

UNIVERSITY OF YORK
POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

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| This document applies to students who commence the programme(s) in: | September 2017 |
| Awarding institution | Teaching institution |
| University of York | University of York |
| Department(s) | Board of Studies |
| Social Policy and Social Work | Social Policy and Social Work |
| Award(s) and programme title(s) | Level of qualification |
| Masters of Public Administration (MPA) | Level 7 (Masters) |
| Award(s) available <i>only</i> as interim awards (i.e. not available for direct entry) | |
| PG Diploma of Public Administration (Exit award only) | |
| PG Certificate of Public Administration (Exit award only) | |
| Admissions criteria | |

The MPA is a post-experience programme. To be accepted on the programme students must (1) have either an undergraduate degree or a 'sufficient professional background' and (2) have professional experience in the public service field. This ensures that students are able to bring their own experiences to the programme and to draw on them (for example through reflection) when studying.

The majority of students who undertake the MPA are early/mid-career professionals who combine study with their work which is predominantly in the area of public service delivery in its broadest sense, whether within the public sector, NGO, charitable or other non-profit organisations. A minority work in the for-profit sector in support of public service outcomes and who wish to deepen their understanding of the constraints and opportunities that their non-profit sector partners contend with. Roles tend to cluster around management and leadership functions, largely though not exclusively in operational management, service delivery and support functions.

Academic background

A good second class (undergraduate) degree or equivalent qualification. Applicants without undergraduate experience may also be considered if they have sufficient professional background.

Professional experience

Professional managerial experience is required in the public service field. This includes roles in government at national and local level, non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations, the voluntary and charitable sector, and private sector roles which support or deliver public services.

English Language

If you are not from a majority English speaking country (as defined by the UK Home Office) you will need to show evidence that you meet the university English language requirements in accordance with the information on the university website for distance learners:

- IELTS score of 6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any element
- PTE: 61 with no less than 55 in each component
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English A and B, or Certificate in Advanced English A

Time to study

Students require an average of 15 study hours each week to successfully manage the programme. This includes reading and participation in group discussions, as well as time for any written exercises and private study.

Applicants must accept a commitment to participate in the mandatory programme of weekly asynchronous module discussions/ group activities.

Technical

In order to participate in the programme, students will require reliable access to the internet with a minimum speed of 0.5mbps to enable access to the VLE (Moodle), the university library facilities, email (Gmail), and various web sites used as resources. An office software suite compatible with Word and Excel formats is also essential.

| Length and status of the programme(s) and mode(s) of study | | | | | |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Programme | Length (years) and status (full-time/part-time) | Start dates/months (if applicable – for programmes that have multiple intakes or start dates that differ from the usual academic year) | Mode | | |
| | | | Face-to-face, campus-based | Distance learning | Other |
| Masters of Public Administration | 24 months Part-time Distance Learning | September each year | | Distance learning | |
| Language of study | | English | | | |
| Programme accreditation by Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (if applicable) | | | | | |
| N/A | | | | | |
| Educational aims of the programme(s) | | | | | |
| <p>For the Masters, Diploma and Certificate:</p> <p>The programme is primarily designed to appeal to students who aspire to develop their future career prospects within the non-profit and public management sectors. It is not designed to provide an entry point in to the study of public management nor is it a stepping stone for a future in academia.</p> <p>The MPA is based upon the logical framework developed by the PPMA that addresses the three distinct yet inter-connected fields of public service context, strategy and the policy process, and public management. It seeks to enable students to develop <i>intellectual</i> capacity for critical enquiry and analysis of the complex problems that they tackle in their everyday work, as well the ability to locate these problems (and their solutions) within a broader social, political and historical context; and <i>professional</i> capacity as a manager, advisor and leader within their organisational field. These two strands of intellectual and professional development converge in the concept of the reflective practitioner.</p> <p>As a result of studying the MPA students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Respond to current challenges affecting public management and administration.</u> Drawing upon their professional roles, knowledge, experience and understanding of the social, political and historical context of public management, you will be better prepared to deliver public services within the context of discontinuity, change and reform. • <u>Deliver policy effectively and efficiently.</u> Through developing an understanding of networks, stakeholders and agents that form the backbone of multi-level governance, including those from across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, you will be able to actively identify and influence policy outcomes that relate to your organisational goals. • <u>Design, lead and manage change within your own and networked teams and organisations.</u> You will develop an understanding of classic and contemporary organisational theory to enable you to ‘read’ organisations and to steer and manage within an increasingly complex, uncertain and ambiguous networked mode of | | | | | |

policymaking, strategic thinking and public service delivery.

