

Information for students

Guidance about providing information to prospective undergraduate students

Please note that this is a draft document that sets out the text we propose to include in the guidance. We are not consulting on the design of the document and the final, designed version of the guidance will look quite different to this consultation draft.

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Introduction

Background

The need for higher education providers to make clear and accurate information available to students has grown in importance following policy changes giving UK students increased responsibility for funding their own studies. Advice provided by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has further clarified the legal obligations of higher education providers in respect of the information they make available. The expectations of consumer law around information provision apply in all four countries of the UK. They are part of the baseline regulatory requirements monitored through the new quality assessment operating system in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The Key Information Set (KIS) was introduced in 2012 (published on an updated Unistats website) to provide a set of standardised information that students could use to inform their decision making. In 2015, the UK funding bodies carried out a Review of Unistats and the KIS as part of their wider Review of Provision of Information about Learning and Teaching, and the Student Experience.¹ This was a fundamental review that involved looking at information usage by prospective students and the types of information they find most useful. A key finding of this review was that detailed information about course structure and delivery was most important to prospective students and that the summary metrics presented on Unistats were not the best way to provide information.

The outcomes of the consultation on the funding bodies' Review of Provision of Information about Learning and Teaching, and the Student Experience, published in August 2016, included the decision to remove information about course delivery, tuition fees and accommodation costs from Unistats, and transfer responsibility for publishing detailed course information to providers (via their own websites). In order to help providers take on this responsibility the funding bodies committed to producing this guidance jointly with the National Union of Students (NUS) and sector representatives, with CMA input. The funding bodies will continue to collect links to this information and publish these on Unistats to allow students to access the information easily.

About this guidance

This guidance is intended to help universities and colleges delivering higher education meet student information needs. It takes account of the compliance advice published by the CMA to help providers understand their legal obligations in terms of the information that they provide and their responsibilities under consumer law, but it neither replaces nor subsumes that advice. Providers should read this guidance alongside the CMA's advice.²

This guidance is also intended to promote consistency and transparency in the information made available by providers, making it easier for prospective students to compare information for different courses. It reflects the findings of the Review of Unistats and the KIS, which included research with current and prospective students. The guidance incorporates the views of students obtained through a NUS survey of almost 1,200 first-year students conducted as part of the funding bodies' review.³

¹ Review of Provision of Information about Learning and Teaching, and the Student Experience, available at: www.hefce.ac.uk.

² UK Higher Education Providers - Advice on Consumer Protection Law: Helping you Comply with your Obligations, Competition and Markets Authority, March 2015. Available at: www.gov.uk.

³ HEFCE 2015_27c ANNEX C Student Views; HEFCE 2015_27d ANNEX D Focus Groups

The guidance will be useful to a range of stakeholders within providers, including those involved in the academic delivery of courses, in the marketing of courses, in admissions, and in the provision of learning facilities and student services.

Scope of the guidance

Although some of the information covered will be relevant to current students, the guidance focuses on information to help prospective students in their decision making, and is not intended to cover all of the information that providers must legally provide. It includes course-level information spanning all modes and locations of delivery (full time, part time and distance learning, in the UK and overseas), as well as information on areas such as accommodation costs and financial support.

Presentation of information

The guidance recognises that providers have their own established policies and practices for providing and presenting information to students. It identifies the types of information about courses that students require but does not seek to prescribe where this information should be located or how it should be presented on institutional websites, in prospectuses, and in course and departmental handbooks.

In order to avoid unnecessary duplication of information, course-specific pages on institutional websites often contain links to more generic layers of information that apply to the institution as a whole, such as tuition fees, learning facilities, accommodation and living costs, student services or complaints procedures. However course-level and course-related information is provided and linked, providers must ensure that it is accessible, as prospective students frequently report difficulties in navigating institutional websites.

Terminology

Prospective students may not always be familiar with terms that are widely used in higher education, and providers are encouraged to give a brief explanation of the meaning of such terms where they are used. Providers are best placed to define the terminology that they use according to their own programmes and context. Annex 2 of this guidance includes a selection of definitions that providers may find useful in this respect.

Examples of good practice

Most of the sections of this guidance include examples of good practice that illustrate how providers can provide the type of information that students need. The examples of good practice are not exhaustive and should be seen as indicative rather than prescriptive in terms of the categories of information they contain, the order in which information is presented and the level of detail provided. Some categories of information may be relevant to more than one of the sections to which the guidance refers, and providers may organise their information in different ways. In such cases there is no suggestion that providers should change their current practice, provided that all necessary information is provided in an accessible and transparent way.

