

Guidelines for the approval of new modules – by the New Module Validation Panel

All new modules must be submitted using PIP (Programme Information Project).

https://apps.bangor.ac.uk/pip_module/

Strategic Approval

New modules must first undergo strategic approval by the Planning and Governance Office (PAGO), and may then proceed to academic approval. In order for strategic approval to be granted, the PIP entry must be submitted to the QAVU, along with a brief document setting out:

- (a) the rationale for the introduction of the module, and
- (b) the resource implications.

Following initial screening, the module will be passed on to PAGO for consideration for strategic approval, and the outcome will be communicated to the relevant School.

Module Approval

The New Module Validation Panel will assess modules against statements below and reach one of the following decisions:

- Module approved
- Module approved subject to minor amendments being made by the School. These will be specified and must be completed before the module is included in the University gazette
- Module not approved and referred back to the School

Module Title

- The title should reflect the content of the module
- Titles such as 'Forestry 1' or 'Marketing 2' should be avoided. Although these may have meaning within the School or University they may be of little value to an employer looking at a student's transcript.
- The main title should only be 30 characters with spaces. A long title can be provided in another section.

Module Code

- A form will need to be completed on PIP to notify administrators to set up new module codes in Banner. You will be asked for the short title at this point.
- Once the module has been set up in Banner you will be notified by e-mail which will include a link to the module for the content details to be completed.
- A separate code will be required for English and Welsh versions of the same module. Level 5 or 6 versions will also require separate codes.
- Modules delivered through the medium of Welsh should be codes 'C' and those delivered bilingually coded 'B'. The letter code is the third character of the module number. For example:
 - BSC-1005 is a Welsh version of module BSX-1005 offered in the School of Biological Sciences

DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service)

- The check is not required for most modules.
- The University's Under 18s and Vulnerable adults Policies require that DBS checks are carried out in certain circumstances, specifically where students and / or staff have substantial unsupervised contact with under 18s or vulnerable adults on a sustained or regular basis. If in doubt you should seek advice from your Head of School or College Director of Teaching and Learning.

Credit Rating

- Undergraduate modules should be 10 credits or a multiple thereof. The credit rating should match the notional learning hours.
 - 10 credits equals 100 hours

Notional Learning Hours

- The sum of the 'contract' and 'private study' time in the module should match the 'credit rating'.
- For example, a 20 credit module the private study and contact time should add up to 200 hours.
- Contact hours should then be broken down in the 'format of teaching' section and how these will be delivered listed in the teaching strategy section. For example:
 - A 20 credit module with 48 hours of contact time there has to be 152 hours of private study.
- The format of teaching section must then define how the 48 hours of contact time is delivered for example:
 - Lectures – 24 hours (2 per week over 12 weeks)
 - Seminars – 12 hours (1 per week over 12 weeks)
 - External visits – 12 hours (4 x 3hrs visits)

Note: PIP will notify you with an Error message if the hours are below what is required, but please be aware that currently 9.5 hours will be rounded up to 10 hours.

Module Description

This section should contain an overview of the module written as a short paragraph. It should be written in a way that provides students with a general summary of the module's aims and contents.

Learning Outcomes (also refer to Guidance to Learning Outcomes in Modules)

Each learning outcome should begin with a verb and should reflect the level of learning and understanding.

For example:

- level 4 (first year) modules might introduce knowledge and concepts
- Level 6 (third year) and 7 (Masters) might be expected to appraise, critique or discuss topics at an advanced level.

Joint Teaching Across Levels

Joint teaching across level 5 and 6 or Level 6 and 7 is permitted, but must be are designed in accordance with the following guidelines:

- There must be separately coded and validated modules for each Level with **clearly distinguishable learning outcomes and assessment methods**.
- If modules are taught in alternate years, the Level 5 and Level 6 versions of a module must be designed so that each cohort group is able to fulfil all of the learning outcomes.
- Joint teaching activities across modules will typically be those where information is given to students as lectures or case studies. The proportion of the contact time for combined activities

across 2 modules that employ joint teaching across levels should be considered carefully, taking into account the format of the teaching activities. For example, in a module delivered entirely by lectures all the contact time could be combined. In contrast, in a module delivered partly by lectures and partly by tutorials, only the lecture component should be combined.

