University of Reading

MODULE CONVENOR ROLE DESCRIPTION

Approved by the University Board for Teaching and Learning on 14 June 2016.

1. The primary responsibility of the Module Convenor is to ensure the design and delivery of high quality learning opportunities for students on the module. It is the Module Convenor's responsibility to support the 'module teaching/marking team'[1], so the tasks below are carried out effectively within the context of the module and the principles of the Curriculum Framework. A module sits in the context of one or more programmes and it is the Programme Director's responsibility to ensure the quality of the programme as a whole. Therefore, Module Convenors will be supported by, and work collaboratively with Programme Directors, and one another, to facilitate the design and delivery of cohesive programmes.

2. It is recognised there will be variation in practice depending on implementation and administrative structures within Schools. For example, whilst Module Convenors could take oversight of the tasks listed, some of these tasks may be carried out by Student Support Centres/Programme Administrators. This role description therefore does not intend to provide a prescriptive list, but does provide what is hoped will be useful guidance in terms of indicative responsibilities.

3. Responsibility for the module and for fulfilling the indicative responsibilities ascribed to Module Convenor applies to the design and delivery of the module whether in the UK or at a branch campus. For more information, see the duties and responsibilities of Module Convenors and Module Leads for Branch Campuses.

Module design

(a) Set the module aims and learning outcomes to ensure that the module is aligned with the programme-level learning outcomes, the University's Graduate Attributes, FHEQ, relevant subject benchmark statements, and PSRB requirements (where relevant).
(b) Ensure the teaching and learning methods/activities (to include contact-time and guided independent study) are planned to facilitate the achievement of the module learning outcomes, and actively engage students in their learning.
(c) Consider resource issues and cost effectiveness of module delivery.
(d) Consider health and safety issues of module delivery, where appropriate.
(e) Design appropriate formative and summative assessment methods that allow students to demonstrate achievement of the module learning outcomes and progression towards programme-level learning outcomes.

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[1] The 'module teaching/marking team' comprises Module Convenors, and any other staff contributing to the module, including Graduate Teaching Assistants, and other postgraduates with teaching responsibilities.

(f) Take proactive account of the needs of different learners in the module learning outcomes, delivery and assessment methods.

(g) Ensure that the notional hours of learning (to include contact time, guided independent study and completion of the assessments) are commensurate with the credit weighting of the module.

(h) In line with the University's established deadlines for Programme Management (and any subsidiary School deadlines), prepare the module description, and once approved by the Board of Studies and School Board for Teaching and Learning, circulate to the module teaching team.

Teaching and supporting learning

(a) Act as the first point of contact for students enrolled on the module.

(b) Review the profile of the student cohort and proactively consider what their learning needs are.

(c) Ensure that subject knowledge, skills, and attributes outlined in the module learning outcomes are integrated so the module forms a coherent whole.

(d) Ensure that module content is up to date and informed by current research and/or scholarship.

(e) Ensure that module content is diverse and inclusive.

(f) Provide opportunities for students to connect subject knowledge, skills and attributes to their use in the wider world, where appropriate.

(g) Ensure the module is delivered using pedagogies appropriate to the discipline and the learning needs of the students.

(h) Provide students with opportunities to learn collaboratively as well as individually, where appropriate.

(i) Incorporate technology enhanced learning methods, where appropriate.

(j) Ensure that the Blackboard course for the module is set up, developed and maintained to create a supportive learning environment.

(k) Create a Talis Aspire reading list for the module and publish this according to agreed timetables. [N.B. Talis Aspire should only be used to create reading lists for modules delivered at our Whiteknights or London Road campuses. For all other modules, please contact your Academic Liaison Librarian for further advice.]

(l) Liaise with the Academic Tutor and School Disability Representative (where relevant) to ensure that any individual adjustments for students with protected characteristics are implemented.

(m) Raise any cause for concern as to a student's academic engagement or fitness to study/ fitness to practise (where relevant) with the Programme Director and Academic Tutor.

Assessing and giving feedback to learners

Coursework

(a) Write an assessment brief which will include clear assessment criteria, and hand-in and hand-back dates and ensure these are internally and (where appropriate) externally moderated before distribution to students, usually at the start of the module.

(b) Provide opportunities to enhance students' awareness of, and critical engagement with the assessment criteria.

(c) Where required, ensure appropriateness of questions for in-class tests.

(d) Ensure that the assessment e-submission points are set up in Blackboard, unless there is an agreed exception.

Exams

(e) In line with the University's established deadlines and specifications provided by the Examinations Office (and any subsidiary School deadlines), ensure appropriateness of exam questions during the setting and approval of exam papers.

(f) Provide draft examination papers to the Examination Representative (or delegate) for scrutiny by External Examiner.

(g) Liaise with the Examination Representative and School Disability Representative (where appropriate) regarding any special examination arrangements, for example, for students with special educational needs or students who are unable to sit examinations on a particular day/during a particular period for religious reasons.

Marking, feedback and moderation

(h) Coordinate marking and ensure that deadlines for marked work to be returned are communicated to the marking team well in advance and in line with University's policy.

(i) Provide opportunities for the marking team to discuss how the assessment criteria should be applied in order to ensure standards and consistency.

(j) Ensure that relevant University policies and procedures are appropriately applied (e.g. step-marking, arrangements for students with disabilities, academic misconduct, extenuating circumstances, and penalties for late submission).

(k) Ensure that the marking team provide helpful feedback and feedforward to students.

(l) Liaise with Programme Director/SDTL regarding a suitable method of internal moderation in line with University Policy, and coordinate and document the moderation process to ensure consistency of marking and feedback across the module.

(m) Ensure that, if sought, feedback on performance in written examinations is available to students.

(n) Arrange for coursework marks and feedback to be returned to students and inform the Examination Representative (or delegate) of module marks.

(o) Contribute to the Programme Examiners' Meeting (if requested to do so).

Module evaluation and enhancement

(a) Encourage some form of informal, light-touch mid-module student evaluation on an annual basis.

(b) Arrange for students on the module to be surveyed biennially (unless the module is new, has undergone significant changes or where significant concerns have been raised, in which case the module needs to be evaluated annually for a period of three years) in line with the University Requirements for Student Evaluation of Teaching.

(c) Ensure that students receive informative and timely feedback on the actions taken (or not) as a result of student module evaluation.

(d) Monitor student engagement and performance on the module and reflect on the performance levels of students from different demographic groups.

(e) Respond to the reports of External Examiners and Reviews undertaken periodically both internally and externally.

(f) Provide opportunities for all staff contributing to the module (and students if desired) to reflect on the module in order to identify good practice and potential future enhancements.

(g) Report to appropriate Boards of Studies, SSLCs and other committees (if requested to do so).

(h) Contribute to the Annual Programme Report (if requested to do so).