

An aerial photograph of a city, showing a dense urban area with numerous buildings, streets, and green spaces. The image is partially obscured by a white curved shape at the bottom, which serves as a background for the text.

Subject Benchmark Statement: Housing Studies

The Basics

This document is a summary of the Subject Benchmark Statement for Housing Studies. It is specifically designed to provide a short and accessible overview of the main Statement for students, employers and academics. It is not intended to replace or alter the Subject Benchmark Statement, which should be referred to in the design and approval of courses and when any further detail is required.

Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the benchmark academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas, and in respect of particular qualifications. They provide a picture of what graduates in a particular subject might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their course or programme.

Subject Benchmark Statements are presented in four sections. Section 1 outlines the contextual information - providing the operational landscape, and boundaries, of subject discipline. This includes consideration of the ways in which the discipline addresses wider social goals, specifically in relation to: equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); the requirements of disabled students; education for sustainable development (ESD); and enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Section 2 covers distinctive features of the course, including curriculum design, partnership arrangements, flexibility of delivery, progression and ongoing monitoring processes. Section 3 explains any features relevant to teaching, learning and assessment activities for the subject. Section 4 describes the benchmark standards of achievement reached by all graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours, with some subjects also including achievement at master's level.



Why study a degree in Housing Studies?

The aim of a housing studies education is to provide graduates with the skills, knowledge and ethical values which enable an analysis of people and their homes in the context of (or in relation to) social need, social, cultural and economic developments and public policy frameworks.

Housing studies is a field of study, the starting point of which is a person or household's fundamental need for a home within which they can live well and flourish. Housing studies links the notions of home, residential buildings and neighbourhoods, and the many activities, institutions and stakeholders involved in the provision of housing and housing-related services. Housing studies is concerned with the production, consumption and exchange of housing in the market and social sectors, all in relation to the adequacy, affordability and security of housing for all citizens. Understanding the lived experience of housing includes the notions of housing rights, housing exclusion and homelessness as well as the importance of housing as an individual and/or community asset and its potential as a financial investment and store of wealth. The intersections between housing, health, well-being and social care are primary concerns of housing studies, as are understanding the social, economic, legal, physical and other processes involved in the provision of housing and the production, consumption and exchange of dwellings.

Housing Studies courses and modules provide students with opportunities for research and informed scholarly learning, as well as vocational and professional development. Housing Studies courses facilitate the combination of these pathways to enable students to optimise their learning experience, employment prospects and citizenship potential.



What are the main teaching and learning approaches in housing studies?

Teaching, learning and assessment styles in the discipline are diverse. A typical Housing Studies course has a teaching, learning and assessment strategy which makes the appropriateness of the methods used explicit and demonstrable in relation to the anticipated learning outcomes and skills being developed. Learning approaches are linked to the mode of delivery and the student profile. The strategy is expected to include a variety of approaches to teaching, learning and assessment which reflect and accommodate a diversity of learning styles and student needs. Where courses are professionally accredited, the learning and assessment strategy will include opportunities for work-based and/or work-related learning, both for students who are new to housing and for those with some prior work experience in housing.

Housing Studies courses are likely to benefit from the continuing development of flexible, virtual, campus-based and blended learning environments, including fully online learning where appropriate. Within both on-campus and online learning environments, it is expected that a range of teaching approaches are used to accommodate different learning styles and preferences.



How are students assessed?

The assessment methods adopted for housing studies aim to measure achievement, both formatively and summatively, over the whole of the degree course, embracing assessment 'of' learning, 'for' learning' and 'as' learning as adopted for sustainable development education. The assessment of Housing Studies courses includes a mix of methods that are accessible to all students. Where individual students may be disadvantaged by particular assessment methods, adjustments to those assessments are considered, while ensuring fairness across the full cohort.

Assessment types vary by course, but Housing Studies students are likely to encounter the following: essays, written reports, policy briefs; examinations, including online tests and exams; oral presentations; individual or group projects with outputs in oral or written forms; reflective learning journals; independent research and practice projects resulting in an extended research dissertation or practice report; assessments focused on digital literacy (for example blogs, wikis or other tools); work-based and work-linked assessments which include building/offering work experience for those new to housing; and drawing on work experience for those already working in housing.



Benchmark Standards

The minimum threshold standards that a student will have demonstrated when they are awarded an honours degree in Housing Studies are outlined on **pages 22-24** of the Subject Benchmark Statement. The vast majority of students will perform significantly better than the minimum threshold standards. Each higher education provider has its own method of determining what appropriate evidence of this achievement will be and should refer to [Annex D: Outcome classification descriptions for FHEQ Level 6 and FQHEIS Level 10 degrees](#).

This Annex sets out common descriptions of the four main degree outcome classifications for bachelor's degrees with honours: 1st, 2:1, 2:2 and 3rd. Study at master's level requires higher level skills, with students expected to achieve according to the descriptor for a higher education qualification at Level 7 on the FHEQ and SCQF Level 11 on the FQHEIS. The Statement was developed by a group of subject experts drawn from across the sector. Details of the Advisory Group can be found on **page 26** of the Statement.

Read the full Subject Benchmark Statement

The [full Subject Benchmark Statement](#) is available on the QAA website.



Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as a membership organisation on behalf of the higher education sector.

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