

## **5.1 Principles for the development of the taught curriculum (modules and programmes)**

### **Introduction**

Education for Health is committed to the provision of excellent teaching and learning and to providing the best quality experience for students as well as the best possible outcomes for their patients. To support us in achieving this, we will develop and support curricula in accordance with the following:

### **Modules and Programmes**

1. All modules and programmes shall satisfy the requirements set out below.
2. All modules and programmes will be approved, reviewed and modified in accordance with Education for Health's quality assurance systems as agreed with The Open University
3. All modules and programmes will be governed by the Undergraduate Regulatory Framework
4. All modules and programmes will have their own designated Lead and development committee
5. All modules and programmes will have their own module or programme specification, the details of which will be approved by The Open University at validation, but which shall include:
  - a. the name of the module or programme,
  - b. its level and credit-rating;
  - c. the aims and learning outcomes of the module or programme in relation to appropriate national benchmarks;
  - d. the maximum duration and mode(s) of study of the module or programme;
  - e. the outline curriculum and structure of the module or programme, with an indicative assessment scheme.

### **The name of the module or programme, credit-rating and level**

There shall be a specific title for each module or programme. The specific title of the award for which the student has qualified shall be stated on the award certificate conferred by the Open University.

The specific title shall be simple and accurate. They shall reflect the normal expectations of relevant professional bodies, employers, students and higher education bodies and further education bodies about the knowledge and skills to be expected from a person holding such an award.

### **Aims and learning outcomes**

The stated aims and learning outcomes of a course are those objectives which the curriculum, structure, and teaching methods are designed to fulfil. Passing a course requires the achievement of the learning outcomes. Assessment schemes shall be designed to test whether the learning outcomes have been achieved by the student.

The aims and learning outcomes shall be specified at the appropriate standard and level required for the award, in relation to a body of knowledge and skills appropriate to the subject of study.

They shall be recorded in the appropriate module or programme specification.

### **Maximum duration and mode(s) of study**

In the programme or module specification, the maximum duration of the course shall be stated in hours, months or years as appropriate

The maximum duration shall relate to the expected time taken by students to achieve the learning outcomes of the course, depending on the mode of study, the level of knowledge and skills required on admission and the curriculum and structure of the course, including periods of work experience or equivalent. The maximum duration shall have regard to the length of time the curriculum shall remain in academic currency.

The maximum duration of the course shall take account of the right for students to have opportunities to make good any failure in an item of assessed work or a module, absence from examination or non-submission of assessed work.

The maximum duration of the module or programme shall take account of the right of a student to interrupt his or her studies, subject to the permission of the appropriate authorities.

The mode of study for all Education for Health modules and programmes is part-time, distance learning. In some instances this is supported by optional study days or requires attendance at examination. This will be clearly stated on the relevant module specification.

Within the maximum duration, the planned learning hours for a module or course shall take account of the need to provide students with reasonable study time in contact with teaching staff, whether in person or by distance-learning, and with reasonable time for private study and consolidation.

On the production of proof of mitigating circumstance, submitted to the Programme Examination Board a student may exceptionally be allowed to continue his or her study beyond the maximum length of the module or programme

### **Programme structure**

The structure of the programme shall provide for the progression of the student to the level required to achieve the aims and learning outcomes of the programme and to qualify for the award.

The structure of the programme shall specify the level at which modules are normally required to be studied and which modules are prerequisite, core (compulsory) and optional

If of sufficient length, the programme shall be structured so that an award is available at each level and/or exit point in the course. Where this is so, the curriculum and structure of courses shall ensure that all students have the opportunity to qualify for the highest award to which the course leads, provided that they satisfy the Programme Examination Board that they have achieved the appropriate learning outcomes and fulfilled the academic requirements of the course.

Provision shall be made for students to transfer between programmes or pathways, with permission, where, within the maximum duration of the programme, they are unable to fulfil the learning outcomes for the programme on which they are enrolled.