- If students are expected to engage in discussion, analysis or interpretation, separate activities and assessment should be arranged for each level. Such activities will typically be tutorials, seminars, group work and presentations.
- There must be different assessments and/or marking criteria across levels. The maximum proportion of identical assessment or marking criteria across 2 modules that employ joint teaching across levels 5 and 6 should not exceed 25% of the marks for the modules. There should be no identical assessments for modules that employ joint teaching across levels 6 and 7.
- Where Level 5 and Level 6 students complete identical elements of assessment, students' work should be assessed and moderated within cohort groups and not across Level 5 and Level 6 groups. It is also good practice for moderators to consider whether there is sufficient differentiation in marking between the work of Level 5 and Level 6 students. When schools wish to (re)validate modules that are taught across levels, both versions should be submitted for approval.

Summary of Course Content

Is normally an itemised list of the course content, giving a summary of the main themes.

Assessment Methods

This section should include information on all forms of summative assessment in the module that contribute to the final module mark.

Group work / Peer Assessment

Where assessment involves group work or peer assessment the method of determining an individual student's mark should be clearly indicated.

Issues to consider:

- Will the student be given a group or an individual mark? If a group mark consider giving the a lower % weighting
- Peer-assessment must be monitored and equal chance to contribute to ensure fair play to all students. How will it be second marked or verified if there is a complaint?
- A mark **must** quantified by a piece of work, therefore linking assessment to attendance is **not** permitted.

Description

A brief description of on the assessment. Do not just state Coursework or Essay, the student will need to have a brief description. Avoid from including specific essay titles as once the module has been published on the Gazette it cannot be changed.

Learning Outcomes

Link the learning outcomes to the assessments. Each assessment should measure one or more learning outcomes and each outcome must be assessed at least once. Do not tick on all the learning outcomes for all the assessments.

Weightings

Weightings of different elements must be included and be comparable in the amount of work involved.

Measuring the assessment load (refer to the Assessment Framework)

A full description is required. The following must be included:

- word limits of reports/essays/blogs etc.
- time limits of examinations and presentation

Extracts from Assessment Framework

Assessment Workload and Equivalence Guidelines

In order to implement the above principles, steps should be taken by those designing modules and programmes to ensure that the assessment workload is appropriate, and falls within what is deemed acceptable under Bangor University's regulations.

As a guideline, it is suggested as a starting point that assessment should have a **notional effort time of 2-2.5 hours per credit.***

For traditional assessment methods this could be translated into **200-250 words per credit** (for an essay), and **12-15 minutes per credit** (for an exam). This is based on the assumption that a 1 hour exam represents 10 hours of effort time, and that a 1,000 word essay also represents 10 hours of effort time.

This suggests that, based on a hypothetical single assessment method (though note principle 5 above), a 10 credit module would have either a 2,000-2,500 word essay or a 2-2.5 hour exam, with a total effort time of 20-25 hours.

In terms of equivalents, it is suggested that the following would each amount to 10 hours of effort time:

- A poster;
- A 1 hour MCQ test;
- An oral presentation of 10 minutes;
- A musical performance of 10 minutes;
- A 2,000 word reflective journal/blog entry;
- A 10-minute clinical assessment.

Examples on combinations of different assessment can be found in the Assessment Framework.

Extracts from Regulation 01: Coursework and Examination

For PGT Research Projects:

- 60 credit Research Project - maximum of 20,000 words
- 120 credit Research Project – maximum of 40,000 words

Amount of assessment

- If a module is assessed by a combination of methods, the length of the examination and coursework should be adjusted. For example, in a 10 credit module assessed by an examination and an essay (both worth 50% of the module marks), the examination must not be longer than 1½ hours and the essay must not be longer than 2,000 words.
- Module organisers must make sure that the time required for assessments (including preparation time) plus the time spent in other activities (e.g. lectures) is 100 learning hours per 10 credit module.

