

# Taught Programme Structures

## UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

This paper describes the administrative procedures (i.e. set of 'rules') that will govern the structuring of taught programmes at the University of Leeds. These procedures are based on proposals that were endorsed by TSEB in November, 2021, shared with leaders in student education as part of Curriculum Redefined workshops (December, 2021) and reviewed with the objective of producing 'stable' timetables across the University. Amendments and additions to the original proposals were endorsed by TSEB in April, 2022. Following a further round of consultation with schools, a final version of the proposals will be presented to Senate before the end of the current academic session. This current version has been produced to make clearer the framework within which schools can create innovative curricula that are based on active and inclusive approaches to learning, and allow better assessment of the impact of the proposals on existing programmes. The current institutional position and context and enabling work are described in the original version of the proposals (see Appendix 1).

### Principles

1. Programmes must be delivered using agreed structures to enable greater interdisciplinary provision, improve the efficiency of education delivery, and allow the procurement of a new 'curriculum management' system.
2. Agreed structures must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the requirements of professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies, and the needs of different disciplines.
3. Programmes must be designed to be deliverable within agreed academic and financial resource, e.g. recognising that academics must also contribute effectively to scholarship, research, and innovation.
4. They must also be designed to provide students with academic support and opportunities to develop 'transferable skills' (personal, academic, and digital) across their teaching activities.
5. The administration procedures that govern the development and delivery of programmes must be objective, fair and transparent, and enable the production of a 'stable' timetable, i.e. one that is produced in advance of student enrolment and the academic year, largely rolls over from one year to another, and has capacity to accommodate new programmes without major revision.

### Proposals on modules

6. All compulsory UG modules will be 20 credits or multiples thereof.
7. Optional UG modules and Discovery modules will be 10 or 20 credits.
8. A maximum of 2 optional modules of 10 credits can be taken in any year.
9. Capstone, enquiry-based projects (including traditional research projects) in the final year of Bachelors (Hons) programmes will be 40 credits.
10. UG modules larger than 40 credits will be subject to approval.
11. All taught PG modules will be 15 credits or multiples thereof.
12. The final year of Integrated Masters (which are classified as extended UG programmes) will be multiples of 15 credits.
13. For those Masters programmes that deliver advanced capstone projects, the corresponding module will be at least 45 credits.
14. The practice of sharing modules across level (i.e., whereby a PGT student can enrol on a UG module and vice versa) will end.
15. Module credits will be equally distributed between the two semesters (e.g. 60 credits in each semester for a UG programme).
16. When required, exceptions will be agreed at University level.
17. Programmes can utilise compulsory and optional modules developed by other programmes provided the modules are complementary and readily accessible to their students in terms of timetabling and pre-requisites.
18. Optional modules will be offered as part of a basket(s) using one of two formats:

- a. Select 1 module from a basket of up to 6 modules, or
  - b. Select 1 or 2 modules from a basket of up to 4 modules.
19. The number of baskets used will be directly related to the number of optional credits available within a programme: the maximum number of baskets for programmes offering 20, 40 and 60 credits will be 1, 2, and 3 basket(s), respectively.
  20. Modules designed for use across the University (e.g. Enterprise) or by related programmes can form the core as well as optional components of UG and TPG programmes, as appropriate.

### **Proposals on taught PG programme architectures**

21. TPG programmes can offer options provided the modules in the basket from which options are selected meet enrolment criteria that consider discipline, regulatory and sector norms and are agreed at faculty level.
22. At least 120 of the 180 credits of teaching in taught Masters will be common to all enrolled students (i.e. compulsory)

### **Proposals on undergraduate programmes**

23. For programmes that offer the opportunity to study a large number of combinations of subjects (e.g. Modern Languages), each combination will be assigned an individual programme code.
24. Two architectures are proposed for Year 1 of UG programmes: one where most of the teaching is common to all the students on the same programme or taking the same combination of subjects, and another where there is considerably more choice on starting a programme (see accompanying schematics).
25. The latter architecture was proposed with programmes that offer access to multiple subjects in mind (e.g. Natural Sciences and Liberal Arts), whilst the former is proposed with all other types of programmes in mind.
26. The Year 1 architectures are referred herein as the “Centred” and “Multi-subject” architectures, respectively. These are no more than operational definitions.
27. The Centred architecture can continue throughout a programme or be replaced by one in later years that offers students choice through defined “Pathways” (i.e., specified groupings of modules) and not the selection of individual modules.

#### **Centred:**

28. In all years, at least 60 of the 120 credits of teaching will normally be common to all students enrolled on the same programme (single and joint honours) or same combination of subjects (within Modern Languages, for example).
29. This allows students to choose up to 60 credits of optional modules, which must provide access to a reimagined version of Discovery in Years 1, 2 and 3 as an option.
30. In Year 1, the teaching common to all students should cover all the foundational subjects that may form a significant part of students’ learning journeys. The number of foundational subjects depending on the disciplinary area.
31. Modules offered as options should meet enrolment criteria specified at faculty level that consider discipline, regulatory and sector norms. The number of optional modules should not exceed that which can be reasonably delivered and assessed by existing academic resource.
32. Regardless of how optional modules are presented, the timetabling of programmes must be readily achievable as experienced by professional colleagues.

#### **Pathway:**

33. Beginning in Year 2 or 3, programmes can adopt this architecture in which optional modules are presented and select as coherent packages of at least 40 credits.
34. In this architecture, the minimum that need be common to all students enrolled on the same programme or combination of subjects is 40 of the 120 credits.
35. There will be sufficient flexibility to accommodate at least 10 credits of Discovery in Years 2 and 3.

36. Pathways will be market informed, clearly described to allow straightforward and informed decision making by students and aligned to more specialised career areas or subdisciplines.
37. Students will normally be expected to follow their chosen pathway through the remainder of their programmes; however, changes will be accommodated whenever possible.
38. Pathways must be derived from ~~optional~~ modules that meet or exceed agreed enrolment criteria (see above). It is expected that there will be no more than six pathways to prevent students being overloaded by choice and that as new pathways are launched one or more is retired.
39. Options can be offered within a pathway, but the selection will be limited to 1 or 2 modules from a basket of up to 4 modules.
40. All the component modules of a pathway will be readily timetabled to ensure an excellent 'clash-free' student experience.
  
41. This architecture is intended to appeal to discipline areas where the applications or specialisations are numerous and perhaps developing rapidly through, for example, technological advances.

**Multi-subject:**

42. In this architecture, none of the teaching need be common to all students enrolled on the same programme.
43. In all years, students will select modules (as curated by the programme) from modules offered by single honours programmes (which will be predominantly of 20 credits).
44. The modules can be presented as curated packages with limited or no optionality (see Pathway architecture) or presented as baskets (see Centred architecture).
45. In Year 1, the modules chosen by students will determine the range of subject combinations available to them in later years. This will be made clear to students.
46. The options available to students should not exceed a number that can be (i) delivered clash-free in the timetable and (ii) presented without overloading students and should be designed with Multi-subject programmes in mind.
47. All combinations of modules offered to students in all years must provide students with academic support and opportunities to develop 'transferable' skills (e.g., personal, academic, and digital).
48. In all years, students will have access, as an option, to at least 10 credits of Discovery.

Kenneth McDowall, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2022  
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