**Course Handbook Guidance 2021-22**

**Title text - Tahoma Bold 14pt**

**\*\*\*Please delete this guidance prior to publication\*\*\***

This template identifies the core elements of a Staffordshire University course handbook and has been designed to focus on information specific to your course. General information on the University, its policies and regulations is provided on the Beacon app and on the [student pages](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students) of our website.

**Format and Text**

This template responds to our practice for “Creating Accessible Documents” found in Iris. This guidance should be referred to by staff when completing documentation.

Text on a white background: This is a standard text that should be included in all handbooks. Text highlighted in yellow: This is for guidance purposes only and should be deleted prior to publication. Text highlighted in light blue should be reviewed by collaborative academic partners. The highlighting should be removed before publication.

The handbook may be amended to include additional course specific information not addressed by the standard headings. Please ensure that all additional sections are numbered appropriately and that the contents page is updated accordingly.

The contents table is best updated when the Handbook is complete and after all guidance has been deleted. Do this by clicking ‘Contents’ at the top of the table, click ‘update table’, then ‘update page numbers only’. This will re-order the page numbers automatically.

The handbook should not duplicate standard information included online as this may be updated, making any static information provided within the handbook out of date.

Sections not applicable to your students should be deleted. In some instances, it may be more appropriate to make it clear to students that a particular section does not apply to their course (e.g. courses that do not provide professional recognition). In these instances, the section should be retained. The text provided under the heading should explain why this section does not apply.

Where your course does not operate in accordance with standard University processes, please provide additional information within the handbook.

Please refer to the student in the second person throughout the handbook (You).

Ensure that the language used is appropriate to the level of the student. Acronyms or course specific terminology, which the student may be unfamiliar to, should be defined within the text.

**Cover Page**

The standard photograph on the cover page may be replaced by a subject specific image, taking care to respond to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework. The alternative photograph should occupy the same area on the page and be of an appropriate size and resolution and provide Alt-text format. Other elements of the design should remain unchanged.

Where possible course teams should utilise photographs available via the [University’s Image Library](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/brand/elements/photography/). Where photographs from other sources are used, course teams must ensure that the appropriate copyright permissions have been obtained prior to use.

**Guidance for Collaborative Provision**

The core elements of the handbook are applicable to students. However, the information provided under each heading must be contextualised to reflect how or where the course is being delivered (e.g. on-campus, at a partner institution, or at a distance). Collaborative partners should work with their Academic Link Tutor to facilitate the production of the handbook. Consideration must be given to how more generic information regarding the delivery of Higher Education provision will be provided to students studying Staffordshire University courses at their institution. This may include the production of dedicated partner webpages or an institutional level HE handbook. When producing this information, partners should consider what material included within the on-campus student information is readily applicable to students studying at the partner institution and what information will require additional contextualisation or localisation. The Sources of Additional Information section must be amended to reflect the approach being taken by the partner institution. The Cover page may be amended to include both Staffordshire University and partner institution logos.

**Storage**

For staff only/auditing purposes:

Please upload your approved version to: [2021/22 Course Handbooks](https://staffsuniversity.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/QES/Ekl30-twLJdItTHbVhRw6wcBiuyVDM21nKFsgj9v4smJ3Q?e=0Uokim)

Documents should be organised by department (partner institution) and named ‘Award title course handbook’ (e.g. BSc (Hons) Computer Games Design Course Handbook). ***N.B: This link is not accessible to students.***

Partnerships should follow the approval process in place via CAP, then upload their Handbooks to [Continuous Monitoring](https://staffsuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/Continuous_Monitoring/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx) and store under ‘Partner Course Handbooks’ in an appropriate year folder for your institution.

For students:

Please **upload a PDF version of your approved document to your VLE site for students to access**.

By uploading into Blackboard Ally this will enable changes in format to improve accessibility.

Or please see [SensusAccess](https://libguides.staffs.ac.uk/sensusaccess) for content that is not in Blackboard. Partners with a Staffs email address can also access this.

Please note that the version stored in the QES SharePoint will remain the definitive copy. There should be no discrepancies between this and the student copy.

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# Coronavirus and Sources of Additional Information

**Coronavirus information:**

This handbook covers our proposed mode of delivery for this academic year, however, there may be variations to this at times in response to the current situation. Building on our already innovative digital delivery, our blended learning approach provides staff and students with a flexible, supportive framework.

Please [visit the Coronavirus pages on our website](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/coronavirus) or use [Beacon -Your Digital Coach](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/digital-services/beacon) for further information, support and FAQs.