Word Limits

- Word limits for coursework must be defined when modules are approved.
- Students must be given the word limits with the details of each assessment.
- The word limits do not include footnotes and bibliography. The word limits include appendices.

For modules except PGT Research Projects, the module organiser can set word limits that include footnotes and bibliography provided that students are made aware that they are included in the word limit.

Assessment Criteria

As a minimum this box should contain information on what students have to do or demonstrate in order to achieve different levels (threshold, good, excellent) of performance. Grading criteria need to be written in such a way that they can be easily understood by students.

Ideally each module should have its own specific grading criteria relevant to the subject. Use of generic criteria is permissible, provided that they are sufficiently detailed and relevant to the module and assessment methods.

PIP the Assessment Criteria will be split into three sections, but you can include additional descriptors.

	UG	PGT
Excellent	70%> -A	70%>
Good	50%> -B	60%>
Threshold	40%> -D	50%>
Categorical Marking range can also be used.		

Resources

This section is in three parts:

- Include a list of core texts (books, on-line articles and journals).
- Set up and include a link to Talis (Library) for the main reading list.
- Include details of any additional cost pertaining to the module. For example:
 - Fieldtrips
 - Cost of travel / accommodation
 - Cost of suitable clothing to go on-site or to complete a particular task
 - Cost of equipment they will need
 - Printing/binding
 - General equipment.
 - Laptop (distance learning)
 - Doctors note

Note: As part of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 we must clearly inform students of any additional cost that may be incurred by students on their degree programme. However, we would counsel against including an actual amount as this may be liable to change and give students the incorrect information.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Guidelines to Learning Outcomes in Modules
- Appendix 2: Summary of Procedures to Revise Current Modules and Approve New Modules & Information on Generic Module Achievement Criteria and Levels of Learning.
- Assessment Framework.

Guidelines to Learning Outcomes in Modules

1. Introduction

The requirement in Bangor University is that every module (and programme) will have learning outcomes. Such outcomes should govern the assessment of those outcomes. Once specified, learning outcomes will generate appropriate module content and the module's teaching and learning strategy.

The design of a module involves specifying learning outcomes, assessment of the attainment of those outcomes, subject content, learning and teaching strategies and evaluation of the module. Learning outcomes are expected to be the initial consideration in module design. Once they have been agreed, then other decisions about student assessment, content and learning strategies are expected to follow.

Learning outcomes should link to relevant required professional outcomes (e.g. Nursing, Social Work, ITET) and to QAA Subject Benchmarking statements:

QAA Subject Benchmark Statements	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
QAA Master's Degree Characteristics Statement (Sept 2015)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=2977#.Vk3zxy7tIBc
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2718#.Vk30ei7tIBd

2. What are learning outcomes?

Writing learning outcomes is part of an approach to course design that:

- * takes the description of what is expected of a successful student as the starting point when designing a **programme or module**;
- * describes a degree programme or module in terms of what a student is expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of a module (**outcome**) instead of a general description of what the lecturer intends (**aims**);
- * requires the assessment of individual students to know whether the learning outcomes **have been attained**;
- * leads to, or integrates with decisions about appropriate course content and teaching and learning strategies and activities;
- * requires monitoring to review the appropriateness of the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes should be **re-evaluated** each year.

3. What are the educational justifications claimed for learning outcomes?

- * Students will be clear about what is expected of them. They will be able to make better informed choices about taking particular programmes/modules. Learning outcomes encourage a student-centered approach.
- * Students will be able to monitor their own learning progress more effectively.

- * Employers will also know what students have achieved. Where there is credit transfer, previous learning will be 'up-front'.
- * A module is not assessment-led. Assessment is based on learning outcomes. It then becomes easier to judge whether the assessment methods of the course/module are appropriate and sufficient i.e. Do they provide evidence that the learning outcomes have been met? This also aids evaluation and quality assurance i.e. Are the students on this course achieving the learning outcomes intended?
- * There may be an increased consistency of standard (but not standardization) across modules.
- * The specification and justification of learning outcomes in a course or module encourages lecturers to think reflectively.