The awards, awarding bodies, delivery organisations and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) used in the examples of good practice are fictitious.

Opportunities to engage with current students

The Review of Unistats and the KIS found that students viewed opportunities to engage with current students as a valuable way of understanding what their experience of the course might be like. In addition to the information contained in this guidance, we would encourage

providers to make prospective students aware of opportunities to engage with current students, particularly those offered in addition to traditional open days, such as online forums and mentoring opportunities.

1 Introductory course information

Course title and awarding body

Students need to know the title of their course and the qualification they will receive on successful completion. Providers should identify the body that regulates the provision, and inform students about the involvement of any other external organisations such as degree-awarding bodies and professional bodies, where relevant.

- **Name the award students will receive on successful completion of their course**
The title of a student's qualification is crucial, as it encapsulates their years of study, and signifies what they will be working towards. Accurate information for prospective students is therefore essential and should include the qualification and course title, for example BA (Hons) Philosophy, FdSc Health Studies, or HND in Accounting and Finance
- **Name the awarding body**
Where the organisation that delivers the course is not itself the awarding body, for example when courses are franchised to collaborative partners, this should be made clear to prospective students. Students will also be interested to know whether the agreement between the awarding body and the delivery organisation requires renewal during their expected period of study.

Length of course

The length of a course is important when students are making choices, particularly if they are considering studying on a part-time basis, whether on-campus or by distance learning. Prospective students feel that information about part-time study is often neglected in comparison with information about full-time study.

- **Indicate the length of courses for both full-time and part-time modes of study**
Course length can vary according to the mode of study (full time or part time) - the length of part-time courses will also depend on the range of intensity of study permitted by providers - and the options available to prospective students should be made clear. Where providers offer substantial part-time provision it may be helpful to provide separate prospectuses and web pages for full-time and part-time courses.
- **Indicate the start and end date of the course**
Knowing the start date and end date of the course well in advance, where possible, provides a focal point for prospective students in planning the commencement of their studies. A start and end date is particularly crucial to overseas students requiring a Tier 4 visa.
- **Indicate work or study placements that may affect the length of the course**
Course duration may be extended by the inclusion of a work or study placement in the UK or abroad. Providers should make clear the duration of the placement, whether it is compulsory or optional, who is responsible for finding it, and the financial arrangements for students on placement.

Location of study

For many students, their higher education experience is in a new place. Other students choose to study locally where there are family or work commitments.

- **Give the name and geographic location where the course will be delivered**
Providers should indicate the location of study. This has significant impact on student choice, because for some it means relocating to a new place for a number of years. Once a prospective student has chosen a university or college, it is helpful to provide details on whether teaching takes place on a compact campus, a single building, or locations across the town or city.

To help students understand the impact travel will have on their time and budgets, providers should provide further information if teaching is split across locations. For example, if a free shuttle bus is not available, and it is the student's responsibility to travel between locations, this should be made clear to prospective students. Similarly, providers should also make it clear if students are likely to need to move campuses during their period of study.

Where awards are delivered by distance learning, providers should inform students about the location, duration and cost of any intensive face-to-face study periods they are required or advised to attend.

- **Provide details of the likely location of work or study placements in the UK or abroad**

Advance information about any work or study placements that might involve travel away from the home campus will help students judge whether they are likely to meet the requirements of the course. Some providers use placement maps or lists of placement providers and locations to facilitate this choice.

Accreditation by professional and regulatory bodies

In some cases awards prepare students for entry into a regulated profession, such as nursing, engineering or law. This may mean additional criteria must be met before a student can qualify as a practitioner. In other cases awards prepare students for membership of professional bodies and offer full or part-exemption from their requirements.

- **Indicate where courses are accredited by a PSRB**
In addition, providers should clarify the benefit to students of the accreditation obtained through successful completion of the course, and whether membership of the professional body is dependent on further requirements, such as a period of placement, employment or further study after graduation.

Where the course is accredited by a professional body it is good practice to provide information about whether the accreditation agreement requires renewal during the expected period of study of prospective students.

Timetable information

Timetable information is helpful to students when choosing courses. Knowing the days and times of the week on which classes take place is useful for all students, and particularly for part-time students, mature students and carers, who work and have other responsibilities to reconcile with their studies.

Students with sporting or cultural interests will also wish to know if there is a teaching-free afternoon set aside for these activities.

Detailed information is not always available at key milestones of the application cycle. If this is the case, prospective students will welcome a clear indication of when they will be given a confirmed timetable for study commitments.