**Sources of Additional Information:**

**Beacon, the Student Hub & Report and Support**

For wider information about the University and services available to students use [Beacon -Your Digital Coach](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/digital-services/beacon), go to [the student pages on our website](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students) and visit the [Student Hub and Information Points.](https://staffsuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/StudentHubWelcome2020) Here you will find information about accommodation, money matters, careers, course administration, wellbeing, help with studies, digital services and useful numbers.

You can also use the [Report and Support pages](https://reportandsupport.staffs.ac.uk/) available for students to both report incidents and to find different avenues of support, both internally and externally.

Collaborative Academic Partners: Please edit this list as appropriate, giving links/ information on where students can find further information relevant to your institution.

**Module Handbooks**

Your course is made up from a number of individual modules. Detailed information on each module is provided in separate module handbooks. Your module tutor will tell you how to access the handbook for their module.

**The Blackboard Online Learning Environment**

**\*Please specify name of Online Learning Environment Used\***

Information and learning materials for your modules will be provided on the Blackboard online Learning Environment. Please check the announcements regularly and any other communication methods used for your course. Blackboard will form an important part of your learning experience. Please let your module tutor know if you encounter any problems accessing this material.

# Welcome

**On-Campus/Distance Learning Provision**

Include a short welcome to the course and the university school. Care should be taken to ensure that the welcome is appropriate to the site or method of delivery.

Please contact your Quality Administrative Officer to obtain standard text introducing the School.

**Collaborative Academic Partnerships**

Include a short welcome to the course and the University school and partner institution. Care should be taken to ensure that the welcome is appropriate to students studying towards a Staffordshire University award at a collaborative academic partner. The Collaborative Academic Partnerships Office will provide standard text introducing the School.

# Your Course Team

Provide the following information for key members of the course team: name, room, telephone number, email address, brief summary of the role. Key members may include course leader, level leaders and final year project co-ordinator. For collaborative academic partnerships, this section should provide details of staff members responsible for the delivery of the course at the partner.

Explain how the course team are particularly qualified to teach this course. Describe how they are engaged in relevant research or other scholarly activity. This may include links to on-line staff profile pages.

# Communication

Please indicate how the course team will communicate with students. (E.g email, noticeboards, student pigeon-holes, Blackboard)

Please indicate how students are expected to communicate with course team members.

# **Equality**, Diversity and Inclusion

**#Proud To Be Staffs**

At Staffordshire University we are committed to promoting and enabling a positive culture where staff, students and visitors are confident to be their authentic selves. We focus on inclusion as a way to ensure equality of opportunity for all our people and to demonstrate our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights. This commitment is reflected in our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement and Framework](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/support/equality-diversity-inclusion/equality-framework-and-reports/framework-and-objectives), which underpin our course development and delivery.

# Support and Guidance

We endeavour through our support systems to support you in all relevant areas of your course – whether relating to professional, academic and/or personal development.

### Academic support

All students at the University are allocated an Academic Mentor (Personal Tutor).Your Academic Mentor (Personal Tutor) is: *insert the person appropriate to your School (incl. Email and Tel No).*

Please provide details of how the Academic Mentoring (Personal Tutoring) role operates within the context of this course.

Please describe any further support and guidance that will be provided to students by the course team.

### Support and wellbeing

At Staffordshire University we are committed to supporting all our students and there are a wide range of services available to you.

**Student Support**

For general information relating to support visit [Student Support information](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/support/home)

**The Student Hub**

Home to a wide range of student support facilities for all students, including the Student Information Team and Student and Wellbeing Support.

Tel: 01782 294751

Email: studenthub@staffs.ac.uk

Webpage: [Student Hub](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/student-hub)

SharePoint: <https://staffsuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/StudentHubWelcome2020>

**General support and guidance**

Webpage: <https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/support/student-guidance/home>

**Students’ Union**

The Student Advice Centre run by the Students’ Union provides independent, impartial and confidential advice to students free of charge. For more information please visit [the Students’ Union](https://www.staffsunion.com/).

# An Introduction **to** your Course

Introduce the course to your students. This should include the educational aims of the course as stated within the approved programme specification.

**Programme Outcomes (Award Learning Outcomes)**

Your award has a set of written learning outcomes (known as Programme Outcomes) that describe what you should be able to do by the end of the course.

These are designed to help you understand what you need to do to pass your course and receive your award. The outcomes for your course can be found in Appendix A of this handbook.

**Module Learning Outcomes**

Each module you study has separate learning outcomes which join together to enable you to demonstrate that you have achieved the overall learning outcomes for your award. The learning outcomes for your modules can be found in your module handbooks.

