



Managing expectations of prospective students

It is important to ensure that prospective students can make an informed decision re the type of programme they select. Providers should, therefore, make a range of information available to prospective students.

Below, we provide a list of questions that students may require answers to and suggest the resources that can support prospective students to select the most appropriate programme and prepare for their student journey.

Practical Issues

Perhaps the most fundamental questions students may have focus on the practicalities associated with their programme. Providers should provide sufficient detail to allow students to know what to expect from the programme, what is expected of them, and how to prepare for the forthcoming programme.

Programme Structure:

- How is the programme structured, e.g. are modules studied in parallel or consecutively?
- Is each module delivered in a single semester or is there a more frequent 'carousel' model?
- Are students required to complete modules in a specific order?
- What is the difference between part-time and full-time study, e.g. for part-time students is there a set or minimum number of modules to be completed in each semester?
- Can students suspend their studies and how does that impact on the availability of modules they wish to take?

Timetables:

- For each module, what 'teaching / contact hours' are included?
- What types of teaching is provided e.g., for each module is there both a more formal lecture and a more interactive seminar?
- Are there scheduled breaks in the semester / between modules?

Teaching Materials:

- Are sessions synchronous (and if so when are details released) or asynchronous?
- Are students required to prepare in advance for teaching sessions?

- Are sessions recorded and, if so, what format does the recording take, are these recorded versions of 'live' lectures or a more edited version featuring a voice over?
- If sessions are primarily recorded / asynchronous, are there regular 'drop in' sessions for students to ask questions about the content, assessments etc?
- What opportunities are there for active learning and how is this implemented e.g. are there opportunities for synchronous discussion that are not part of the assessment?

Assessments:

- How many assessments do students undertake per module?
- Is all the assessment information provided at the start of a module?
- What is a typical assessment schedule in a module (weekly submissions, mid and end point assessment)?
- What type of assessments are there and what is their purpose (breadth, depth, conceptual or factual understanding, research skills, team work)?
- Are there asynchronous discussion board assessments?
- Are there formative as well as summative assessments?
- What feedback do students receive on their assessments and are there opportunities to discuss this feedback with the marker or module leader?

Learning Experience:

- Are all teaching materials for a module made available at the start of the study period or released on a week-by-week basis?
- What equipment are students expected to have access to?
- Is specialist software to be used during the programme and is this open access?
- Do students have opportunities to interact with other students (during taught sessions or at other times)?
- What initiatives are in place to support student connection and belongingness?
- Can students interact with students taking other modules / in other years?

Student Support

However well-prepared teaching resources are, students are likely to require additional support and guidance during the programme. Providers should detail the academic and pastoral support available to support students.

Personal Tutors:

- Will students be allocated to a Personal Tutor or Academic Advisor?
- Will the Personal Tutor be the same person throughout the programme or is it module specific?
- Does the Personal Tutor support academic or pastoral issues or both?

- How do students contact their Personal Tutor e.g., for online programmes is contact limited to email or are students able to book a synchronised meeting?
- Will Personal Tutors proactively contact and support students or are meetings depending on student initiative?

Student Feedback and Representation:

- How do students evaluate the programme and how does this shape the future of the programme?
- In addition to feedback on specific modules, how do students feedback their experience on the programme as a whole (e.g., student support)?
- Will students receive a summary of student feedback and how this has been used to enhance the programme.
- Is there a student representative for the programme?
- If a student representative system is in place, how are they contacted and how do they contribute to development of the programme?

Additional Support:

- What additional guidance (e.g., technical, library, and careers support) is available to students?
- In addition to 'how to' guides etc, do students have the opportunity for 1-1 meetings?
- Will careers support be available for a time after completion of the programme or does it terminate immediately after graduation?
- Can the careers support available provide guidance for visa requirements or professions based outside the UK?

Practical Issues: Minimum Suggested Resources

1. Programme Overview, including availability of each module and regularity of delivery
2. Guidance detailing part-time study requirements and the process / implications of suspension
3. Example weekly timetable, including mandatory teaching sessions (specifying asynchronous lecture, synchronous seminar etc) and optional sessions
4. Example teaching materials, including recorded sample lecture, guidance notes, and required reading
5. Example assessment schedule, assessment brief, and marked assessment displaying the type of feedback provided
6. List of required equipment
7. An overview of opportunities to interact and work with other students

Student Support: Suggested Resources

1. Overview of the academic and pastoral support available (in addition to the 'self-help' guidance documents available to students). In particular, allocation of named

Personal Tutors and the form that support takes (e.g., emails or regular synchronous meetings)

2. Overview of the feedback and student representative system.
3. Outline of the additional (technical, library, careers) support available to students including the availability for synchronous individual support.