- **Indicate when students can expect to receive a course timetable**

It is acknowledged that the logistics of timetabling is administratively burdensome and complex. However, students who need to reconcile study with family or work commitments would find a timetable made available as soon as possible particularly helpful. Providers are encouraged to make timetables available as early as possible to prospective students.

Course information should make it clear when students can expect to receive their timetable.

Where there is a degree of consistency in course timetables from one academic year to the next, providers may consider making the current year's timetable available to prospective students on an indicative basis.

Introductory course information: Example of good practice

This example of good practice is not intended to be exhaustive. Providers may wish to include additional introductory information such as entry requirements and tuition fees, which are dealt with elsewhere in this guidance.

Introductory course information

Award: BA (Hons) Business Management

UCAS Code: NXXX

Location: University Centre Exton (and location of work placement)

Awarding body: University of Bexford

Students who complete the course successfully will receive a degree from the University of Bexford. The agreement between the University Centre Exton and the University of Bexford is reviewed every five years for developmental purposes and was last renewed in May 2015.

Professional body accreditation: Successful completion of this course satisfies the academic requirements for membership of the Chartered Association of Managers (CAM). The course has indefinite accreditation from the CAM but is reviewed periodically.

Duration: 3 years (full time)
4-6 years (part time)
4 years (full time) including a one-year work placement

Academic year: Full-time course: 11 September 20XX - 21 June 20YY
Part-time course: 11 September 20XX - 21 June 20YY
9 January 20XX - 18 December 20YY

Part-time study: When studied part time, the duration of the course depends on the speed at which you wish to progress through it. This is called the 'intensity of study'. For example, studying half time would be equivalent to 50 per cent intensity of study and would typically double the length of the course from three to six years. You may be able to change the intensity of study during your course. Please note that the four-year version of the course is not currently available on a part-time basis.

Work placements: If you choose to undertake a work placement between the second and final years of the course, our placement staff work with you to identify a suitable location for your work placement in the UK or abroad. Please refer to our placements map for further details and note that you are responsible for any costs incurred in travelling to and from your work placement, and for any accommodation costs.

Timetables: Timetables are normally available one month before registration. Please note that while we make every effort to ensure that timetables are as student friendly as possible, scheduled teaching can take place on any day of the week. Wednesday afternoons are normally reserved for sports and cultural activities. Part-time classes are normally scheduled on one or two days per week, details of which can be obtained from the [course leader](#) [link].

2 Entry requirements

Entry requirements are the single most consulted piece of information by prospective students.

- **Provide information on entry criteria, any specific entry requirements and standard typical and contextual offers**
Entry requirements give students their first indication as to whether they might receive an offer. Some students choose not to apply for courses for which they believe they are unlikely to achieve the required grades, while others see some motivational advantage in making choices that are stretching.
- **Information on entry requirements should include:**
 - academic entry criteria
 - non-academic entry criteria, for example requirements set by professional or sponsoring bodies
 - occupational health requirements
 - specific entry requirements, for example English or Welsh language requirements
 - standard typical offer and contextual offer, such as POLAR3 or index of multiple deprivation application
 - how to apply through routes other than UCAS, where applicable.

Providers should inform prospective students whether they will be interviewed, and whether the interview process will involve additional activities such as auditions or discussion of portfolios. Prospective students should also be informed if they will be required to perform additional tasks such as writing an admissions essay.

Entry requirements: Example of good practice

This example of good practice is not intended to be exhaustive. The wording and tariff points used in this example are indicative, as is the list of entry requirements.

Award: BSc (Hons) Nursing - Child

UCAS Code: B000

Entry requirements 2017-18:

- our typical offer is 112 UCAS tariff points from at least two A Levels, or equivalent
- UCAS tariff points from Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers are accepted
- UCAS tariff points from the Irish Leaving Certificate are accepted
- Welsh Baccalaureate
- UCAS tariff points from BTEC level 3 Diplomas are accepted
- International Baccalaureate: full diploma, achieving at least 24 points
- Open University credits in lieu of A Levels are accepted (90 will normally be in Health or Science subjects)
- Access to HE Diploma: at least nine credits must be achieved at Distinction grades, with all remaining level 3 credits at Merit grades
- a minimum of three GCSEs or equivalent at Grade C or above, including English and Maths
- Edexcel/BTEC National: Distinction/Merit
- National Literacy and Numeracy tests at level 2 or 3 will be accepted in lieu of GCSE English and Maths, but you will still require a minimum of three GCSEs
- qualifications other than those listed above will be considered on an individual basis.

International applicants

- If English is not your first language you will need an IELTS score of 7.0, with a minimum score of 6.5 in each component (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking), or an equivalent English Language qualification.

