)
- understand the role of narrative and emotion in decision-making
- be sensitive to cultural contexts when working with others.

3.6 English graduates are active, lifelong learners. They are able to:

- adapt to different demands and tasks
- appreciate the benefit of giving and receiving feedback
- evaluate and reflect on their own practices and assumptions
- look beyond the immediate task to the wider context, including the social and commercial effects of their work
- initiate and take responsibility for their own work.
Threshold standard

5.1 This is the minimum requirement that should be reached by graduates of a bachelor's degree with honours.

5.2 Graduates who have studied English as a significant component of their degree demonstrate:

- knowledge of the subject as defined by the breadth of the curriculum in Section 3
- awareness of the different ideas and values represented in the subject of English
- understanding of how critical, analytical and creative approaches produce knowledge
- effective communication skills
- powers of textual analysis and critical argument and an awareness of the affective power of language
- critical judgement
- an ability to conduct independent research and organise relevant information to formulate an appropriate written argument or response.
Typical standard

5.3 This is the level of attainment reached by the typical student whose results fall into the main cluster.

5.4 Typical honours graduates who have studied English as a significant component of their degree are be able to:

- demonstrate a wide knowledge of the subject as defined in Section 3 and an ability to deploy a conceptual grasp of its central concerns
- interpret and articulate ideas and values as represented in the subject of English
- apply their understanding of critical, analytic and creative approaches to produce knowledge
- exhibit an effective command of written English together with a wide-ranging and accurate vocabulary
- display confident textual analysis and fluent critical argument, attending to language, structure and form and the role of the reader in the process of communication and interpretation
- use independent and self-reflective critical judgement
- conduct independent research through self-formulated questions and tasks and organise relevant information to establish an appropriate written argument or response and achieve scholarly standards of presentation.

Excellent standard

5.5 English graduates who have attained an excellent standard demonstrate to a higher level the capabilities and skills listed in 5.4, and show evidence of extensive independent reading, originality of thought and expression, and in-depth understanding. Excellent work displays wide-ranging knowledge of the subject and applies it in subtle and effective ways, showing exceptional critical insight, analytic rigour and creativity.
UKQCHE Part ‘A’ (contd)

The national qualifications level descriptors *(generic)* and subject benchmark statements *(subject-specific)* are **used together** to develop programme content and learning outcomes at the appropriate level in respect of:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Intellectual skills
- Practical skills
- Transferable skills
## Programme Learning Outcomes

### Level 4

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and Understanding</th>
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<tr>
<td>A 6.4 Begin to compare and contrast different approaches to the applications and functions of drama and theatre practice.</td>
<td>DRA1101; DRA1104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 8.4 Identify some key sources and be aware of approaches to research in the exploration of the field of drama and theatre.</td>
<td>DRA1101; DRA1102; DRA1103; DRA1104;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 7.4 Identify some of the interrelationships between drama and other performance disciplines, and begin to recognise the potential for interdisciplinary processes and production.</td>
<td>DRA1101; DRA1104; DRA1105; TEC1100</td>
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<tr>
<th>Intellectual Skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>C 1.4 Identify and retrieve sufficient information, and locate suitable learning materials, to facilitate thoughtful engagement with the study of drama.</td>
<td>DRA1101; DRA1102; DRA1105; DRA1104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 2.4 Review critical material, construct arguments and communicate ideas clearly and appropriately, in the context of intellectual engagement with the study of drama.</td>
<td>DRA1101; DRA1102; DRA1105; DRA1104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 3.4 Engage with a range of academic discourses to begin to produce an informed intellectual approach to thinking about drama.</td>
<td>DRA1101; DRA1102; DRA1105; DRA1104</td>
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<tr>
<th>Practical Skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>B 3.4 Manipulate the artistic and technical ability of the practitioner at a basic level in the creation and presentation of dramatic and theatrical work.</td>
<td>DRA1103; DRA1104; DRA1106; TEC1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 8.4 Recognise the need for cooperative and collaborative working relationships in the practice of drama and in the creation of theatrical experiences.</td>
<td>DRA1103; DRA1104; DRA1106; TEC1100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B 5.4 Stimulate spectator and participant response, with a basic awareness of the role of the audience in drama and theatre contexts.</td>
<td>DRA1103; DRA1104; DRA1106; TEC1100</td>
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<tr>
<th>Transferable Skills</th>
<th>Mapped to Modules</th>
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<tr>
<td>D 9.4 Work with adequate awareness of project risk in an environment subject to rapid change.</td>
<td>DRA1103; DRA1104; DRA1106; TEC1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 5.4 Manipulate and utilise information technologies for purposes of adequate communication.</td>
<td>DRA1101; DRA1102; DRA1105; DRA1103; DRA1104; TLC1000; TLC1001;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 7.4 Demonstrate sufficient awareness of health and safety principles underpinning creative work, and act and operate safely in the creative workplace.</td>
<td>DRA1103; DRA1104; DRA1106; TEC1100</td>
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<td>Subject Knowledge and Understanding</td>
<td>A. Knowledge and Understanding</td>
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<td>5.1 Subject-Specific Skills</td>
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<td>5.2 Generic and Graduate Skills</td>
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<td>5.2a</td>
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UKQCHE Part ‘B’