**The ‘University 8’**

The specific learning outcomes for your award and modules have been matched to eight university-wide learning outcome statements:

* knowledge and understanding
* learning enquiry
* analysis
* problem solving
* communication
* application
* reflection

These statements describe the abilities and skills all Staffordshire University students should demonstrate in order to pass their course. They have been designed to meet national expectations contained within the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/the-existing-uk-quality-code/part-a-setting-and-maintaining-academic-standards)

This ensures that the learning outcomes for your course are equivalent to similar courses at other UK universities and colleges. Appendix A shows how the Programme Outcomes for your course have been mapped to the University 8.

**Subject Benchmark Statements (\*\*Delete paragraph if not applicable\*\*)**

The design of your course has been guided by the national subject benchmark for please state name of Subject Benchmark(s).

Written by national experts, the benchmark describes the defining characteristics of the subject area and the abilities and skills you should be able to demonstrate by the end of the course. Appendix A maps your learning outcomes to the subject benchmarks.

# The Structure of your Course

Provide the structure for the course. This will normally be provided in a box diagram format. Where a common handbook will be provided to full and part-time students, include structures for both routes through the course. Include module codes. Please indicate where option modules may not be available every year.

# Professional Recognition

(\*\*Delete section if not applicable\*\*)

Please describe any professional recognition/accreditation available to students who successfully complete the course. This should specify the name of the professional body, the exact nature of the recognition and any special requirements that must be met by the student in order to qualify for this recognition.

# Learning, Teaching and Assessment on your Course

## Learning and Teaching

Provide details of the learning and teaching strategy for the course.

## Placements and Work-Based Learning

(\*\*Delete section if not applicable\*\*)

If the course includes a placement, practice or work-based learning, please indicate when this will occur, its duration, how students will secure a placement and any assistance that will be provided to them. The guidance should clarify the nature of the placement and any related assessments.

## Assessment

Provide details of the assessment strategy for the course.

If students are required to use an alternative referencing style to Harvard, please give details here. If students are required to undertake research requiring ethical approval, please highlight the requirement to follow the ethical review procedures published on the University website.

## How to Submit Assessments

Please explain how students will be expected to submit work for assessment. Where submission arrangements will vary across modules, students should be directed to the module handbooks for further information.

On-Campus Provision: Wherever possible assessments should be submitted electronically through Blackboard. Where this is impractical due to the nature of the assessment task (e.g. the production of an artefact), details of local submission arrangements should be provided.

You must submit all pieces of assessment required for each module on or before the submission date for each piece of assessment. Failure to do so is likely to result in failure of the module overall. There may be occasions when you are unable to submit or undertake a piece of assessment due to circumstances beyond your control. The University has put in place a procedure for dealing with such exceptional circumstances. You can find more information on the University’s Exceptional Circumstances procedure by visiting our [Regulations webpage](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/regulations/).

## Feedback on your Work

Please indicate how students will receive feedback on their work. Teams should ensure that information provided to students is consistent with [Staffordshire University’s Assessment Policy and Procedure](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/legal/policies/assessment-policy-and-procedure.jsp). Students will normally receive feedback on all assessments, other than examinations, within 20 working days following the date of submission. Course teams may commit to providing feedback within a shorter timeframe. Care should be taken to ensure that shorter timeframes will be met. Where in rare situations a longer timeframe will be required, this must be explained to students.

## External Examiners Appointed to your Course

External examiners help the University to ensure that the standards of your course are comparable to those provided by other universities or colleges in the UK. More information on the role performed by external examiners can be found in our [External Examiner Policy](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/about/corporate-information/quality/docs/pdf/external-examiner-policy-and-procedure.pdf).

The external examiner for your course is: provide the name, job title and home institution of the AWARD external examiner. Details of relevant module external examiners should be included within module handbooks.

It is not appropriate for you to make direct contact with your external examiner.

**Please direct any queries for your External Examiner through your Course Leader.**

# Extra Costs

(\*\*Delete section if there are no additional costs associated with this course\*\*)

Please identify any specialist equipment, clothing or consumables students will be required to purchase or access whilst completing the course. This information should provide realistic guidance on any additional costs that will be incurred.

Please indicate where students will be required or invited to participate in visits, field trips and any estimated costs payable by students.

# The Student Voice

Your feedback is key to ensuring that we get an accurate picture of what it is like to be a Staffordshire University student and enables us to enhance the learning experience for current and future students.

During the course you will have the opportunity to share your views and opinions on your modules, course and the University.