Additional requirements:

- a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service report
- a satisfactory Occupational Health Clearance
- it is a requirement of the Nursery and Midwifery Council that applicants pass numeracy and literacy tests - to be selected for interview you must achieve at least 11/15 in the literacy test and 9/12 in the numeracy test (you can try our sample tests by clicking [here](#) [link])
- you must provide evidence of having been in general education for at least 10 years and of having studied within the last five years
- a face-to-face interview is required before an offer is made.

3 Course structure and delivery

Prospective students regard detailed information about the structure and delivery of the course as the single most important factor in making their decisions. This includes whether the course is based on terms or semesters, and the length and weighting of its constituent units, including work or study placements and final year major projects, where applicable. It is helpful to provide a brief overview of the academic content of the course, and to list the modules or course units that students can take.

The CMA advises providers to provide prospective students with access to their rules and regulations, and such information may be included here or elsewhere, at the discretion of providers.

Course overview

- **State the purpose and key features of the course as succinctly as possible**

Relate course content to the academic discipline/s and professional practice/s on which it draws, identifying its most relevant characteristics. It is helpful to prospective students if providers give an overview of what will be studied in each year of the course.

You may wish to indicate the kinds of discipline-specific and generic knowledge and skills students will acquire in taking the course, and how employability skills are developed.

- **State whether the course, or part of it, is delivered, or available to be delivered, in another language**

An example of this is that some providers in Wales offer courses that are delivered in part or wholly in Welsh.

- **Explain how the academic year is organised**

Inform students whether the academic year is based on terms, semesters or other study periods, giving start and end dates so that students can plan their transition to higher education with as much notice as possible.

Part-time and distance-learning courses may have more than one start date each year, and this additional flexibility should be drawn to the attention of potential applicants.

- **Explain the building blocks of the course**

Indicate how each year of the course is broken down into course units or modules, where appropriate, and the contribution made by these units to the end-of-year mark and to the final course mark.

Course overview: Example of good practice

This example of good practice is not intended to be exhaustive. Providers may wish to include additional or more detailed overview information.

BSc (Hons) Computer Science

Course overview

This course will equip you with the specialist knowledge and skills needed to produce computer solutions from a robust mathematical and scientific base, as well as the employability skills needed to become a computer professional. It has been designed to meet the requirements of the computer industry and is underpinned by the research and industry experience of our staff.

Level 4 (Year 1 for full-time students) develops the underpinning knowledge and skills in areas such as programming and interface design that you will need to develop as an area of specialisation later in the course.

Level 5 (Year 2 for full-time students) begins the process of specialisation in areas such as software development distributed systems and networking, digital technologies and web development. You acquire knowledge and practical skills using industry-standard systems engineering techniques.

Level 6 (Year 3 for full-time students) focuses on advanced computing skills culminating in a major project. The major project develops your ability to work independently on a project of your choosing. Many students have found their major project to be of interest to potential employers.

The course operates on a modular basis that provides flexibility and choice. Most modules count for 15 academic credits, although some, such as the major project in your final year, are double-weighted and count for 30 credits. Each credit taken equates to a total study time of around 10 hours. Total study time includes scheduled teaching, independent study and assessment activity.

Full-time students take modules worth 60 credits per semester, with part-time students taking proportionately fewer credits per semester. All students take a total of 120 credits per level and 360 credits for the degree as a whole. Your overall grade for the course and your degree classification are based on the marks obtained for modules taken at levels 5 and 6.

The full-time course has one start point in September, while the part-time course has start points in September and January.

A copy of the rules and regulations governing the course is available [here](#) [link].

4 Module information

Module or course unit or information enables students to understand the building blocks of the course and how they relate to the subjects in which they are interested. In order to help them understand workload requirements, students should know how many course units or modules they will be expected to take concurrently per term, semester or year.

Students may choose a course because it contains modules that are led by academic staff by whom they particularly wish to be taught because of their reputation in the field. This can lead to disappointment if these staff members leave the institution or are otherwise unavailable to deliver the modules concerned. CMA guidance advises providers to inform students that the staffing of modules is correct at the time of writing, and how and when they will be informed of any changes. Providers should state that staffing of modules is indicative where this is the case.

Students may be similarly disappointed when an optional module advertised in the course prospectus or website that they particularly want to take does not run.

- **Provide information on compulsory and optional modules**
Providers should include a list of the modules to be taken as part of the course. This is sometimes referred to as a course or module map. Some providers make available an institution-wide module catalogue on their websites, while others make short module summaries available on individual course pages. Such summaries include information about assessment.
- **Make it clear if optional modules may not run**
Where the viability of optional modules depends on a combination of student demand and staff availability, and course information regularly advertises substantially more optional modules than actually run, the institution should make this clear to students. For example, if a course lists 50 optional modules, of which 25 run on average, course information should make it clear that although the choice of optional modules appears to be substantial, only 50 per cent of the modules listed will run in a typical year.