4. Learning Outcomes should:

- * be written as **threshold** targets i.e. every student passing the module will be expected to have achieved the outcomes described;
- * be written in a **student-friendly** manner and be easily comprehensible to employers etc;
- * be based on a particular **level** (e.g. different outcomes expected at levels 4,5,6 and 7 Masters);
- * reveal progression through the levels by subsequent levels having more exacting and challenging learning outcomes, and/or extra learning outcomes;
- * lead to decisions about **assessment** methods;
- * lead to decisions about **subject content, resources, learning** and **teaching strategies** and activities (seminars, lectures, and laboratory work, giving an oral presentation).

Criteria for judging performance above the threshold, such as allocation to 1st class, 2i, 2ii and 3rd class standard, will be separate from learning outcomes.

Depending on the module, learning outcomes may be about:

knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, interpretation, synthesis, evaluation, concepts, abilities, skills, transferable skills, attitudes, etc.

Some learning outcomes will be subject-specific, some may be generic outcomes (e.g. expected of all graduates), some may be life skills / transferable skills / personal skills (e.g. communication skills, teamwork, self-evaluation, problem solving, numeracy, literacy, ICT etc.).

Modules may have overlapping learning outcomes. Modules should be seen as creating an integrative whole such that a course results in overall 'macro' learning outcomes for students. Such 'macro' learning outcomes will be expressed in the Programme Specification.

5. Some Examples of Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:

- * Critically evaluate a specified author's use of imagery.
- * Analyze the nature and limitations of market segmentation.
- * Demonstrate an understanding of why religious explanations of evolution have been criticised.
- * Assess positive and negative aspects of the government's policy on pensions for OAPs.
- * Confidently and competently present a 10 minute talk.
- * Demonstrate knowledge of how to harmonize a hymn tune.
- * Apply knowledge of x in a given experiment.
- * Measure a patient's blood pressure, oxygen uptake, heart rate.
- * Demonstrate skills in the summary and presentation of business data from a large-scale company.

6. How to write learning outcomes

- (i) One suggestion is that learning outcomes **start with the phrase: “On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:”**
- (ii) Then decide what **outcomes** in terms of student knowledge, demonstrating understanding, competence or ability, and transferable skills that all students should achieve by completion of the module. What will be developed in students in this module? How will they have changed as a result of this module?

What threshold **level of performance** is expected so as to pass the module/programme?

Be clear about the **level** of the outcome (e.g. 4,5,6, 7 Masters), as it will be important to show **progression** from one level to another

A learning outcome often starts with a verb. **Typical opening verbs** in writing learning outcomes include:

assess, evaluate, critically evaluate, analyse, argue, interpret, examine, understand, discuss, deduce, think critically, show balanced judgement, appreciate, differentiate, judge, explain, appraise, demonstrate, summarise, utilise, distinguish, inquire, solve, estimate, apply, compare, contrast, predict, calculate, develop, design, test, determine, generate, create, discriminate, discover, become competent, infer.

Often we need to add the **context** in which a learning outcome is achieved. For example, ‘demonstrates team skills’ would need to specify teamwork in a biology laboratory, forestry fieldwork or archaeological project.

- (iii) Then explicitly link each learning outcome with **assessment**. Sometimes various learning outcomes will be assessed together (e.g. by a project or dissertation). Occasionally, a learning outcome may be assessed more than once (e.g. ‘critical thinking’ by essay and examination).

Ask yourself how you will know that students have achieved those outcomes. Are the assessment devices appropriate?

- (iv) Ensure that the subject content and learning and teaching strategies of the module are designed to help deliver those learning outcomes. When possible show the links in module documentation between learning outcomes and subject content and learning and teaching strategies.