Please provide information on:

* Course Committees. How are students made aware of the scheduled meetings? How do they receive notes of the meetings?
* Student representatives. How are student representatives elected? How do students find out who their representatives are? Please see optional text below:

Every student has the opportunity to become a course/class/cohort representative. This voluntary position makes you the key contact point between staff and students, where you will listen to your peer’s feedback to understand everyone’s experiences, speak to your staff about ways to further enhance your learning & teaching and share the positive outcomes and impacts for learners. The Students’ Union support this role, offering online training and support year-through.

Students can find out who their representative is from their course team, through Blackboard or from the “[Find My Rep](https://www.staffsunion.com/representingyou/academicreps/whois/)” function via our [Student Union website](https://www.staffsunion.com/).

* [Student Surveys](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/surveys): National Student Survey (NSS) and Student Viewfinder Survey (SVS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) – Amend as appropriate - what surveys will students be invited to complete?

Please summarise issues raised by previous students and how the course team addressed these.

# Employability

**Employability commitment to Staffordshire University Students and Graduates**

At Staffordshire University we are continually developing courses to be relevant to the working world. Through incorporating a well-designed curriculum that has a focus on developing skills and knowledge for employment with excellent support services, we can bring out the best in all our students. This is achieved through our Employability Framework that will be embedded into every course. The Framework will ensure that:

* Students develop a career/life plan that they will revisit through their University journey
* Students understand the importance of and are well prepared to secure work experience opportunities
* Students develop the ability to recognise and articulate the skills that they have developed throughout their University journey in different settings

Alongside this crucial work in the curriculum, students will also have access to a wide range of experiences through our constantly developing and evolving campus, events and business connections to help you stand out from the crowd. We have invested in innovative industry technology across campus to prepare students for the world of work and create digitally pioneering courses.

We offer lifetime access to our careers support to ensure our graduates get the support and coaching they need. Visit our [careers webpage](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/careers/) for further advice and guidance.

All courses: Please indicate how the course will enhance students’ employability. Please include both typical and atypical career or further study opportunities available to students on graduation. This may draw upon the experiences of former students.

# SU Global Connections

During your course you will be encouraged to think globally and consider issues from a variety of perspectives, ensuring you have the knowledge and skills necessary to build your future career in an increasingly connected world.

Provide details of how the course will enable students learn about their subject within an international context. This may include case studies, study trips, international study exchanges or work placements. Include details of previous exchanges or placements undertaken by students on your course, or opportunities to digitally connect with international students at partner institutions.

***[\*\*On-Campus Students Only – Delete as Appropriate\*\*]***

Staffordshire University is committed to supporting students who wish to undertake study, work or volunteering placements abroad. If you would like to explore these opportunities, please contact your Course Leader or contact the University’s dedicated SU Global Connections Team ([SUGlobal@staffs.ac.uk](mailto:SUGlobal@staffs.ac.uk)) to find out more.

# Rules and Regulations

If your course operates in accordance with the University’s standard regulations include the statement: Your course is delivered and assessed according to the University’s Academic Award Regulations. Please visit our [Regulations webpage](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/regulations/) for more information.

Please explain any course specific regulations. These should be as detailed in the programme specification. Changes to course specific regulations must be approved by the University’s Quality and Enhancement Committee.

For full details of the University regulations explaining what good academic conduct is and how we will deal with allegations of academic misconduct please see the [University’s Academic Conduct Procedure](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/course-administration/academic-policies-and-regulations/academic-conduct-procedure).

Please also find useful information at: [Examination Regulations](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/course-administration/academic-policies-and-regulations/examination-regulations), [Exceptional Circumstances Procedure](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/course-administration/academic-policies-and-regulations/exceptional-circumstances-procedure) and the [Complaints and Appeals Procedure.](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/course-administration/academic-policies-and-regulations/complaints-and-appeals-procedure)

In the event of any issues during your course, please speak to your Course Leader in the first instance. Should you not be able to resolve any issue, please visit our [‘Appeals, Complaints and Conduct’ webpage](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/students/course-administration/appeals-complaints-and-conduct) for information.

# Appendix A – Programme (Award) Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Maps

The below mapping exercises can now be completed conjointly via the Programme Outcomes table from the current [Programme Specification](https://www.staffs.ac.uk/about/corporate-information/files/word/programme-specification-template.docx).

Please attach or provide a link to the Programme Specification covering these:

* the award learning outcomes for each level/stage of the course
* a mapping of the ‘University 8’ learning outcome statements to modules
* a mapping indicating how the design of the course has been informed by the relevant QAA subject benchmark(s)