- Design and deliver projects and programmes that achieve their intended policy outcomes. You will develop an understanding of how to identify and respond to strategic demands for project interventions and how to differentiate between successful project management and successful project outcomes, enabling you to manage successful strategic policy planning, implementation and delivery.
- Develop as a reflective practitioner to enable your own continuous learning and development, and that of colleagues and communities of practice, throughout your career. This is therefore a cross cutting theme throughout the programme, emphasised in particular in the first year through a combination of theoretical input and reflective exercises that anchor the learning process in your workplace.
- Assess the complex social, political, and economic factors shaping the development of new ICTs and their diffusion, and analyse their impact in your organisational or personal context.

Additionally for the Diploma (if applicable):

For the diploma, the programme offers additional subjects topics enabling students to gain an understanding of public service reform or project management over and above the certificate subjects, thereby being able to think critically and reflective from a wider subject base and range of academic perspectives.

It also enables students to practice reflective learning, particularly in the context of personal, organisational and digital-age learning.

Additionally for the Masters:

The masters enables students to demonstrate greater synthesis of understanding across a range of subject areas through the exploration of a real life work related case study of their own choosing (dissertation).

Intended learning outcomes for the programme – and how the programme enables students to achieve and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes

This programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

The following teaching, learning and assessment methods enable students to achieve and to demonstrate the programme learning outcomes:

| A: Knowledge and understanding | |
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| <p>Knowledge and understanding of: <i>For the Masters, Diploma and Certificate:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the structures and processes of governance and administration, including relationships between citizens, consumers, users and the state 2. the frameworks, concepts and techniques relevant to analysing these structures and processes 3. global trends in the modernisation of these processes 4. the implications of the modernisation of public management for relationships between citizens and the state 5. how the frameworks tools and techniques identified above can be used to analyse and manage the challenges of public administration, including working across organisational boundaries and within organisational networks 6. the issues involved in comparing with and learning from approaches to public administration and the delivery of public services between organisations and countries 7. theory and practice in specific areas that further extend students' appreciation of the distinctiveness of the public sector: governance, strategic planning and public finance or organisational learning 8. literature review-based application of theory and evidence to a relevant organisational problem, analysis and evaluation of options, and capacity to draw conclusions | <p>Learning/teaching methods and strategies (relating to numbered outcomes):</p> <p>Outcomes 1-7</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. private reading of set materials (authored module texts, journal articles, book chapters and case studies) facilitating exploration of the outlined topics, enabling students to engage critically and to develop their understanding of how the issues apply to their own experience and to wider case study examples 2. private study exercises to provide prompts to check the assimilation of knowledge 3. private study discussion for the optional sharing of points for clarification, supported by the tutor 4. self-administered questionnaires 5. weekly group discussions and exercises (compulsory) to develop understanding through a process of critical debate, supported by the tutor, and to practice application of understanding to specific cases 6. peer assessment of short written exercises 7. role plays <p>Outcome 8</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. individual feedback by tutors on specific exercises and discussion input |
| | <p>Types/methods of assessment (relating to numbered outcomes)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formative assessment via submission to tutor of short written exercises to check understanding 2. Formative assessment via feedback from tutor during the weekly group discussions 3. Formative assessment through telephone and private email discussions with tutor 4. Summative assessment through end of module assignments combined with formative assessment via feedback on assignment plans and on assignment mark sheet 5. Summative assessment through the end of programme dissertation. |

| B: (i) Skills – discipline related | |
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| <p>Students will be able to: <i>For the Certificate:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate use of practical tools and techniques relevant to the administration of public services 2. analyse and evaluate complex information (through interpretation and extrapolation) 3. demonstrate decision-making in, for example, managing change. 4. Write effectively through means of narrative and IT mediated fora. 5. reflect on professional practice using the frameworks and concepts provided by the programme 6. demonstrate personal and collective leadership 7. select and apply concepts and tools relevant to governance of public sector organisations, performance management, change management and strategic planning. <p><i>Additionally for the Diploma</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. select and apply concepts and tools relevant project | <p>Learning/teaching methods and strategies (relating to numbered outcomes):</p> <p>Outcomes 1-9</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. private reading of set materials (authored module texts, journal articles, book chapters and case studies) facilitating exploration of the outlined topics, enabling students to engage critically and to develop their understanding of how the issues apply to their own experience and to wider case study examples 2. private study exercises to provide prompts to check the assimilation of knowledge 3. private study discussion for the optional sharing of points for clarification, supported by the tutor 4. self-administered questionnaires 5. weekly group discussions and exercises (compulsory) to develop understanding through a process of critical debate, supported by the tutor, and to practice application of understanding to specific cases 6. peer assessment of short written exercises 7. role plays 8. individual feedback by tutors on specific exercises and discussion input <p>Outcome 10</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Supervision of independent study relating to a subject of the student's own choice. |

