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## FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

### 1. Introduction

The Framework for undergraduate degree programmes offered at XJTLU is established to ensure consistency in programme structure across all undergraduate programmes and equivalence to undergraduate non-clinical programmes offered at the University of Liverpool. The Framework also sets out clear criteria for how an individual student's progress is determined as they study and are assessed on their programme.

## PROGRAMMES

### 2. Programme Structure

#### *Credits, modules and balance in years of study*

- a) An undergraduate degree programme at XJTLU normally involves a minimum of four years study (full-time) and requires the study of modules totaling 180 credits. One credit represents 30 hours of student learning and assessment. (This includes lectures, tutorials, practical work, private study, revision and assessments/examinations). University examinations, scheduled by the Registry, fall outside the total study hours delivered in a module. All undergraduate programmes must include a Final Year Project and an approved work placement, in accordance with Chinese Ministry of Education regulations.
- b) This credit structure can be compared with (i) the UK norm in which a typical three-year undergraduate degree programme is described in terms of the study of 360 credits, and (ii) the Chinese norm in which one credit represents one hour of class contact per week. The XJTLU credit framework is designed to bridge between the two types of frameworks.
- c) Years 1 and 2 should each require the study of modules totaling **50 credits**. Years 3 and 4 should each require the study of modules totaling **40 credits**.
- d) Modules must normally be assigned a credit value of 2.5, 5, 7.5 or 10.
- e) Modules must be assigned a credit level. For undergraduate programmes, these assigned at FHEQ levels 3, 4, 5 and 6<sup>1</sup> which are equivalent to the XJTLU credit level

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<sup>1</sup>These descriptors for the level of credit correspond to the descriptors in the UK's QAA Framework for Higher

of 0, 1, 2, 3 respectively. Typically, the credit level in:

- a. Year 1 is level 0 (FHEQ 3)
- b. Year 2 is level 1 (FHEQ 4)
- c. Year 3 is level 2 (FHEQ 5) and
- d. Year 4 is level 3 (FHEQ 6).

For the purposes of this Framework, level of credit is expressed in terms of the XJTLU credit level.

- f) The level assigned to a module is an indicator of relative intellectual demand, complexity and depth of learning required of a learner.
- g) Up to 10 credits at level 4 (Master's level) credit may be offered in Year 4 and any such modules would carry a pass mark of 50% and may only be offered on an optional basis.
- h) All other modules would normally be offered at the correct level of study. Where a module is offered at a lower level of study, this would be no more than 5 credits and need approval of the University's Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC).
- i) Each module must have a unique syllabus and assessment. Modules which are shared between programmes should normally be allocated the same module code.
- j) Student workload as defined in programmes should normally be divided equally between the two semesters in each year of study. However, programmes may be designed with imbalances of up to 5 credits between semesters. Any proposal for a programme to be designed with a greater imbalance of workload (up to 10 credits difference between the two semesters) will require specific approval by the University's Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC). This permission may only be given in exceptional circumstances, on submission and acceptance of a satisfactory rationale.
- k) In exceptional circumstances, individual students may be allowed to choose options in their programme of studies which would result in an imbalance of up to 10 credits. Such choices require specific and written permission of the relevant Programme Director, and a student choosing such a pattern of study must be made aware of the fact of the uneven workload will not be regarded as a mitigating factor in the case of failure in assessment and consequent failure to progress to the next year of study.
- l) Up to 10 credits of learning undertaken in the first semester may form part of modules taught over two semesters and therefore be assessed at the end of semester two. The delivery and assessment of modules with a credit value of 2.5 credits over two

semesters should normally be avoided.