If optional modules are not guaranteed to run, prospective students should be told when the optional modules running in the following term, semester or year are confirmed, and the choices available to them if a module they intended to take is not available.
- **Inform students as soon as possible if a module is going to be cancelled or changed**
Students can be disappointed when an optional module advertised in the course prospectus or website that they particularly want to take is cancelled or modified. To mitigate the risk of disappointment providers should inform students that information about modules is correct at the time of writing and explain how and when they will be informed of any changes.

Module information: Example of good practice

This example of good practice is not intended to be exhaustive. Providers may wish to include additional information such as the assessment methods for each module, or the modules associated with different pathways through the course.

Module map

This module map provides an indicative list of the modules that make up your course. Each module is worth a specified number of credits: you take a combination of compulsory and optional modules, enabling you to cover key subject knowledge while developing your own interests. You must take modules worth a total of 120 credits at each level of the course. The number of optional modules you can take depends on the number of core modules at a given level, and you have more choice in later parts of the course.

Our teaching is informed by research, and modules change periodically to reflect developments in the discipline. You can always find the most up-to-date information about your modules and who is teaching them in our [module catalogue](#) [link] and in module guides.

We aim to ensure that all optional modules run as scheduled. If for any reason an optional module cannot be run we will advise you as soon as possible and help you choose an alternative module.

The modules available on the course are as follows.

Level 4 (Year 1 for full-time students)

| Semester 1 | | Semester 1 | |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Compulsory modules | Credits | Optional modules | Credits |
| . | | . | |
| .. | | .. | |

| Semester 2 | | Semester 2 | |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Compulsory modules | Credits | Optional modules | Credits |
| . | | . | |
| .. | | .. | |

Level 5 (Year 2 for full-time students)

| Semester 3 | | Semester 3 | |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Compulsory modules | Credits | Optional modules | Credits |
| . | | . | |
| .. | | .. | |

| Semester 4 | | Semester 4 | |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Compulsory modules | Credits | Optional modules | Credits |
| . | | . | |
| .. | | .. | |

Level 6 (Year 3 for full-time students)

| Semester 3 | | Semester 3 | |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Compulsory modules | Credits | Optional modules | Credits |
| . | | . | |
| .. | | .. | |

| Semester 4 | | Semester 4 | |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Compulsory modules | Credits | Optional modules | Credits |
| . | | . | |
| .. | | .. | |

Note: The modules given above are indicative and based on the current academic year. Modules may change in order to keep content current.

5 Teaching and learning

Students' understanding of how they will learn and be taught influences their choice of course. Some providers make programme specifications available to prospective as well as current students. While this is helpful it is nonetheless advisable to provide summary information about the course's approach to teaching and learning. Students have commented that workload information is rarely provided in course information and that they have been surprised by how much time is involved in studying for a higher education award.

- **Provide an overview of teaching and learning activities**
Identify the types of classes and class activities that are typically used to deliver the course, for example: lectures, workshops, seminars, tutorials, supervisions, practical classes or workshops, studio work and fieldwork. Give an indication of typical class contact hours for level 4 study and whether the pattern changes at levels 5 and 6.
- **Give indicative class sizes where possible**
Students may find it helpful to have some context for this information. For example, a lecture might be attended by over 100 students, providing little opportunity for interaction. However, this could be followed by seminars with the lecturer, in smaller groups of perhaps 15-20 students, to focus on specific aspects of the lecture topic and enable discussion and interaction.
- **Indicate the importance and volume of independent learning required**
Students are often surprised by the amount of work they are expected to do outside the classroom. Consequently, they need to be informed about its importance, the amount of work required and the resources available to support that work. This includes generic resources such as libraries and learning zones, and subject-specific resources such as laboratories, studios and performance facilities, and language centres.
- **Indicate the workload involved in studying on the course**
Understanding the likely workload is a key factor in a student's ability to cope with the demands of higher study. Students armed with this information can make better informed choices about the compatibility of study with family life and the need to work alongside their studies.
- **Provide an overview of learning support**
Provide brief details of the learning support services that students can access, as well as information about their opening hours. The latter are particularly important for part-time students.
- **Provide information about the staff who teach on the course**
Prospective and current students are interested to know who will be teaching them. A well established and effective way of doing this is by means of staff profiles published on the institutional website. Staff profiles might include academic qualifications, research interests, professional and practitioner experience, teaching qualifications, and Higher Education Academy and national teaching fellowships.

