Policy Coversheet

Name of Policy:	Typology of Award Outcomes and Indicative Descriptions of Levels
Purpose of Policy:	To provide indicative descriptions of academic levels which interpret the FHEQ and to assist module and course designers to express at an appropriate level, the challenges of their own fields of study.
Intended audience(s):	Staff/External Parties
Approval for this policy given by:	Director of Quality Enhancement and Standards/Finance
Last Review Date:	29/06/2016 (Previously included in Academic Award Regulations)
Review Due Date: (3 years from last review)	28/06/2019
Individual responsible for review:	Director of Quality Enhancement and Standards
Authorising department:	Academic Development Unit

Typology of Award Outcomes and Indicative Descriptions of Levels

The University uses a typology of award outcomes and indicative descriptions of levels which interprets the FHEQ for the University's HE awards at Levels 4 to 8 Award outcomes incorporate and are defined by this classification.

Outcomes are categorised under the following common learning headings: Knowledge and Understanding; Learning; Enquiry; Analysis; Problem Solving; Communication; Application; Reflection. Awards may also incorporate up to two award specific outcomes at each award Level.

Table 1: Typology of award outcomes and indicative descriptions of levels four to six (undergraduate)

On completion of each level of study, a Staffordshire University student will be able to:-

OUTCOME HEADINGS	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles.	Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established concepts, principles and their development.	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of key aspects, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline.
Learning	Develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts.	Understand the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.	Demonstrate an understanding of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge.
Enquiry	Present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data showing an awareness of the key principles of Information Literacy.	Demonstrate knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in (*the field of study*) and demonstrate application of the key principles of Information Literacy.	Deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry and initiate and carry out projects within *(the field of study)*. Evaluate use of Information Literacy, including the ethical use of information in *(the field of study)*.
Analysis	Evaluate and interpret concepts and principles.	Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information.	Describe and comment upon current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship and critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements.
Problem Solving	Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems.	Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems and propose solutions to problems arising from analysis.	Develop appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions – to a problem and use decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts.
Communication	Communicate the results of study/work accurately, reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments.	Communicate effectively information and arguments in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively.	Communicate and analyse information, ideas, problems, and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Application	Undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment.	Apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied.	Apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding and devise and sustain arguments, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline.
Reflection	Demonstrate qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment and/or further study requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.	Demonstrate qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment or further training including the development of existing skills, and acquisition of new competencies that will require the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making and will enable students to assume significant responsibility within organisations.	Manage their own learning, exercise initiative, personal responsibility and demonstrate the learning ability, qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment or further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

Table 2: Typology of award outcomes and indicative descriptions at level 7 and 8 (postgraduate)

On completion of each level of study, a Staffordshire University student will be able to:-

OUTCOME HEADINGS	LEVEL 7	LEVEL 8
Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.	Demonstrate a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.
Learning	Demonstrate the independent learning ability required to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level for continuing professional development.	Make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data.
Enquiry	Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding and critical evaluation of methodologies and techniques, including Information Literacy, applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses.	Undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, approaches, and the creation and interpretation of new knowledge (*through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, merit publication and extend the forefront of the discipline*).
Analysis	Demonstrate a critical awareness and evaluation of current research, advanced scholarship, contemporary problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline.	Conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline.
Problem Solving	Evaluate complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and employ appropriate decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations.	Adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems.
Communication	Communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.	Communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Application	Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.	Demonstrate a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.
Reflection	Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.	Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

Table 3: Typology of award outcomes and indicative descriptions at level 3 (Pre-HE)

The University offers a number of foundation years at Level 3 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (i.e. equivalent to A-level), which provide an entry route to bachelor's degrees and other higher education awards. On completion of Level 3, a Staffordshire University student will be able to:

OUTCOME HEADINGS	LEVEL 3
Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate knowledge of some fundamental theories and concepts in the subject area.
Learning	Formulate judgements in accordance with simple theories and concepts within the subject area.
Enquiry	Demonstrate basic skills of enquiry and method appropriate to the subject area and an appreciation of some key aspects of information. literacy
Analysis	Undertake straightforward analysis and interpretation of information in the context of the subject area.
Problem Solving	Demonstrate a basic understanding of different approaches to solving problems within the subject area.
Communication	Communicate information accurately and reliably in oral and written forms.
Application	Apply basic subject-based knowledge and skills in different contexts.
Reflection	Demonstrate an elementary understanding of the process of reflection as an aid to learning and skills development.