- m) Modules may be designated as 'mandatory', 'compulsory' or 'optional'. For definitions of these terms, please refer to the 'Glossary of Terms' as set out in the Code of Practice on Assessment. Approval of the LTC must be obtained for designating a module as 'mandatory' and the number of such modules in any year of study should not normally be of value of no more than 50% of the total credits for a certain level of study. It is expected that mandatory status will normally be reserved for those modules in which competence is a requirement of professional or accrediting bodies of the degree.
- n) Two modules in a single year of study may be linked, where they represent a clear continuum of study and learning. By linking modules together, good performance in the second module can compensate for failure in the first module. Normally, the individual marks for the linked modules will be returned and recorded. However, if the first module has been failed and the second module has been passed, the marks for the two modules will be averaged and, if this average represents a pass, this average mark will be returned for both modules. In all other circumstances the normal failure and re-sit rules apply.
- o) Any proposal for and approval of changes to programmes must be undertaken in accordance with the 'Policy and Procedures for Approval of New Modules and Modifications to Existing Programmes and Modules' and must ensure that the programme structure complies with this Framework.
- p) All modules at levels 0, 1, 2, and 3 must be taught and assessed in English. Exemptions may be permitted at level 0. Language modules may be taught and assessed in the relevant language.

### ***Assessment and re-assessment regime of modules***

- q) The pass mark for all undergraduate modules at levels 0, 1, 2, and 3 is 40%.
- r) Where level 4 modules are offered in Year 4 (see 2(g) above), the pass mark for such modules is 50%.
- s) A student would normally need to meet all Learning Outcomes to be able to pass a module.
- t) Normally, the formal University's assessment periods are timed at the end of each semester and in early August, the latter being the normal period for re-assessment of any formal examinations for Years 1, 2, and 3 only. The University allows for mid-term assessments where the assessment regime of modules includes such a requirement and coursework/practical assessments are timed individually, by

departments. Re-assessment for modules in Year 4 will normally be made available at the normal assessment periods in the following year.

- u) The initial assessment of a module must be completed by the end of the semester in which the teaching of it is completed.
- v) Under normal circumstances, a re-assessment opportunity of all components, including those assessed by coursework/practical, must be made available. Exemptions from this requirement must be sought from and approved by the ULTC and will only be given in relation to assessments which it would be impractical to repeat, for example, laboratory practical assessments.
- w) The learning outcomes assessed and the criteria used to assess students' achievement must be the same in any re-assessment examination/assessment as in the first examination/assessment. The mode/type of assessment (for all students) for re-assessment should normally be the same as that used in the original assessment. A different type of assessment may, however, be used, provided that the alternative mode of assessment can test the same learning outcomes adequately.
- x) It is not normally permissible for alternative assessment arrangements from those approved for the module to be made available to students on an individual basis. Where, exceptionally, alternative assessment arrangements from those approved for the module need to be made for individual students, the approval of the Chair of ULTC must be obtained.
- y) Each department has the discretion to determine whether or not students must achieve the pass mark in all components of a module or whether failure in a component can be compensated when the overall mark is a pass for the module.
- z) Where failure is compensated, and a student fails a component or components of the module assessment, but achieves a passing overall average mark, this will be deemed to be a pass and the failed components will not (and may not) be re-assessed in order to improve the overall module mark.
- aa) Where compensation between components of the module assessment is NOT allowed and a pass mark must be obtained in all or certain components for the module to be passed, the student must be re-assessed in those failed components in the re-sit period even if the overall module mark is a pass.

### **3. Programme Exit Qualifications**

- a) An undergraduate programme of study must include the following two exit points, whereby a student may be awarded:
  - i. A University of Liverpool Certificate in Higher Education if they have satisfied the academic requirements to progress to Year 3 (XJTLU Level 2, FHEQ Level 5) but

either leaves the programme before completing Year 3, or has their studies terminated as a result of failure in Year 3; **or**

- ii. A University of Liverpool Diploma in Higher Education, if they have satisfied the academic requirements to progress to Year 4 (XJTLU level 3, FHEQ Level 6) but either leaves the programme before completing Year 4, or has their studies terminated as a result of failure in Year 4.
- b) The University of Liverpool Certificate of HE or Diploma of HE will be issued automatically to students who leave the programme before they qualify for the undergraduate degree, but who, nevertheless, have satisfied the Board of Examiners in Years 2 or in Years 2 and 3.
  - c) In accordance with Chinese Ministry of Education requirement, a student will also be issued a Chinese Certificate of Studies if they have completed more than one but less than four years of study or a Chinese Certificate of Completion of Studies if they have completed all four years but failed to meet the criteria for graduation.