Deals with **assuring and enhancing the quality of student learning opportunities** with chapters on:

1. Programme design, development and approval
2. Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education
3. Learning and teaching
4. Enabling student development and achievement
5. Student engagement
6. Assessment of students and recognition of prior learning
7. External examining
8. Programme monitoring and review
9. Academic appeals and student complaints
10. Managing higher education provision with others
11. Research degrees
UKQCHE Part ‘B’ (contd)

• All chapters contain one or more *Expectations* *(mandatory)*

• These are supported by *Indicators of sound practice* (technically not mandatory but important benchmarks that need to be taken seriously)
UKQCHE Chapter B3 Learning and teaching

The Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about learning and teaching, which higher education providers are required to meet:

Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

The Indicators of sound practice

Indicator 1

Higher education providers articulate and implement a strategic approach to learning and teaching and promote a shared understanding of this approach among their staff, students and other stakeholders.

Indicator 2

Learning and teaching activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Indicator 3

Learning and teaching practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.
UKQCHE Chapter B3 Learning and teaching

Indicator 4
Higher education providers assure themselves that everyone involved in teaching or supporting student learning is appropriately qualified, supported and developed.

Indicator 5
Higher education providers collect and analyse appropriate information to ensure the continued effectiveness of their strategic approach to, and the enhancement of, learning opportunities and teaching practices.

Indicator 6
Higher education providers maintain physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use.

Indicator 7
Every student is provided with clear and current information that specifies the learning opportunities and support available to them.

Indicator 8
Higher education providers take deliberate steps to assist every student to understand their responsibility to engage with the learning opportunities provided and shape their learning experience.

Indicator 9
Every student is enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development through the provision of regular opportunities to reflect on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff.
Information from HE providers should be:

• Comprehensible to the general public, students, and other stakeholders
• Valid, reliable, useful and accessible
• Timely and proportionate to audiences' requirements
• Should offer a **fair** reflection of the higher education experience the provider offers
NATIONAL LEVEL

Part ‘A’ - Standards

Part ‘B’ – Quality and enhancement

Part ‘C’ - Information
INSTITUTION-LEVEL

Strategies, policies, procedures, regulations, information, oversight, evaluation

Part 'A' - Standards

Part 'B' – Quality and enhancement

Part ‘C’ - Information

NATIONAL LEVEL
‘Institution-level’

- HE providers embed the national Quality Code within their regulations and quality processes (cf. EHU’s Academic Regulations and Quality Management Handbook)

- Policies and strategies will also be informed by the Code, e.g. EHU’s Taught Degrees Framework and strategies for L&T, assessment and student support – these are effective ‘proxies’ for the UKQCHE
EHU Taught Degrees Framework (2017)

• “A set of guiding principles for the design of all undergraduate and taught postgraduate awards validated by the University.”

• Validation should evidence programme teams’ engagement with the following five themes:

1. Graduate attributes, Employability and Work-Related/Work-Based Learning
2. Induction and transition
3. Learning, teaching and assessment
4. Education for Personal Development and Enhancement
5. Global citizenship
Validation, delivery, monitoring and review

INSTITUTION-LEVEL

Strategies, policies, procedures, regulations, information, oversight, evaluation

Part ‘A’ - Standards
Part ‘B’ - Quality and enhancement
Part ‘C’ - Information

NATIONAL LEVEL

PROGRAMME LEVEL
‘Programme-level’

- Validation - detailed panel scrutiny of new programme proposals
- Annual Monitoring (AMR) – includes module evaluation
- External examiners – confirm standards through their annual reports
- Periodic review - of subject areas every 5 years (includes ‘re-validation’)
Validation

• A deliberative process for scrutinising new course proposals
• Enables full consideration of academic standards and the appropriateness of the proposed learning opportunities for students
• Is independent of the proposing department
• Contains appropriate ‘externality’
• Sets conditions of approval and/or recommendations and confirms they have been addressed before final approval by the University’s Academic Quality Enhancement Committee (AQEC)
Proforma validation agenda

**Technical information** - qualification level and award title ([QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)); mode of study and type of delivery; admissions criteria; target intake numbers; planned date of implementation and any ‘phasing in’ arrangements

