

International Foundation Programme

For students entering in 2006

Teaching Institution: The University of Reading
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences

Programme length: 1 year

Date of specification: January 2006

Programme Director: Mrs E. Frances Russell

Board of Studies: International Foundation Programme

Summary of programme aims

The Programme aims to provide access to higher education in Britain to international students who do not possess the normal entry requirements of GCE Advanced level qualifications or the equivalent. This is achieved through the provision of high quality teaching which is sympathetic to the needs of students from a wide range of educational backgrounds. On completion of the Programme, students can expect to be equipped with the subject specific and general study skills which will enable them to cope with the demands of undergraduate study.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which students are expected to develop by the end of their degree programme. The Foundation Programme seeks to introduce students to these skills through the provision of a credit-bearing Academic Skills module. The key skills relate to communication (both written and oral), use of information, problem solving and team-working. The credits for the module are awarded through work done in relation to the core subject modules with additional support provided through workshops and individual tutorials.

Programme content

The Programme offers a range of subjects made up of 40 credit and 20 credit modules. The profile which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with a list of modules which are chosen according to the students' intended degree programme (the required modules) and a list of modules from which students may make a selection (the optional modules). Students must choose modules totalling 140 credits.

Compulsory modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
All students must take:			
IF0ACA	Academic Skills	20 credits	0
And if their English is below a specified level:			
IF0IE1	International English A	40 credits	0

Required modules

Students must take at least TWO of the following as specified for their intended degree programme.

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
AM0BIO	Biology	40 credits	0
CH0CHE	Chemistry	40 credits	0
CH0CST	IT and Statistics	40 credits	0
EC0ECO	Economics	40 credits	0
GG0ENS	Environmental Science	40 credits	0
MA0FMA	Further Mathematics	40 credits	0
MA0FMC	Further Mathematics and Computer Science	40 credits	0
IF0LAW	Law	40 credits	0
MA0MAA	Mathematics	40 credits	0
EC0FMF	Mathematics for Management	40 credits	0
PH0PHY	Physics	40 credits	0
PO0POL	Politics	40 credits	0
SO0SOC	Sociology	40 credits	0

Optional modules

Students may take further modules from the above or from the following list up to a total of 140 credits, by agreement with the Director.

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
CH0STA	Statistics	20 credits	0
GG0ENA	Environmental Science A (Physical Geography)	20 credits	0
GG0ENB	Environmental Science B (Human Geography)	20 credits	0
MA0FMS	Further Mathematics	20 credits	0
CS0CSC	Computer Science	20 credits	0

Progression requirements

Passes are at three levels: Grade I with Distinction (70%), Grade I (60%) and Grade II (40%). To pass the Programme, students must achieve an average of at least 40% in modules totalling 120 credits with a maximum of 40 credits of these modules with a mark below 35% and a pass in the Academic Skills module.

To progress to degree study in the University students must also satisfy the following progression and English Language requirements

Most individual degree programmes specify the modules in which a Grade I pass is required. These are listed in the Foundation Programme handbook. The progression requirements which relate to the number of Grade I and Grade II passes vary according to the intended degree programme as follows:

Intended degree programme	Progression requirements
Law Management Studies Management and Business Administration Accounting and Management	An average of at least 60% overall with a Grade I pass in each of two 40 credit modules (including any specified modules) and no module mark below 40%.
International Securities, Investment and Banking	An average of at least 60% overall with a Grade I pass with Distinction in Mathematics for Management, a Grade I pass in Economics and no module mark below 40%.
Pharmacy	An average of at least 60% overall with a Grade I pass with Distinction in Chemistry, a Grade I pass in Biology and no module mark below 40%.
Speech and Language Therapy	An average of at least 60% overall with a Grade I pass with Distinction in International English, a Grade I pass in Biology and no module mark below 40%.
All other degree programmes	A Grade I pass in each of two 40 credit modules (including any specified modules) and an average of at least 40% in the remaining two or three modules but with no module mark below 35%.

English language requirements

Speech and Language Therapy	IELTS 7.5 with at least 7.0 in each skill.
All other degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and in The Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences	IELTS 7.0 or a pass at 60% in IF0IEI.
Degree programmes in other faculties	IELTS 6.5 or a pass at 55% in IF0IEI.

Students who pass the Programme but do not qualify to progress to any degree programme will be entitled to an International Foundation Programme Certificate.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is delivered through lectures, seminars and individual tutorials. Some science modules also include practical classes in the laboratory.

Most modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework and formal examinations. Some are assessed by formal examination only.