Indicate whether some teaching will be undertaken by postgraduate research students. It is helpful to identify the types of class they may teach (for example tutorials, seminars) and whether training has been provided.

Teaching and learning: Example of good practice

This example of good practice is not intended to be exhaustive. Providers may wish to include additional information such as the percentage of staff who are Fellows, Senior Fellows and Principal Fellows of the Higher Education Academy, or whether any member of staff has been awarded a national teaching fellowship.

BSc (Hons) Engineering

Teaching and Learning

Teaching

You are taught through a combination of lectures, seminars and laboratory practicals. Seminars enable you to discuss and develop your understanding of topics covered in lectures in smaller groups of around 16-18 students. In addition, you have timetabled meetings with your personal tutor. You use industry-standard design software and have access to engineering and computer laboratory facilities throughout your course. At level 4 you typically have around 15-16 contact hours per week.

Independent learning

When not attending lectures, seminars and laboratory or other timetabled sessions you will be expected to continue learning independently through self-study. Typically, this will involve reading journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library, preparing coursework assignments and presentations, and preparing for examinations. Your independent learning is supported by a range of excellent facilities, including the library, the learning zone, and our engineering and computer laboratories.

Overall workload

Your overall workload consists of class contact hours, independent learning and assessment activity, plus field trips, with each credit taken equating to a total study time of around 10 hours. While your actual contact hours may depend on the optional modules you select, the following information gives an indication of how much time you will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

Level 4: 32 per cent of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Teaching, learning and assessment: | 384 hours |
| Independent learning: | 816 hours |

Level 5: 28 per cent of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Teaching, learning and assessment: | 336 hours |
| Independent learning: | 864 hours |

Level 6: 22 per cent of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Teaching, learning and assessment: | 264 hours |
| Independent learning: | 936 hours |

Academic support

Our Academic Support Team provides help in the following areas:

- study skills (including reading, note-taking and presentation skills)
- written English (including punctuation and grammatical accuracy)
- academic writing (including how to reference)
- research skills (in conjunction with the library)
- critical thinking and understanding arguments
- revision, assessment and examination skills (including time management).

Our Disability Advice and Support Service helps students with additional needs resulting from disabilities such as sensory impairment or learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

Teaching staff

You will be taught by an experienced teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes senior academics, professional practitioners with industry experience, demonstrators and technical officers. Postgraduate research students who have undertaken teacher training may

also contribute to the teaching of seminars under the supervision of the module leader.

Our teaching is informed by the research and consultancy we undertake, and 56 per cent of our lecturers have a teaching qualification. You can learn more about our staff by visiting our [staff profiles](#) [link].

6 Assessment and feedback

Students surveyed by the NUS stated that that they would like course information to contain more information about the types and frequency of assessment. Similarly, the NUS recommends that feedback on both formative and summative assessment should be provided throughout the course.⁴ Providers should be mindful that prospective students may not be as familiar as current students with some of the terminology used in higher education. For example, when informing students about 'formative assessment' opportunities, providers should explain the meaning of the term. They should explain the timing of assessments and the approximate balance of coursework and examinations contributing to it.

A common student concern is the time taken to mark their assessed work and to return it with appropriate feedback, and providers should explain their policy in this regard.

- **Inform students about the availability of formative assessment**
- **Provide an overview of summative assessment:**
 - the types of assessment used by the course (for example, written examinations, coursework, performance and practical examinations)
 - the percentage of assessment by coursework
 - the frequency of assessment.
- **Explain arrangements for returning marked work and providing feedback**

⁴ The NUS Assessment and Feedback Benchmarking tool, available at: www.nusconnect.org.uk.

Assessment and feedback: Example of good practice

This example of good practice is not intended to be exhaustive. Providers may wish to give additional information about, for example, the assessment methods used on the course.

Assessment

The course provides you with opportunities to test your understanding of the subject informally before you complete the formal assessments that count towards your final mark. Each module normally contains at least one piece of practice or 'formative' assessment for which you receive feedback from your tutor. Practice assessments are developmental and any grades you receive for them do not count towards your module mark.

There is a formal or 'summative' assessment at the end of each module. Assessment methods include written examinations and a range of coursework assessments such as essays, reports, portfolios, performance, presentations and your final year major project. The grades from formal assessments count towards your module mark.