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| <p>management or public service reform.</p> <p>9. practice reflective learning in relation to own, organisational and digital contexts</p> <p><i>Additionally for the Masters</i></p> <p>10. demonstrate an ability to synthesise learning from across subject areas and thereby to demonstrate deep understanding of complex problems and to recommend effective solutions.</p> | <p>Types/methods of assessment (relating to numbered outcomes)</p> <p>Outcomes 1-9</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formative assessment via submission to tutor of short exercises to check understanding 2. Formative assessment via feedback from tutor during the weekly group discussions 3. Formative assessment through telephone and private email discussions with tutor 4. Summative assessment through end of module assignments combined with formative assessment via feedback on assignment plans and on assignment feedback pro-forma <p>Outcome 10</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Summative assessment through the end of programme dissertation. |
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| B: (ii) Skills - transferable | |
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| <p>Students will be Able to: <i>For the Certificate:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use tools relevant to the planning and management of complex organisations 2. Analyse and evaluate complex information 3. Make decisions and act upon them 4. Communicate effectively in writing, through narrative and IT mediated fora 5. Practice effective leadership 6. Manage own and others time effectively <p><i>Additionally for the Diploma:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Ability to apply above skills in a wider range of contexts 7. Reflect on personal and organisational practice <p><i>Additionally for the Masters:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Ability to apply the above skills to relevant organisational problems, analyse those problems, evaluate options and draw conclusions | <p>Learning/teaching methods and strategies (relating to numbered outcomes):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group discussions and individual exercises to develop skills of critical analysis, evaluation, decision-making and communication 2. Role plays, debates and quizzes as appropriate to specific themes 3. Practical application of tools and techniques during assessment <hr/> <p>Types/methods of assessment (relating to numbered outcomes):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formative assessment via submission to tutor of short written exercises to check understanding 2. Formative assessment via feedback from tutor during the weekly group discussions 3. Formative assessment through telephone and private email discussions with tutor 4. Summative assessment through end of module assignments combined with formative assessment via feedback on assignment plans and on assignment feedback pro-forma 5. Summative assessment through the end of programme dissertation. |
| C: Experience and other attributes | |
| <p>Students will be Able to: <i>For the Masters, Diploma and Certificate:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critique ideas and experiences shared amongst fellow practitioners from a diverse range of organisations within the sector (demonstrating | <p>Learning/teaching methods and strategies (relating to numbered outcomes):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. personal supervision 2. group discussions, role plays, debates and quizzes (as appropriate to specific themes) are designed to facilitate team working and collaboration. |

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| <p>awareness of diversity of people, culture and management contexts; listening persuading and negotiating)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Identify good practice and assess its relevance to their own context ensuring appropriate research and understanding of management issues 3. Network with others to develop professional links between individuals and organisations 4. Collaborate with others across a distance (demonstrating reflective, adaptive and collaborative learning) 5. Lead discussions (influencing others and managing group projects) 6. Think critically (identify assumptions, false logic and implicit values; evaluate statements and generalisations) 7. Plan (time management , e.g. taking responsibility for personal behaviours, motivations and initiative) 8. Problem solve (investigate; create; evaluate and assess options, reach reasoned conclusions and act upon them) 9. Exercise judgement 10. Develop further their capacity to compare and contrast their experience and to build their knowledge and understanding through this process | <p>Types/methods of assessment (relating to all numbered outcomes):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formative assessment via feedback from tutor during weekly group discussions 2. Formative assessment through telephone and private email discussions with tutor |
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| <p>Relevant Quality Assurance Agency benchmark statement(s) and other relevant external reference points (e.g. National Occupational Standards, or the requirements of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies)</p> |
| <p>QAA Business and Management benchmark statement</p> <p>National Occupations Standards for Policy and Operational Delivery</p> <p>Standards approved by Public Administration Committee (PAC) of the Joint University Council, the Public Management and Policy Association, and the Public Administration Specialist Group of the UKs Policy Studies Association.</p> <p>Standards approved by the UK Government for online MPAs meeting the requirements of the UK public sector (programme is approved by 'Buying Solutions' on a call-off basis)</p> |
| <p>University award regulations</p> |
| <p>To be eligible for an award of the University of York a student must undertake an approved programme of study, obtain a specified number of credits (at a specified level(s)), and meet any other requirements of the award as specified in the award requirements and programme regulations, and other University regulations (e.g. payment of fees). Credit will be awarded upon passing a module's assessment(s) but some credit may be awarded where failure has been compensated by achievement in other modules. The University's award and assessment regulations specify the University's marking scheme, and rules governing progression (including rules for compensation), reassessment and award requirements. The award and assessment regulations apply to all programmes: any exceptions that relate to this programme are approved by University Teaching Committee and are recorded at the end of this document.</p> |
| <p>Departmental policies on assessment and feedback</p> |
| <p>Detailed information on assessment (including grade descriptors, marking procedures, word counts etc.) is available in the written statement of assessment which applies to this programme and the relevant module descriptions. These are available in the student handbook and on the Department's website:</p> |
| <p>Information on formative and summative feedback to students on their work is available in the written statement on feedback to students which applies to this programmes and the relevant module descriptions. These are available in the student handbook and on the Department's website:</p> |