## **STUDENTS**

### **4. Late student registration on programmes or modules**

- a) The decision to accept a student onto a programme once teaching has started must be based on the academic judgement of the Programme Director, in consultation with the relevant Module Leaders, to ensure that the student registering late on the programme will not be disadvantaged in respect of the opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes, meeting coursework deadlines and engaging in the learning context, such as group work. Normally, late registration onto a programme will not be allowed after the beginning of the first teaching week of the semester.
- b) The decision to accept a student onto a module once teaching has started must be based on the academic judgement of the Module Leader, to ensure that the student registering late on the module will not be disadvantaged in respect of the opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes, meeting coursework deadlines and engaging in the learning context, such as group work. Under normal circumstances, transfer into a module will not be allowed after two weeks from the start of teaching in the semester. Transfers will also only be allowed if the teaching timetable can accommodate the revised module combination. If the transfer would result in a credit imbalance across semesters, the approval of the Programme Director must be secured, in accordance with 2 (j) above.

## 5. Student Progression

### *Progression criteria*

- a) The rules for progression apply to students in Years 1, 2 and 3 only.
- b) The criteria for completing each year of study, other than the final year, and for progression to the next year of study, require a student to:
  - i. Pass (i.e. achieve 40%) in all mandatory modules; **and**
  - ii. Pass (i.e. achieve 40%) in modules amounting to 37.5 credits in Years 1 and 2 and amounting to 30 credits in Year 3; **and**
  - iii. Achieve at least 40% averaged across all modules and a minimum mark of 35% in all modules.
- c) The progression rules as set out in 5(b) above provide that a student may be awarded a compensatory pass if they narrowly fail (35% - 39%) modules totaling up to 12.5 credits in Years 1 and 2 and up to 10 credits in Year 3. Where a student meets the criteria for progression, a module mark in the compensatory range will be recorded on a student's transcript as 40%. This module mark of 40% will be used to calculate the year average mark and for degree classification.
- d) If, after re-assessment during the re-sit period, a student in Years 1, 2 or 3 has not met the above progression criteria, the Board of Examiners (Progression Board) may consider allowing a student to progress to the next year of study but with **ONLY** up to 5 credits of failure.
- e) Where a student has been permitted to progress to the next year of study carrying failed credit, they will be required to re-take and pass the module during the next year, normally with attendance at lectures and classes, timetable permitting. Normally, students will be permitted up to a further two attempts only at the module during that year, one at the normal assessment period of the module and, if necessary, a further re-sit, unless determined by the Board of Examiners (Progression Board) that one re-sit attempt only is permitted. Students will not be permitted to carry the same failed module(s) into the next year of study.
- f) Students will be required to pass any failed modules carried into the next year of study in accordance with the progression criteria as described in 5(b) above.
- g) Where a student is permitted to change their programme of study and has also been permitted to carry failed credit, consideration will be made, by the Board of Examiners (Progression Board), to the possibility of exchanging the failed module for an

alternative within the new programme. However, this replacement module MUST be passed, in accordance with 5(f) above.

### **Maximum periods of registration**

- h) Students may be permitted to repeat Year 1 up to a maximum of four times.
- i) Students may be permitted to repeat subsequent years of study but ONLY up to a maximum period of 8 years' registration which includes all periods of repeat study and periods of suspension of studies, imposed or requested.
- j) Where students have been granted repeat years of study in Years 1 and 2, they must be warned by their department of the maximum period of registration permitted.

### **Student failure in assessment**

- k) Re-assessment can be undertaken in one of the following two ways:
  - a. **Re-sit** – this term is used when the student is re-assessed in one or more components of the module without further attendance in lectures and classes.
  - b. **Re-take with attendance** – this term is used when a student will attend the whole module and will take all assessments associated with that module, normally as part of repeating a year of study and normally permits two further attempts at the assessments.
  - c. **Re-take without attendance** – normally ONLY used for re-assessment of failed credit carried into the next year of study (see 5(g) above) in case of no fit timetables for students concerned. It normally permits two further attempts at the failed module.
- l) Students who fail modules at the first attempt have the right to re-sit their failed modules in the next available re-sit period. As the University does not provide re-assessments for Year 4 modules in the August re-sit period immediately following the period of initial assessment, the next available re-sit period for final year modules will be at the normal assessment periods in the following year, either at the end of semester one or semester two.
- m) Students who fail to meet the progression requirements following initial assessment, as set out in 5(b) above, must re-sit failed assessments in all failed modules, including those in which they achieve a mark in the compensatory range (35% - 39%).
- n) Following re-assessment, the mark recorded for a module will be the weighted average of the final marks achieved for each assessment component of the module. The marks of any assessment component(s) of module which have not been replaced by the re-sit opportunity will be carried forward and used with the actual marks gained