### **Changes to Academic regulations or regulatory Frameworks during a students' period of study**

Students studying for modules or programmes shall be governed by the regulatory framework that was in place at the time of their module or programme start date.

New or revised Academic Regulations or changes to the regulatory framework shall normally apply to new entrants. Where this is not so, there is a requirement to consult:

- representatives of students elected to the Academic Board and its sub-committees,
- external Examiners, in the case of assessment and conferment regulations;
- students currently enrolled on the course, in respect of changes to course specific regulations in the course specification.

Changes to the Academic Regulations or the Regulatory Framework that will impact upon currently studying students can only be implemented if it is agreed by Academic Board that the change will not have a disadvantage the current students.

### **Programme Admissions and Assessment schemes**

Programme specific regulations shall describe the basis on which an applicant may be admitted to the beginning or to subsequent stages of the programme, where this differs from the position stated in Education for Health's minimum entry requirements by:

- identifying the knowledge and skills required at admission and relating these to the length, content and learning outcomes of the programme and the standard of the award;
- identifying any specific qualifications additional to the minimum entry requirements;
- setting out the criteria and procedures by which an applicant will be admitted on the basis of certificated and/or uncertificated prior learning to the start of the course, or to a later point in the programme with credit.

These regulations, alongside the programme specification shall set out the assessment scheme, which shall include:

- the minimum and maximum number of credits to be obtained;
- the weighting each module carries in the final assessment of the student's overall classification;
- procedures for assessing RPL credit and exemptions and how this is weighted within the final assessment of the student's overall performance;
- how students may make good any failure, absence at examination or non-submission of assessed work; and the limits to their rights in this respect;
- how students may progress from one level or exit point to the next through the course,
- how students shall be informed of their results and given guidance on their general progress;
- criteria for the conferment of an award with Distinction or with Merit where appropriate;
- criteria for first class, second class (first and second division), third class honours and unclassified, where appropriate;

### **Module Admissions and assessment schemes**

The module specification will identify admission requirements for applicants.

Recognition of Prior Learning does not apply for entry onto a module.

These regulations, alongside the module specification shall set out the assessment scheme, which shall include:

- how module marks are determined
- the weighting of each assessment element towards the overall module mark
- the specific learning outcomes assessed by each assessment element
- how students may make good any failure, absence at examination or non-submission of assessed work; and the limits to their rights in this respect
- how students shall be informed of their results

In addition the following principles should underpin all curriculum development:

### **Evidence-Based education**

- 1 An evidence-based approach to teaching and learning will be embedded within the curriculum of all modules and programmes of study.
- 2 All Honours Degree programmes will include a specific project, dissertation or equivalent where students are able to demonstrate the development of their own research and independent study skills, as well as their expertise in their chosen field of study. The purpose of this project (or equivalent) is to enable students to demonstrate their ability to apply the principles of evidence based healthcare to their work environment. Whilst there is an expectation that students understand key aspects of research methodology, in line with many post-registration qualifications, demonstrating their ability in the practical application of the principles of evidence based healthcare should be the priority.

### **Inter- and cross-disciplinarily education**

- 3 Modules and Programmes developed by Education for Health will offer the opportunity for students to undertake study with students from a range of health or health-related disciplines to reflect the increase in multi and inter-disciplinary working practices within the health service.

### **Employability and skills**

- 4 In addition to the acquisition of specific subject knowledge programmes will develop a range of skills in our students to enable them to effectively transfer their skills and knowledge into their workplace and to provide students with the competences and the ability to manage their own intellectual and professional development.
- 5 All modules and programmes of study will utilise a diverse range of modes of assessment (appropriate to the discipline, subject matter and learning outcomes) that support the

development and demonstration of a broad range of competences and skills, with modes of learning and teaching being revised as necessary to support this diversification of assessment.

### **Underpinning structures**

- 6 Key quality management processes, for example programme approval, curriculum development, annual review and periodic review will be used to support, and monitor, the implementation of these Principles.