The criteria for assessment are published in the handbook in the form of grade descriptions. The assessment objectives are:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Interpretation, analysis and application
- Evaluation
- Organisation and presentation
- Practical skills (Science modules only)

Grades are awarded at the following levels:

Mark	Interpretation
70% - 100%	Grade I with Distinction
60% - 69%	Grade I
40% - 59%	Grade II
0% - 39%	Fail

Admission requirements

Entrants to this Programme are normally required to have obtained a school leaving qualification from their home country which is at least equivalent to GCSE but which will be below GCE A-level standard. There must be evidence of a general academic ability of a high standard, with particular strengths in those subjects which are relevant to their chosen degree programme and Foundation Programme modules.

Entrants must also satisfy an English language entry requirement as follows:

Faculty of intended degree course	IELTS or equivalent
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences	5.5 with at least 5.0 in each skill
Faculty of Arts and Humanities	5.5 with at least 5.0 in each skill
Other faculties	5.0 with at least 5.0 in each skill

Admissions Tutor: Mrs E. Frances Russell

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, the International Student Adviser, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

The Foundation Programme places particular emphasis on individual support for its students. Support for students in their studies is provided through the University's Personal Academic Record (PAR) Scheme, in which Personal Tutors see their tutees at least once in each term and also offer weekly surgeries for ad hoc consultations. Small group teaching and weekly module surgeries provide opportunities for individual assistance with academic problems. Student progress is monitored closely so that problems can be identified and addressed at an early stage. In addition, module tutors submit reports at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms and these are discussed with each student at termly interviews with the Director.

The Student/staff committee meets once a term and allows for discussion on matters relating to the working of the Foundation Programme and issues of concern to students and staff.

Career prospects

The majority of Foundation Programme students believe that their career prospects in their home country will be enhanced by obtaining a degree from a British university. The Foundation Programme assists in this process by providing access to most degree programmes in this University and to alternative programmes at other institutions. An average of 75% of students qualify to proceed to a degree programme at Reading and, of those who have sat examinations but do not qualify and wish to transfer to another institution, 100% have to date been successfully placed. The degree results of those who graduate from Reading compare favourably with students who enter the University through other routes, with an average of 30% over the past five years gaining First Class or Upper Second class degrees.

Educational aims of the programme

The main aims of the Programme are:

- to provide a sound knowledge base in the areas studied and to develop the methodological and learning skills which are specifically relevant to those areas
- through the use of a variety of teaching methods, to equip students with the academic skills which are particularly suited to undergraduate study at a British university

- to encourage the development of work discipline, commitment, independent learning and time management
- to assist students in improving their language skills

Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and Understanding

<p>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The key areas of each module syllabus. 2. The relevant concepts and principles. 3. Subject specific methodology and reasoning. 4. Where relevant, the relationship between different areas of study. 	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Acquisition of knowledge is through lectures, seminars and individual tutorials. Students are expected to undertake independent reading to supplement and consolidate what is being taught in classes and to broaden their individual knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Where appropriate, visits to relevant places of interest further enhance understanding and interest.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Knowledge and understanding are assessed through unseen written examinations and, in some modules, coursework.</p>
---	--

Skills and other attributes

<p>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpret and analyse different types of information. 2. Explain and apply the syllabus material. 3. Evaluate arguments and points of criticism. 4. Identify and solve problems. 5. Present material in a well-planned sequence 6. Use appropriate terminology confidently and accurately 	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme outlined above. The format of the teaching is designed to enable students to develop all the learning outcomes in this category. Regular assignments in the form of seminar preparation and homework provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate their levels of achievement.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>These skills form part of the assessment objectives in end-of-term and final examinations. Assessed coursework and practical project work are also used in some modules.</p>
---	--

C. Practical skills – able to:

1. Perform practical work logically, precisely and safely.
2. Accurately collect and collate data.
3. Relate theory to practice.
4. Use data to produce a well presented and ordered report.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Practical skills are developed through regular practical exercises. In some modules, work is laboratory or project based and data are used to produce written reports.

Assessment

Practical skills are assessed in end of term and final examinations. In some modules, laboratory skills, project work and written reports are also assessed.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. Communicate effectively by written and oral means.
2. Demonstrate numerical and problem solving skills appropriate to the subject matter of the module.
3. Competent use of information, including Information Technology.
4. Work as part of a team.
5. Work independently.
6. Demonstrate effective time management

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The skills are developed primarily within the context of the core modules with additional support provided through workshops and individual tutorials.

Assessment

The skills are assessed through work done in relation to the core modules. The skills which are developed within individual modules are identified and presented in the handbook. From this information and after consultation with their tutors, students are required to identify the individual skills which will be assessed within each module. They then complete an assignment which focuses on each key skill. The assignments are marked and the average mark is given a credit rating.

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.