7. Using module aims and objectives to write learning outcomes.

Modules will often have both general aims and more specific learning outcomes. Modules with **learning outcomes** differ from those with **aims** in two main ways. Firstly, aims tend to be expressed in rather general, generic ‘macro’ terms (e.g. to develop a love of Shakespeare; to appreciate the concept of evolution). Learning outcomes state more specifically what is required of the student. Typical examples:

Aim: to understand questionnaire design and construction

Outcomes: to be able to:
 analyse critically a given questionnaire;
 compose a questionnaire without major design faults;
 demonstrate an understanding of the sequence of questionnaire construction.

Aim: to acquire a range of core biochemical practical skills

Outcomes: to be able to:
 measure the rate of an enzyme catalysed reaction;
 assay protein and glucose concentrations;
 construct and use calibration curves;
 distinguish between good and bad analytical practice.

8. Educational Health Warnings:

- (i) Beware trivialising learning outcomes to make assessment easy. Creativity, originality, the ability to synthesise complex material and critical thinking, for example, may be important outcomes of a module. We must not over-value the highly measurable and more exactly definable.
- (ii) The **process** of a module, the voyages of discovery, are very important - not just outcomes and products.
- (iii) Module experience is **not** always **predictable**. We can't always forecast what individual students will gain from a module. Spontaneity and serendipity are important in quality learning experiences.
- (iv) The structure of any University programme is highly complex, valued and debated. Learning outcomes need critically re-assessing on an annual basis so that module enhancement occurs.

Revision: January 2017

**Summary of Procedures to Revise Current Modules and Approve New Modules
&
Information on Generic Module Achievement Criteria and Levels of Learning**

Revisions to Current Modules

Schools are only allowed to make minor changes to approved programmes and modules. A programme must be revalidated if:

- Changes are made to more than 20% of the programme learning outcomes and/or
- New core or compulsory modules are worth more than 20% of the total number of credits in the programme.

A module must be submitted for approval if:

- Changes are made to more than 20% of the module learning outcomes and/or
- Changes are made to assessments accounting for more than 50% of the module mark

Procedure to Approve New Modules

1. New modules must be submitted using Bangor University Module Catalog (PIP):
https://apps.bangor.ac.uk/pip_module/

Or alternatively go to the Academic Registry's web page:
<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/ar/main/course/valid.php.en>

2. The deadline date is **31st January 2018**.

3. Strategic Approval.

New modules must first undergo strategic approval by the Planning and Governance Office (PAGO), and may then proceed to academic approval. In order for strategic approval to be granted, the PIP entry must be submitted to the QAVU, along with a brief document setting out:

- (a) the rationale for the introduction of the module, and
- (b) the resource implications.

Following initial screening, the module will be passed on to PAGO for consideration for strategic approval, and the outcome will be communicated to the relevant School.

4. Following strategic approval, the module will be considered by the Module Approval Panel for academic approval. The Chair of the Panel can decide how many meetings of the Panel are needed every year.

5. The membership of the Module Approval Panel must be:

- Chair of the Quality Assurance & Validation Task Group (or nominee)

- At least one Director of Teaching and Learning and/or representative from CELT*
- QA Officer (Validation)+
- Academic Registrar (or nominee)+
- Panel secretary+

** The Chair will decide how many Colleges are invited depending on the modules that have to be considered.*

+ The Academic Registrar (or nominee) or the QA Officer can also act as the Panel secretary.

The Panel can consult with the Timetable Officer and Awards Administrator if required.