in the re-sits of the failed components, in order to calculate the overall module mark. The actual average mark will be used in the calculation for progression to the next year of study and it will also be recorded on the student's transcript, and will be flagged as having been achieved at a second or subsequent attempt. The mark will be capped at 40% for the purposes of degree classification unless a student has had an application accepted that their performance in the assessment was affected by mitigating circumstances.

- o) If a student fails to satisfy the progression requirements following re-sit examinations, the following decisions may be taken by the Progression Board:
- i. Permit the student to re-take or re-sit failed modules in the next year before the student may progress to the next year of study;
  - ii. Permit the student to progress to the next year of study, carrying failed credit, but ONLY in accordance with Clauses 5(e) (f) and (g) above.
  - iii. Require the student to terminate studies on their current programme on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress. This decision can only be made where a student has failed to engage with any opportunities provided for re-assessment in failed modules, or where the student has exhausted all attempts at re-assessment afforded to them under this Framework;
  - iv. Permit the student to repeat the year of study, fully or partially, as appropriate, where evidence has been submitted and accepted by the Board, that the student's year of study has been affected by ill health or other similar unforeseen circumstances. The Progression Board, on advice from the Mitigating Circumstances Committee, will determine which modules must be re-taken with two further attempts, or re-sat, with one further attempt.
- p) Where the decision of the Progression Board is to require a student to terminate their studies on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress, this decision may only be overturned if an appeal against such a decision is upheld, in accordance with the relevant appeal procedures.
- q) In exceptional circumstances, where a student is experiencing difficulties in satisfying the requirements of the programme by, for example, failing a year of study, they may request a transfer to another programme of study. Under these circumstances, approval of the transfer must be given by the receiving department/programme concerned and the year of study for the transfer must be determined. Serious consideration of any such request must be made to evaluate whether or not the student, in the light of their previous failure, is suitable for pursuing another programme of study. In such cases, students may be required to attend and pass modules already taken and passed in previous years. However, the students may



be entitled to carry forward marks achieved in previous years of study. Students whose studies have been terminated by the Board of Examiners (Progression Board) may not normally transfer to another programme.

- r) Where a student is recorded as not having made satisfactory progress in his/her studies during the semester, for lack of engagement, especially where the student is repeating a year of study, the relevant Progression Board may require the student to terminate their studies before the end of the year. Departments must ensure that, under these circumstances, students are warned of the consequences of failing to engage appropriately with their studies.
- s) In the circumstances when modules are discontinued in the following academic year, students should re-sit all examinations/assessments in the failed modules during the next year without attendance at lectures and classes and special papers and assessment tasks for those modules must be set. In those circumstances, where a student is required to attend for the purpose of re-taking a failed module, the student may be allowed, on academic grounds, to replace the discontinued module by a new module to substitute a module not previously attempted, for a failed module. In this case, the mark for the new module would be capped for carry forward purposes, except where the mark for the original was deemed to have been affected by mitigating circumstances.

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#### Approval and Revision Log

Date	Approved by	Description
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	University Learning and Teaching Committee	Version 2 of the Framework for Undergraduate Degrees approved, effective academic year 2016/17
4 <sup>th</sup> December 2015	UoL Collaborative Provision Committee	Approved
29 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	Academic Board	Approved
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	Chair's action	Approved, subject to following changes: 2.a) '90-hour work placement' changed as 'an approved work placement'. 2.h) New clause added 5. The following clause deleted: "It is not permitted for a student to carry failed credit into Year 4."
7 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	PMQA	'Preamble' explaining Versions 1 and 2 of the UG Framework removed, since all students will be subject to this version from 2018/19.
26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	University Learning	The heading of "to take effect for all new entrants

	and Teaching Committee Chair's action	from start of academic year 2016-2017" was removed to avoid confusion.
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