Diagrammatic representation of the programme structure, showing the distribution and credit value of core and option modules

If the programme includes part-time routes please provide a representation of the part-time programme structure, showing the distribution and credit value of core and option modules

Masters

| Autumn term | Spring term | Summer term | Summer vacation |
|--|--|--|------------------------|
| Year 1 Public Management and Delivery (20 credits) | Year 1 Strategic Planning (20 credits) | Year 1 Policy Analysis and Process (20 credits) | |
| | Reflective Practice for Professional Development Part 1 (10 credit workshop) | Digital Government: Policy and Practice (10 credit workshop) | |
| Year 2 Leading and Managing Organisational Change (20 credits) | Year 2 1 x 20 credit Options module from: Project Management (20) or Public Sector Reform (20) | Year 2 Dissertation (40 credits) | |
| Reflective Practice for Professional Development Part 2 (10 credit workshop) | Dissertation Proposal (10 credit workshop) | | |

Postgraduate Diploma (if applicable)

| Autumn term | Spring term | Summer term | Summer vacation |
|--|--|--|------------------------|
| Year 1 Public Management and Delivery (20 credits) | Year 1 Strategic Planning (20 credits) | Year 1 Policy Analysis and Process (20 credits) | |
| | Reflective Practice for Professional Development part 1 (10 credit workshop) | Digital Government: Policy and Practice (10 credit workshop) | |

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| Year 2 Leading and Managing Organisational Change (20 credits) | Year 2 1 x 20 credit Options module from: Project Management (20) or Public Sector Reform (20) or Public Finance (20) | |
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Postgraduate Certificate

| Autumn term | Spring term | Summer term |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Public Management and Delivery (20 credits) | Strategic Planning (20 credits) | Policy Analysis and Process (20 credits) |

Diagrammatic representation of the timing of module assessments and reassessments, and the timing of departmental examination/progression boards

If the programme includes part-time routes please provide a representation of the part-time programme structure, showing the distribution and credit value of core and option modules

| Autumn term | Spring term | Summer term | Summer vacation | Date of final award board |
|---|---|--|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Year 1 Public Management and Delivery (20) assessed by assignment submitted four weeks from last day of term. | Year 1 Strategic Planning (20) assessed by assignment submitted four weeks from last day of term. | Year 1 Policy Analysis and Process (20) assessed by assignment submitted four weeks from last day of term. | | |
| | Reflective Practice for Professional Development part 1 (10 credit workshop) assessed by submission of learning/reflective journal prior to start of summer term. | Digital Government: Policy and Practice (10 credit workshop) assessed by assignment submitted at the end of the summer vacation. | | |

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| <p>Year 2 Leading and Managing Organisational Change (20) assessed by assignment submitted four weeks from last day of term.</p> | <p>Year 2 Project Management (Option 20) or Public Sector Reform (option 20) or Public Finance, assessed by assignment submitted four weeks from last day of term.</p> | <p>Year 2 Dissertation (40 credits) assessed by submission during the summer vacation.</p> | <p>Year 2 Progression Board in the summer term on completion of taught modules.</p> <p>Reassessments undertaken following progression Board.</p> |
| <p>Reflective Practice for Professional Development part 2 (10 credit workshop) assessed by submission of learning/reflective journal prior to start of spring term.</p> | <p>Dissertation Proposal (10 credit workshop) assessed by submission of proposal prior to last day of spring term.</p> | | <p>Final Exams Board in autumn term.</p> |