**Programme rationale** - target audience, market research

**Benchmarking and consultation** – [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#), academic benchmarking ([QAA Subject Benchmark Statement/s](#)); considerations of graduate employability and alignment with any PSRB standards (for accreditation); evidence of employer involvement in programme development; demonstrable mapping of academic benchmarks/professional standards to programme learning outcomes/modules
Design considerations – inclusive programme design; programme aims and learning outcomes; programme structure, levels, pathways; modules (core/compulsory/options) and module size; delivery pattern

Learning, teaching and assessment – inclusive L&T activities including Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL); educational visits and field trips; Sandwich year and/or Study Abroad (Erasmus) exchanges; use of guest lecturers, employers, service users and/or alumni; and overarching strategy for formative and summative assessment etc.

Graduate attributes, employability and Work-Related/Work-Based Learning – the competences, skillsets, behaviours (motivations and attitudes) and professional practices that graduates should be able to demonstrate etc.
Proforma validation agenda

Global citizenship - how internationalisation and globalisation are addressed in the content and delivery, curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students to engage with socio-economic, political, environmental and ethical agendas related to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Induction and Transition - arrangements for student admission and induction including pre-entry communication and support. Regulations and procedures governing RP[E]L. Support for academic transition between years of study/ FHEQ levels.

Education for Personal Development and Enhancement - academic and pastoral support provided to students, specifically via personal tutoring and Personal Development Planning (PDP). Inclusive support for students with protected characteristics, on-campus international students and students with different entry qualifications.
Staffing, staff development and research – staff expertise and capacity for programme delivery. Strategies for staff professional development and performance review, including observed teaching. How programme design and delivery are underpinned by staff research and scholarly activity, particularly at FHEQ levels 6 & 7.

Learning resources – use of central and course-specific resources (inventory - includes collaborative partner resources where applicable).

Organisation and management - management, maintenance and effective deployment of staffing and resources. Department and course management structures and roles (organisational chart). Operational liaison with collaborative partners and employers, where applicable.
Proforma validation agenda

**Quality assurance** - annual monitoring including Module Evaluation Questionnaires and feedback from internal student surveys and NSS; marking and moderation; external examiners; assessment boards. Student representation, Programme Boards and Student-Staff Consultative Fora. Complaints processes.

**Quality enhancement** – how the department supports the design and development of innovative and effective learning, teaching and assessment practices and student support and evaluates their impact. Systems and structures for the promotion, identification and exchange of good practice.
Outcomes of validation

- Panels recommend approval with or without **conditions** - “A condition is set when a presenting issue, if not resolved before students enrol, renders the course undeliverable and therefore invalid” (QMH Chapter 4)
- Other (non-binding) advice may take the form of a **recommendation**, e.g. to the proposing Team, Faculty or even the University
- Panels affirm that standards and quality meet national expectations
- Panels note features of good practice (for quality enhancement)

**OR**

- Panels refer proposals back for further development
Validation – variations:

- **Major modifications** of existing programmes use a variant of the standard validation process – see Quality Management Handbook Chapter 4.
- Approval of new **collaborative provision** and **degree apprenticeships** – see QMH Chapter 5 & Chapter 7.
- **Articulation routes** provide ‘entry with advanced standing’ for students holding approved external (overseas) qualifications – see QMH Chapter 5.
Monitoring and review

• Annual monitoring (QMH Chapter 3)
• External examiners (QMH Chapter 2)
• Periodic review (QMH Chapter 3)

• These processes identify any issues for attention as well as good practice for wider dissemination (‘quality enhancement’)
Academic Quality and Development Unit

About Us

Validation

UK Quality Assured

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is a new scheme for recognising excellent teaching, in addition to existing national quality requirements for universities, colleges and other higher education providers. Click on the TEF Gold logo to read this institution’s latest report.

Academic Planning

Monitoring and Review

Committees

Academic Planning

Monitoring and Review

Committees

Collaborative Provision

Modifications

Student Engagement

Collaborative Provision

Modifications

Student Engagement

University Strategies & Policies

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VASC Standing Panel

Undergraduate Degree

Framework

Postgraduate Degree Framework

Collaborative Provision

Student Engagement

External Examiners

Academic Board Committees

Professional Accreditations

Programme Specifications

Staff

University Strategies & Policies
Guidance and information

AQDU wiki
https://go.edgehill.ac.uk/display/aqdu/
Home

- Quality Management Handbook
  - ‘Preparing for Validation’
  - ‘Preparing for Annual Monitoring’
  - ‘Preparing for Periodic Review’

- Assorted templates
The Quality Code

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code
Any Questions?

~ Thanks for your attention! ~