Percentage of the course assessed by coursework

The balance of assessment by examination and assessment by coursework depends to some extent on the optional modules you choose. The approximate percentage of the course assessed by coursework is as follows:

Year 1

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 50 per cent coursework | 40 per cent written exams | 10 per cent practical exams |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|

Year 2

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 50 per cent coursework | 40 per cent written exams | 10 per cent practical exams |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|

Year 4

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 70 per cent coursework | 30 per cent written exams | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--|

Feedback

You will receive feedback on all practice assessments and on formal assessments undertaken by coursework. Feedback on examination performance is available upon request from the module leader. Feedback is intended to help you learn and you are encouraged to discuss it with your module tutor.

We aim to provide you with feedback within 10 working days of hand-in (practice assessment) and 20 working days of hand-in (formal coursework assessment).

7 Costs and financial support

Finances are a consistent concern for students and providers should ensure transparency and clarity of information provided in this regard. Course costs are cited by many students as crucial information, but accommodation in and around the location of study and day-to-day living expenses are also major items of expenditure. Providers can help students' budgets by providing a breakdown of these costs before the course begins.

Course costs

- **Provide clear information about the tuition fees students will be charged**
This should be provided for full-time and part-time UK/EU students and for overseas students. Indicate any planned increases.
- **Provide information about other course-related costs**
Inform students about which course-related costs are included in the tuition fee and which are not. The latter may include additional expenses such as books or other learning materials, materials fees, specialist equipment, uniforms or other clothing required for work placements, and the cost of field trips.

Accommodation and living costs

Information about accommodation, living costs and budgeting is crucial to students and providers should endeavor to provide as much information as possible to inform students about the likely cost of accommodation in and around the location of study, including college and university-owned, and, where available, private accommodation. This information will in many cases be located elsewhere on the institutional website and providers should ensure that it is easily accessible via a link from course information. For this reason it is not dealt with in detail in the following example of good practice.

Financial support

- **Provide information about financial support available to students**
When choosing their course, students are keen to know about any bursaries or scholarships that are available. In acknowledgement of the increasing importance of alternative funding sources for students, a number of providers have developed a central scholarships, bursaries and prizes website, which contains useful information, including value, eligibility and deadlines for the submission of applications.

Providers should indicate whether they offer other types of financial support such as free or discounted laptop computers, software or core textbooks.

Students will welcome clear information from alternative providers about whether a course is eligible for financial support to cover living and/or course costs through an application to the Student Loans Company.

Course costs: Example of good practice

This example of good practice is not intended to be exhaustive. Providers may wish to give additional or more detailed information.

BA (Hons) Fine Art

Duration: 3 years (full-time)
4-6 years (part-time)
4 years (with placement year outside the UK)

Fees

For the academic year 2017-18 the tuition fees for this course are:

| | UK/EU | Overseas |
|--|--------------|-----------------|
| Full time | £9,250 | £11,250 |
| Part time | £4,625 | N/A |
| Placement year (Full-time route only) | £500 | £500 |

The University intends to increase full-time tuition fees from £9,000 to £9,250 for UK/EU students starting their course in September 2017, provided that it satisfies the government's Teaching Excellence Framework. Part-time fees will be increased pro rata.

The above fees apply to the academic year 2017-18 only and are likely to increase annually by a maximum of 5 per cent for each further year of study.

The following course-related costs are included in the fees:

- loan of cameras and related equipment required for photography modules
- compulsory visits to museums, galleries and exhibitions in the UK
- annual £50 printing allowance
- heavily discounted fees during the (optional) placement year spent outside the UK.

We make a small charge of £500 to cover our costs in liaising with the host institution, monitoring your personal wellbeing and academic progress, and visiting you at least once while you are abroad.

The following course-related costs are not included in the fees:

- the estimated cost of your art materials over three years (around £150 per year, on average)
- the optional field trips to Bologna, Rome and Venice (approximately £400 each at current prices)
- additional printing over and above the £50 annual allowance
- the cost of books that you might wish to purchase.

Accommodation and living costs not included in the fees

This information can be obtained from our [Accommodation Services](#) home page [link].

Sources of financial support

If you receive funding from Student Finance you may be eligible to apply for additional benefits. Details can be obtained from our [Student Services](#) home page [link].

Bursaries, scholarships and prizes

The university/college also provides a number of scholarships and prizes for undergraduate students, which you may be eligible to apply for. Some of these are available to students on any course (such as sports scholarships, study abroad scholarships, and bursaries offered by charitable trusts) and some are specific to Fine Art (such as the Annual Public Art Prize, and the Turner Prize for the best final year major project in Art). You can check your eligibility for these types of financial support, along with their value and application deadlines, at our [Scholarships, Bursaries and Prizes](#) website [link].