6. The Module Approval Panel will report general concerns to the Quality Assurance & Validation Task Group.
7. The Head of the Quality Assurance & Validation Task Group can consider modules submitted late. The Chair can consider the modules as a special case or refer the modules back to the School for submission at a later date.
8. The module approval process must consider:
 - The needs of all students.
 - The module learning outcomes, including their clarity and suitability for the specified level of learning.
 - The structure and content of the module, including the extent to which it provides appropriate learning opportunities to students to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes.
 - The teaching and learning strategy, including the use of formative assessment and ICT.
 - The credit weighting of the module.
 - The assessment strategy including how effectively it can measure the achievement of the learning outcomes.
 - The grading criteria and their appropriateness for the assessment methods, learning outcomes and level of learning (See Appendix 7).
 - The physical, human or material resources required to deliver the programme.
 - The opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate transferable skills.
 - Where a module is being revised or replaced, the impact of revisions on other programmes for which the module is compulsory.
 - Whether the module involves teaching and/or assessment by staff who are not members of the University.
 - Whether staff involved in the delivery of the programme must undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks, for example if the module involves contact with children or vulnerable adults.
 - That the module conforms to the University's regulations and that permitted deviations from the regulations are properly justified and defined.

- Subject specific skills, which should refer to QAA Benchmarks and any relevant PSRB requirements as appropriate.

9. All modules must have learning outcomes. The learning outcomes determine the module's content, the learning and teaching methods and the assessment methods. Learning outcomes should link to QAA Subject Benchmarking statements and, where relevant, professional outcomes (e.g. in Nursing, Social Work and ITET). Further guidance on learning outcomes is provided in Appendix 6.

10. Joint teaching across levels is not normally permitted. It is only permitted across adjacent levels (e.g. across Levels 5 and 6 or across Levels 6 and 7) and where modules are designed in accordance with the following guidelines:

- There must be separately coded and validated modules for each Level with clearly distinguishable learning outcomes and assessment methods.
- If modules are taught in alternate years, the Level 5 and Level 6 versions of a module must be designed so that each cohort group is able to fulfil all of the learning outcomes.
- Joint teaching activities across modules will typically be those where information is given to students as lectures or case studies. The proportion of the contact time for combined activities across 2 modules that employ joint teaching across levels should be considered carefully, taking into account the format of the teaching activities. For example, in a module delivered entirely by lectures all the contact time could be combined. In contrast, in a module delivered partly by lectures and partly by tutorials, only the lecture component should be combined.
- If students are expected to engage in discussion, analysis or interpretation, separate activities and assessment should be arranged for each level. Such activities will typically be tutorials, seminars, group work and presentations.
- There must be different assessments and/or marking criteria across levels. The maximum proportion of identical assessment or marking criteria across 2 modules that employ joint teaching across levels 5 and 6 should not exceed 25% of the marks for the modules. There should be no identical assessments for modules that employ joint teaching across levels 6 and 7.
- Where Level 5 and Level 6 students complete identical elements of assessment, students' work should be assessed and moderated within cohort groups and not across Level 5 and Level 6 groups. It is also good practice for moderators to consider whether there is sufficient differentiation in marking between the work of Level 5 and Level 6 students. When schools wish to (re)validate modules that are taught across levels, both versions should be submitted for approval.

11. Joint teaching across levels (e.g. across Levels 5 and 6 or across Levels 6 and 7) should not be used:

- Where Level 5 students will not have acquired at Level 4 the necessary skills, knowledge or understanding of context to allow an appropriate version of a Level 5 module to be designed for a particular subject/topic.

- Where Level 6 students will not have acquired at Level 4 or 5 the necessary skills, knowledge or understanding of context to allow an appropriate version of a Level 6 module to be designed for a particular subject/topic.
- Where joint teaching across levels would compromise the standards expected in a professionally accredited course.
- Where it is expected that students who have completed Level 6 modules as part of their undergraduate degree will pursue their studies by enrolling on a Master's course at Bangor in the same discipline.

12. For each module, the Module Approval Panel will arrive at one of the following decisions:

- i. Approval.
- ii. Approval with minor modifications. The changes must be made before details of the module are published.
- iii. Referral back to the School.

13. Schools are only allowed, between validation and revalidation, to make minor modifications to approved modules. The modifications must not exceed 20% of the module learning outcomes as approved at (re)validation. The revised module must be resubmitted for approval if the cumulative changes are over 20%.

14. Changes to module titles must be reported to the QAV Unit.