

## Annex M Mode of study

1. This annex explains how to determine the mode of study for a year of instance (full-time, sandwich year-out or part-time), including guidance on how to treat learning in the workplace and work experience when determining mode of study.

### Full-time

2. A year of instance is counted as full-time if it meets **all** of the following criteria:

a. The student is normally required to attend the institution, or elsewhere, for periods amounting to at least 24 weeks within the year of instance and, during that time, they are normally expected to undertake periods of study, tuition, learning in the workplace or sandwich work placement that does not meet the criteria to be sandwich year-out, which amount to an average of at least 21 hours per week; and

b. Full-time fees are chargeable for the course for the year. These include:

#### **For 'current system students':**

- i. Regulated fees of up to £3,375 for undergraduates and students registered for a PGCE.
- ii. Regulated fees of up to £1,680 for undergraduates on courses provided in conjunction with overseas institutions that are not Erasmus exchanges, where study at the Home institution is for less than 10 weeks.
- iii. Regulated £0 for undergraduates who are on full-year outgoing Erasmus exchanges.

#### **For 'old system students':**

- iv. Regulated fees of £1,345 for undergraduates and students registered for a PGCE.
- v. Regulated fees of £665 for undergraduates on courses provided in conjunction with overseas institutions that are not Erasmus exchanges, where study at the Home institution is for less than 10 weeks.
- vi. Regulated £0 for undergraduates who are on full-year outgoing Erasmus exchanges.

In the above examples, 'current system students' and 'old system students' mean those defined in the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2009 (SI 2009 No. 1555), as amended. Exceptionally, all or part of the fee may be waived for individual students based on their particular personal rather than course-related circumstances. This does not include cases where fees are reduced because students are studying less intensively than is normally expected for a full-time student. It should not be waived for all students on a course, and the criteria that determine whether fees may be waived should not be tantamount to waiving the fee for all students.

3. The full-time category includes all full-time, sandwich and language year-abroad students, other than those falling within the definition of 'sandwich year-out' given below.

### **Sandwich year-out**

4. A year of instance is counted as sandwich year-out if it includes a period of work-based experience and meets both of the following criteria:

a. The course falls within the definition of 'sandwich' in Regulation 2(10) of the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2009 (SI 2009 No. 1555), as amended. This includes language year-abroad courses where the year abroad is spent working.

b. The overall maximum fees are, for qualifying students, those described in Regulation 5 of the Student Fees (Amounts) (England) Regulations (SI 2004 No. 1932), as amended by Regulation 2(4) of the Student Fees (Amounts) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 432), or up to approximately half of the fees that would be chargeable if the student were full-time.

Exceptionally, all or part of the fee may be waived for individual students based on their particular personal rather than course-related circumstances. This does not include cases where fees are reduced because students are studying less intensively than is normally expected for a full-time student. It should not be waived for all students on a course, and the criteria that determine whether fees may be waived should not be tantamount to waiving the fee for all students.

5. Students spending a full year abroad working who are eligible for the regulated £0 fee under the Erasmus scheme should be returned as sandwich year-out. This includes students under the British Council's Language Assistant scheme.

### **Part-time**

6. A year of instance is counted as part-time if it does not meet the requirements to be either full-time or sandwich year-out. This includes HNC students who are expected to complete in one year, but whose course is not subject to regulated fees.

7. In general, all students on a given course with a broadly similar pattern of activity, for a given year of instance, should be recorded as having the same mode.

8. In some cases a student's mode of study changes between years. For example, the mode of a student on a full-time 18-month course would change from full-time in year one to part-time in year two, where the second year does not have 24 weeks of study. In this case the student's activity would be recorded as 'other full-time' in year two on the HESA student record.

## **Students who change from full-time to part-time within a year of instance**

9. Where full-time students change mode within the year of instance to become part-time students, the year of instance should be recorded as part-time only. This applies only where the student continues to study actively on their year of instance, where there is a formal process for agreeing the change in mode, including confirmation by the student and a recalculation of their tuition fee to reflect their part-time status. It may also result in the student losing entitlement to full student support. Their FTE should be calculated in the usual way, by comparison with the equivalent full-time course. Students should not be excluded from Table 6 solely on the basis that they have changed from full-time to part-time (see Annex H, paragraph 27 and Annex I, paragraph 3).

### **Example 1**

10. A student starts off as full-time but changes to part-time in the second term of the year of instance, studying at the same rate as a part-time student with an FTE of 0.5 per year of instance. They should be returned in the part-time table with an FTE of 0.67. This is made up of 0.33 for the first term and  $0.5 \div 3 = 0.17$  for each of the second and third terms, equalling 0.67 in total for the year of instance. More guidance on assigning student FTE for part-time years of instance is in Annex J. Depending on their circumstances, particularly if this was the first year of instance on an undergraduate programme, the year of instance may still need to be included on Table 6, because more than two weeks of full-time study was completed.

## **Treatment of learning in the workplace and work experience for the purposes of determining mode of study**

11. For the purposes of meeting the attendance definition for a full-time course, full-time study can include learning in the workplace, where this is a course requirement. Such learning is frequently a feature of foundation degrees, and may also occur in other programmes. Learning in the workplace is a structured academic programme, controlled by the higher or further education institution, and delivered in the workplace by academic staff of the institution, staff of the employer, or both.

12. Unlike work experience, which is one element of a course such as a sandwich placement (whether for the whole or part of a year), learning in the workplace is at the heart of a student's learning programme and must be subject to the same level of academic supervision and rigour as any other form of assessed learning. It includes:

- the imparting of relevant knowledge and skills to students
- opportunities for students to discuss knowledge and skills with their tutors
- assessment of students' acquisition of knowledge and skills by the institution's academic staff, and perhaps jointly with an employer.

13. Learning in the workplace should be regarded as substituting for learning that under other circumstances would normally take place within the institution. The

inclusion of an element of learning in the workplace should, therefore, not extend the normal duration of a course.

14. Institutions should note paragraph 4 of Annex O, which states that if the year of instance is 45 weeks or more in length because of a period of work-based study, then the year of instance is not counted as long. This applies to both learning in the workplace and work experience. Sandwich years-out cannot therefore be recorded as long, and we would also not generally expect foundation degrees to be recorded as long.

### **Audit issue**

#### **Recording the incorrect mode of attendance if a student is only active for part of a year**

15. In general, where a student plans to study at a full-time rate for a portion of the year, for example only for the first semester, they must be returned as part-time, even though they are 'full-time' for that period of study. The mode of attendance must be established with reference to the activity for the whole year of instance.

16. We have found cases where students are on a full-time programme but due to APL are studying at a part-time rate and have been incorrectly recorded as full-time.