

## Programme and Module Learning Outcomes

*Effective date:* September 2025 (for programmes redesigned inline with the Leading Edge Curriculum Framework)

### Policy statement of purpose

1. The Leading Edge Curriculum Framework, with its programme-level approach to design, places programme learning outcomes (PLOs) as the basis of the degree for UG and PGT programmes.
2. The approach outlined below is designed to ensure that modules, and their learning outcomes (MLOs) are aligned with PLOs.

### Scope

3. The policy applies to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes.

### Policy

#### Definitions and key requirements

#### Programme-level Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

4. PLOs provide the foundation for the design and delivery of all programmes. They describe the result of a learning process; what students will learn and be able to do if they successfully complete the programme. They define the main knowledge, skills and attributes that students will gain. PLOs should embody the programme's vision and identity, as well as the intended learning over the whole programme of study.
5. PLOs for UG degrees at Level 6 should reflect the knowledge, skills and attributes expected by the end of the stages that contribute to the honours degree classification (usually Stages 2 and 3).
6. PLOs for Integrated Masters at Level 7 should reflect the knowledge, skills and attributes expected by end of the stages that contribute to the degree classification (usually Stages 2, 3 and 4).
7. For PGT programmes a single set of PLOs should be articulated at Level 7.

#### Module learning outcomes (MLOs)

8. MLOs describe the specific learning intended within each module. All MLOs must be clearly aligned with a relevant PLO and articulate **how** the PLO is met within the context of the module. {See slide 1 [PLO MLO diagrams.pptx](#)}
9. MLOs are a tailored articulation of the PLO within the modules' disciplinary focus and framed at the appropriate FHEQ level for the module. This ensures teaching activities and assessments are intentionally designed to support students to progress towards meeting the overall PLOs. MLOs provide an opportunity to explicitly articulate the skills and attributes developed through the module in the ways in which these are framed.

#### Core relationship between PLOs and MLOs

10. At a programme level, all PLOs must be met within the programme's **compulsory modules** within the stages that count towards classification:

11. Optional modules will also be mapped to the PLOs, providing additional instances where the PLOs are addressed.

**Example:**

For a BA Education Studies programme a programme-level learning outcome may be:

- PLO1: By the end of the programme students will be able to critically analyse the principles of curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment, and apply them to develop inclusive and effective learning environments

Within a specific module at Stage 2 (ABC1001 Curriculum and Pedagogy) a MLO which is aligned to this PLO could be:

- MLO: By the end of the module students will be able to compare different approaches to curriculum and pedagogy, and explain how these practices influence learning (mapped to PLO1)

This MLO captures *how* the student is working towards PLO1, within that specific module context and content and at the appropriate level for a Stage 2 module.

**Integrated Learning Outcomes**

12. The single set of PLOs should integrate knowledge, skills and attributes into a single set of cohesive statements about the students' learning. This is where programme teams will reflect the relevant Education for Life Skills and Attributes in their programme.
13. This is a deliberate move away from outcomes being sub-divided into types (currently on programme and module documentation divided into knowledge and understanding; intellectual skills; practical skills; and transferrable/key skills) to simplify and avoid duplication and repetition.
14. PLOs must also reflect the programmes' engagement with the leading edge of research, industry, and/or practice and society, as appropriate to the discipline. This provides scope for a detailed articulation of these within the relevant MLOs.
15. This integrated approach is also expected in how MLOs are framed.

**PSRB requirements and LOs**

16. Where a programme is accredited by a PSRB this should be stated in a high-level PLO. There may be a need to demonstrate more granularity within the relevant modules to show how a module and its assessments meet specific external accreditation requirements. In these instances, specific MLOs which reflect the knowledge, skills and attributes required for the accreditation should be articulated – providing a clear outcome against which a student's successful completion of that module can be assessed. [See Slide 3 [PLO MLO diagrams.pptx](#)] Use the terminology of must, should, may as set out in the procedures document.

**Differentiating UG Stage 1 – Stage Learning Outcomes**

17. All undergraduate programmes must include a distinct set of Stage 1 learning outcomes, articulated at FHEQ Level 4. These outcomes define the expected knowledge, skills, and attributes students will achieve by the end of Stage 1.

18. This enables clear differentiation between degree-level and non-degree-level outcomes, supports the design of teaching, learning and assessment, and provides a basis for awarding a Certificate of Higher Education where applicable.

### **Design alignment, and ongoing management, where modules are shared across multiple programmes**

19. **All modules must have an identified 'home' programme or suite of programmes** (a suite is a group of programmes with a shared disciplinary focus, where the module is a key part of all of programmes' central content). The Board of Studies with oversight of the 'home' programme/suite in turn has oversight of the modules whose 'home' sits with these programmes.

20. Where modules are shared across programmes, to ensure the continued alignment of all module LOs with the appropriate programme/s LOs, the following needs to be reflected in design and practice.

- For modules that are **compulsory on more than one programme**, the MLOs **must** reflect and be mapped to both programme LOs. [see Slide 2 [PLO MLO diagrams.pptx](#)] MLOs may reflect directly the PLOs of one programme, or the other, or alternatively a MLO can bring together the relevant elements from both programme LOs, into a single statement. Changes to these modules therefore **must** be discussed and agreed with both programme teams and DPDs prior to approval by the 'home' Board of Studies.
- For modules that are **compulsory on the 'home' programme, but can also be taken as optional modules** by other programmes (within or beyond the academic Unit) the MLOs are primarily mapped to the 'home' programme PLOs. Programme teams (including but not limited to the module leader) **may** engage with the Degree Programme Director (DPD) and programme team of the other programmes where this module is frequently taken as an optional module. This engagement should take place during the design phase to help align MLOs with the other programmes' PLOs. Changes are approved by the 'home' programme Board of Studies but **should** be communicated to the DPDs of the programmes where the module is optional.
- In rare instances, for modules which are optional for the 'home' programme, but are compulsory for other programmes (within or beyond the academic unit) permission **must** first be sought from the 'home' programmes by the outside programme's DPD to include this module as compulsory in their programme design. When making module changes the 'home' programme teams (including but not limited to the module leader) **must** engage with the DPD and programme team of the other programmes where this module is compulsory in its design. This is to enable the design of appropriate MLOs which align with both programmes' PLOs.
- For modules which are optional for the 'home' programme and can also be taken as optional modules by other programmes (within or beyond the academic Unit) the MLOs are primarily mapped to the 'home' programme PLOs.

## Document and version control

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