Overview of modules

Core module table

| Module title | Module code | Credit level ¹ | Credit value ² | Prerequisites | Assessment rules ³ | Timing (term and week) and format of main assessment ⁴ | Independent Study Module? ⁵ |
|---|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Public Management & Delivery | SPY00023M | 7 | 20 | None | NC | AuT (year 1) assessed by assignment in week 13 | |
| Strategic Planning | SPY00111M | 7 | 20 | None | | SpT (year 1) assessed by assignment in week 13 | |
| Policy Analysis and Process | SPY00020M | 7 | 20 | None | | SuT Year 1) assessed by assignment in week 13 | |
| Leading & Managing Organisational Change | SPY00018M | | 20 | None | | AuT (year 2) assessed by assignment in week 13 | |
| Reflective Practice for Professional Development – Part 1 | SPY00106M | 7 | 10 | None | | SpT (year 1) assessed by reflective learning journal in week 17. | |
| Reflective Practice for Professional Development – Part 2 | SPY00102M | 7 | 10 | None | | AuT (year 2) assessed by reflective learning journal in week 15 | |

¹ The **credit level** is an indication of the module's relative intellectual demand, complexity and depth of learning and of learner autonomy. Most modules in postgraduate programmes will be at Level 7/Masters. Some modules are permitted to be at Level 6/Honours but must be marked on a pass/fail basis. See University Teaching Committee guidance for the limits on Level 6/Honours credit.

² The **credit value** gives the notional workload for the module, where 1 credit corresponds to a notional workload of 10 hours (including contact hours, private study and assessment)

³ **Special assessment rules** (requiring University Teaching Committee approval)

P/F – the module is marked on a pass/fail basis (NB pass/fail modules cannot be compensated)

NC – the module cannot be compensated

NR – there is no reassessment opportunity for this module. It must be passed at the first attempt

⁴ AuT – Autumn Term, SpT – Spring Term, SuT – Summer Term, SuVac – Summer vacation

⁵ **Independent Study Modules** (ISMs) are assessed by a dissertation or substantial project report. They cannot be compensated (NC) and are subject to reassessment rules which differ from 'taught modules'. Masters programmes should include an ISM(s) of between 60 and 100 credits. This is usually one module but may be more.

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| Digital Government: Policy & Practice | SPY00100M | 7 | 10 | None | | SuT (year 1) and summer vacation, assessed by assignment in week 17 | |
| Dissertation proposal | SPY00114M | 7 | 10 | None | P/F | SpT (year 2) assessed by submission of ISP proposal in week 10 | |
| Dissertation | SPY00104M | 7 | 40 | None | | SuT and SuVac (year 2) assessed by submission of ISP in summer vacation. | Yes |

Option modules

| Module title | Module code | Credit level | Credit value | Prerequisites | Assessment rules | Timing and format of main assessment | Independent Study Module? |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Public Sector Reform | SPY00006M | 7 | 20 | None | | SpT (year 2) assessed by assignment in week 13 | |
| Project Management | SPY00021M | 7 | 20 | None | | SpT (year 2) assessed by assignment in week 13 | |
| Public Finance | SPY00022M | 7 | 20 | None | | SpT (year 2) assessed by assignment in week 13 | |

| Transfers out of or into the programme | |
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| In accordance with university policy, accreditation of prior learning is available in respect of a maximum of 50% of the credit rating of the award, i.e. 30 credits of the 60 credit certificate if the student steps out at this stage, 60 credits of the 120 credit diploma and 90 credits of the 180 credit Masters. The dissertation cannot be accredited through APL. | |
| Exceptions to University Award Regulations approved by University Teaching Committee | |
| Exception | Date approved |
| The programme offers an independent study module (dissertation) route which constitutes less than the norm of 60 credits (at 40 credits) as the availability of this route is appropriate for the aims of this programme. | 15 April 2009 |
| Quality and Standards | |
| The University has a framework in place to ensure that the standards of its programmes are maintained, and the quality of the learning experience is enhanced. | |
| Quality assurance and enhancement processes include: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic oversight of programmes within departments by a Board of Studies, which includes student representation • The oversight of programmes by external examiners, who ensure that standards at the University of York are comparable with those elsewhere in the sector • Annual monitoring and periodic review of programmes • The acquisition of feedback from students by departments. | |
| More information can be obtained from the Academic Support Office: http://www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/support-and-admin/academic-support/ | |
| Date on which this programme information was updated: | 29 th November 2017 |
| Departmental web page: | http://www.york.ac.uk/spsw/ |
| Please note | |
| The information above provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and learning outcomes that a typical students might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the leaning opportunities that are provided. | |
| Detailed information on learning outcomes, content, delivery and assessment of modules can be found in module descriptions. | |
| The University reserves the right to modify this overview in unforeseen circumstances, or where processes of academic development, based on feedback from staff, students, external examiners or professional bodies, requires a change to be made. Students will be notified of any substantive changes at the first available opportunity. | |