In addition to the above we encourage students to enter national art competitions, and a number of students have won cash prizes in recent years.

Annex 1: Further information

Providers may find the following sources of information helpful for further guidance on the areas covered above:

A Marked Improvement: Transforming Assessment in Higher Education (Higher Education Academy, 2012)

Assessment and Feedback Benchmarking Tool (NUS, 2015)

Charter on Assessment and Feedback (NUS, 2010)

Contact Hours: A Guide for Students (QAA, 2011)

Explaining Students' Workload: Guidance about Providing Information for Students (QAA, 2013)

The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (Qualifications Frameworks) (QAA, 2014)

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards (QAA)

The Quality Code, Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality (QAA)

The Quality Code, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision (QAA)

Understanding Assessment: Its Role in Safeguarding Academic Standards and Quality in Higher Education (QAA, 2012)

UK Review of Information about Higher Education, Review of Institutions' Websites (HEFCE, 2016)

Annex 2: Terminology

In providing information to prospective students, providers may find it helpful to use the definitions of key higher education terms provided below.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| awarding body | a UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award higher education qualifications such as degrees |
| bursary | a financial award made to students to support their studies; sometimes used interchangeably with 'scholarship' |
| collaborative provision | a formal arrangement between a degree-awarding body and a partner organisation, allowing for the latter to provide higher education on behalf of the former |
| compulsory module | a module that students are required to take |
| contact hours | the time allocated to direct contact between a student and a member of staff through, for example, timetabled lectures, seminars and tutorials |
| course unit | see 'module' |
| coursework | student work that contributes towards the final result but is not assessed by written examination |
| current students | students enrolled on a course who have not yet completed their studies or been awarded their qualification |
| delivery organisation | an organisation that delivers learning opportunities on behalf of a degree-awarding body |
| distance-learning course | a course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors |
| extracurricular | activities undertaken by students outside their studies |
| feedback (on assessment) | advice to students following their completion of a piece of assessed or examined work |
| formative assessment | a type of assessment designed to help students learn more effectively, to progress in their studies and to prepare for summative assessment; formative assessment does not contribute to the final mark, grade or class of degree awarded to students |

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| higher education provider | organisations that deliver higher education |
| independent learning | learning that occurs outside the classroom that might include preparation for scheduled sessions, follow-up work, wider reading or practice, completion of assessment tasks, or revision |
| intensity of study | the time taken to complete a part-time course compared to the equivalent full-time version: for example, half-time study would equate to 0.5 intensity of study |
| lecture | a presentation or talk on a particular topic; in general lectures involve larger groups of students than seminars and tutorials |
| learning zone | a flexible student space that supports independent and social learning |
| material information | information students need to make an informed decision, such as about what and where to study |
| mode of study | different ways of studying, such as full-time, part-time, e-learning or work-based learning |
| modular course | a course delivered using modules |
| module | a self-contained, formally structured unit of study, with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria; some providers use the word 'course' or 'course unit' to refer to individual modules |
| national teaching fellowship | a national award for individuals who have made an outstanding impact on student learning and the teaching profession |
| navigability (of websites) | the ease with which users can obtain the information they require from a website |
| optional module | a module or course unit that students choose to take |
| performance (examinations) | a type of examination used in performance-based subjects such as drama and music |
| professional body | an organisation that oversees the activities of a particular profession and represents the interests of its members |
| prospective student | those applying or considering applying for any programme, at any level and employing |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | any mode of study, with a higher education provider |
| regulated course | a course that is regulated by a regulatory body |
| regulatory body | an organisation recognised by government as being responsible for the regulation or approval of a particular range of issues and activities |
| scholarship | a type of bursary that recognises academic achievement and potential, and which is sometimes used interchangeably with 'bursary' |
| semester | either of the parts of an academic year that is divided into two for purposes of teaching and assessment (in contrast to division into terms) |
| seminar | seminars generally involve smaller numbers than lectures and enable students to engage in discussion of a particular topic and/or to explore it in more detail than might be covered in a lecture |
| summative assessment | formal assessment of students' work, contributing to the final result |
| term | any of the parts of an academic year that is divided into three or more for purposes of teaching and assessment (in contrast to division into semesters) |
| total study time | the total time required to study a module, unit or course, including all class contact, independent learning, revision and assessment |
| tutorial | one-to-one or small group supervision, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project |
| work/study placement | a planned period of experience outside the institution (for example, in a workplace or at another higher education institution) to help students develop particular skills, knowledge or understanding as part of their course |
| workload | see 'total study time' |
| written examination | a question or set of questions relating to a particular area of study to which candidates write answers usually (but not always) under timed conditions |